

## Project overview

Our iconic koalas have variable population status across their distribution. Listed as endangered in NSW, QLD, and the ACT, yet in Victoria and in South Australia they can reach unsustainable densities in some areas and require management. Our knowledge of our Victorian koala populations is patchy. As part of the new **Victorian Koala Management Strategy**, we're working together with partners and the Victorian community to fill in the gaps.

## What we're doing

- Surveying Victoria's koalas at key sites to get more accurate population estimates.
- Undertaking health and welfare assessments
- Targeted genetic sampling to determine the genetic composition of key populations.

## Get involved - Koala Scat Collection

As part of this project, we're comparing the genetics of our Gippsland koala populations to koala populations across the state. To do this we are sampling DNA from koala scats. Volunteers can get involved by participating in our koala scat collection program.

Volunteering sessions will be run across Gippsland between October 2023 and March 2024.



More information can be found on the DEECA website by searching for :

## The Great Victorian Koala Survey



Energy,  
Environment  
and Climate Action

# The Great Victorian Koala Survey

## Scat collection instructions



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**WildDNA**<sup>®</sup>

## Koala scat collection

Koala DNA is located on the surface of the scat. It is very fragile and can be damaged easily.

Do not touch the scat with your hand or put the scat inside anything. Diseases can be passed to humans via scats.

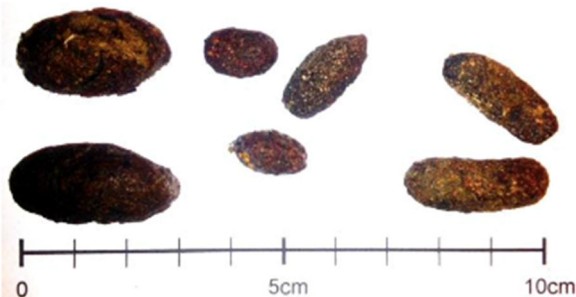
Make sure to only collect fresh scats after a dry night or day as rain and fog can damage the DNA.

Fresh scats will have a shiny glossy coat.

Koala scats can be difficult to find (see image below).



You don't need to see the koala to collect scats. You just need to find their favourite Eucalyptus trees.



Koala scats can look very similar to Brushtail possum scats (see image below). Fresh scats will be an olive green colour changing to a black/brown colour. Koala scats are usually fatter through the middle.



Pick up 4-6 scats per koala using a toothpick. Use gloves if necessary

Place the scats upright into a takeaway container with some foam or polystyrene so they can dry similar to the image below.



Please record on the container or on a piece of paper the GPS coordinates, or address of where the scats were found and any information about the koala i.e., male or female, any joey present and climatic conditions i.e., rain or fog or sunny, scat quality.

Leave scats upright in container to dry in a dark room with air flow for 2 days.

Do not put a lid on the takeaway container as the scats will go mouldy which can damage the DNA.

Once ready to send in the mail fill a small container with scats. Pack it down with tissue paper (so they can't roll around) and place a desiccant sachet on top to absorb moisture (see image below). Close the lid.



Place the container/s and scat information into an Express Post bag and send to:

**Kelly Smith**

Parcel Collect 10284 75015

Dromana Post Office

Shop 8, 251 Point Nepean Road

Dromana, Victoria, 3936

Any questions can be emailed to:

[kellyj.smith@federation.edu.au](mailto:kellyj.smith@federation.edu.au)

Happy hunting and thankyou!