

Pigs in trees (by Max Herford)

If you hear pigs rather than birds calling in your trees, chances are it is October and you are sharing your backyard with koalas. From now until about November, the male koalas are serenading the females with loud grunts and snorts that defy their otherwise cuddly and docile appearance. [Click here to listen!](http://www.fnpw.org.au/Backyard_Buddies) (http://www.fnpw.org.au/Backyard_Buddies)

Soon there will be joeys the size of a peanut in their mothers' pouches. Tiny, naked, blind and totally dependent on their mother they do not emerge from the pouch for another seven months. It will be June before you get to see the joey riding on its mothers' back, but make sure mum and bub are safe until then.

If you have koalas around your house, observe them quietly. They are easily stressed and dislike loud noises. If their food trees are set apart from each other your koala may have to leave its tree at night and wander across your backyard. Keep your dog away from the koala, because while the dog may just want to play, the koala's delicate immune system won't survive even the smallest of nibbles. Drive slowly at night and be aware of your furry neighbours who are most active at night. In a safe environment your koala can live for up to 12 years.