

10 Cool things about KOALAS

When it comes to climbing the highest trees, the koala's king!



There's a lot more to these living 'teddy bears' than fluffy ears and a laid-back lifestyle. Check out ten surprising things about these wild, loud and loveable creatures from Australia...



"BURRP!"

1 WHAT A RACKET

Imagine a burp so loud it makes you jump, followed by a snore that rattles the rafters. That's what the typical bellow of a koala sounds like! "The noise they make is so loud that campers complain about koalas keeping them up all night" says Deborah Tabart, head of the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF). So why are they so noisy? Male koalas grunt with gusto to broadcast their whereabouts to distant females or to scare off rivals!

2 MEGA MUNCHERS

Koalas don't live in tall eucalyptus trees just to enjoy the view! They climb up the branches to munch leaves one at a time, eating up to a kilogramme each day – that's about ten small bags of salad! The leaves are actually **poisonous** to most creatures and are tough to digest, providing little nutrition. Luckily for koalas, they have a specially adapted digestive system that extracts every last drop of energy from the leaves while neutralising their toxins.

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3 NIGHT SHIFT

Koalas often look sleepy when people see them during the day. That's because they're **nocturnal**, so they're usually only awake when it's dark. And all that eating is hard work so they need to save energy – amazingly, koalas can **sleep for 20 hours a day!** When they're snoozing, their extra-furry rumps provide a built-in cushion!



A baby koala stays cosy in its mum's protective pouch

4 MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The Europeans who first settled in Australia mistook these tree dwellers for a type of bear, and the name 'koala bear' stuck. However, like kangaroos, koalas are **marsupials** – mammals that look after their newborns in a pouch. But the koala's closest cousin is actually the **wombat**, a marsupial that lives in burrows – and wouldn't look twice at a eucalyptus leaf!



Snuggle up, it's nap time – again!

