

# ***The Great Koala Count***

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**SUNDAY, 2 NOVEMBER, 11am  
at Falconbridge Hall, Home Street  
(just off St Georges Crescent), Falconbridge**

## **Koalas are counting on us counting them**

The *Great Koala Count* (7-17 November) is an annual national event. The information collected may be used to investigate koalas' use of habitats; identify areas of concern or promise for populations; monitor changes over time; & develop conservation strategies for this Threatened Species.

**Dr Grainne Cleary** is part of the team who've developed *BioTag*, an app for SmartPhones to record the GPS location & details about any koalas spotted. After registering at [www.koalacount.org.au](http://www.koalacount.org.au) and downloading *BioTag*, if you spot a koala, just snap a photo & answer the questions. You don't even need to be in range at the time. And if you don't see any, that's valuable info for the researchers too. You don't need a SmartPhone to take part - you can report manually on the website too.

Most koala sightings in the Mountains have been on more fertile soils in the lower eastern areas & around the basalt capped peaks, but the results of the *Count* may change this. Coincidentally, during last year's count in the Mountains, a koala was seen crossing the Highway at Boddington Hill and others sought refuge near houses at Winmalee during the bushfires.

At the meeting on Sunday 2 November, Grainne will also outline the *Atlas of Living Australia* ([www.ala.org.au](http://www.ala.org.au)), an amazing online data base of flora & fauna. Using the *Atlas*, you can enter any location and find the whole range of animals and plants that have been recorded within a 1, 5 or 10 km radius, whether lizards, mosses, insects, grevilleas, birds or any other living thing.

**Dr Kellie Leigh** will be discussing her research looking at koala diversity throughout the mountains ([www.scienceforwildlife.org](http://www.scienceforwildlife.org)). Kellie is examining how koalas use the range of trees and how to manage and protect their population in a potential refuge from the increasing threats of the continuing growth of Sydney, diseases and climate change.

Kellie also is involved in using wildlife-detection dogs to survey elusive threatened species such as koalas and quolls. Kids will love watching Badger, her quoll detection dog, demonstrate his amazing skill at finding quoll scats hidden in the park next door.

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