



# CONSERVING KOALA COUNTRY



## DEAR EARTHWATCHER,

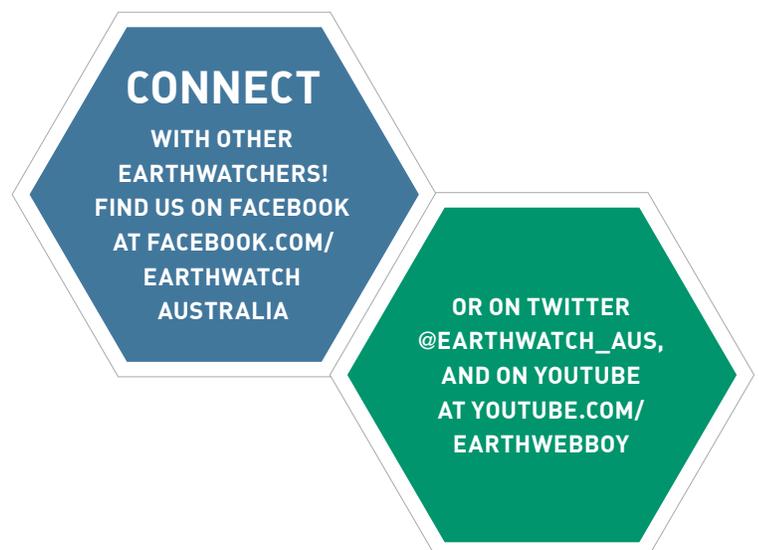
Welcome to our Earthwatch Expedition on Conserving Koala Country. We are looking forward to sharing our research and passion for koalas and their habitats with you. Koalas face numerous and diverse threats across their range, which makes managing the species a real challenge. In many areas, koala populations are declining but in the Otways, they are at high densities and in some locations actually destroying their own habitat by overbrowsing their preferred trees. Ours is the first long-term study of a high-density population and is providing insight into koala behaviour and ecology, and how the species responds to environmental change. This information is critical for the development of conservation strategies for koalas and their habitats across their range.

Research activities vary according to the trip. On some trips, you will assist in the capture and handling of koalas, or get to know individual koalas personally as you radiotrack them each day. In other trips, you will help count koalas and assess tree condition in sites that we have been monitoring since 2008. You may even be asked to help collect koala poo (for analysis of diet), or collect seed for revegetation. Regardless of the research focus of a trip, you will have plenty of opportunities to observe koalas and experience the beauty of the area. Make sure you bring your camera!

You will also experience the challenges of working in the Australian bush. This expedition has many good reasons behind its rating of 'strenuous'. Many of our sites require walking off trails and pushing through dense and prickly vegetation. In some cases, the vegetation is so thick that the only way through is on your hands and knees. Add in some wet weather and leeches and you'll really have some stories to tell. At least the exercise usually means that you sleep well!

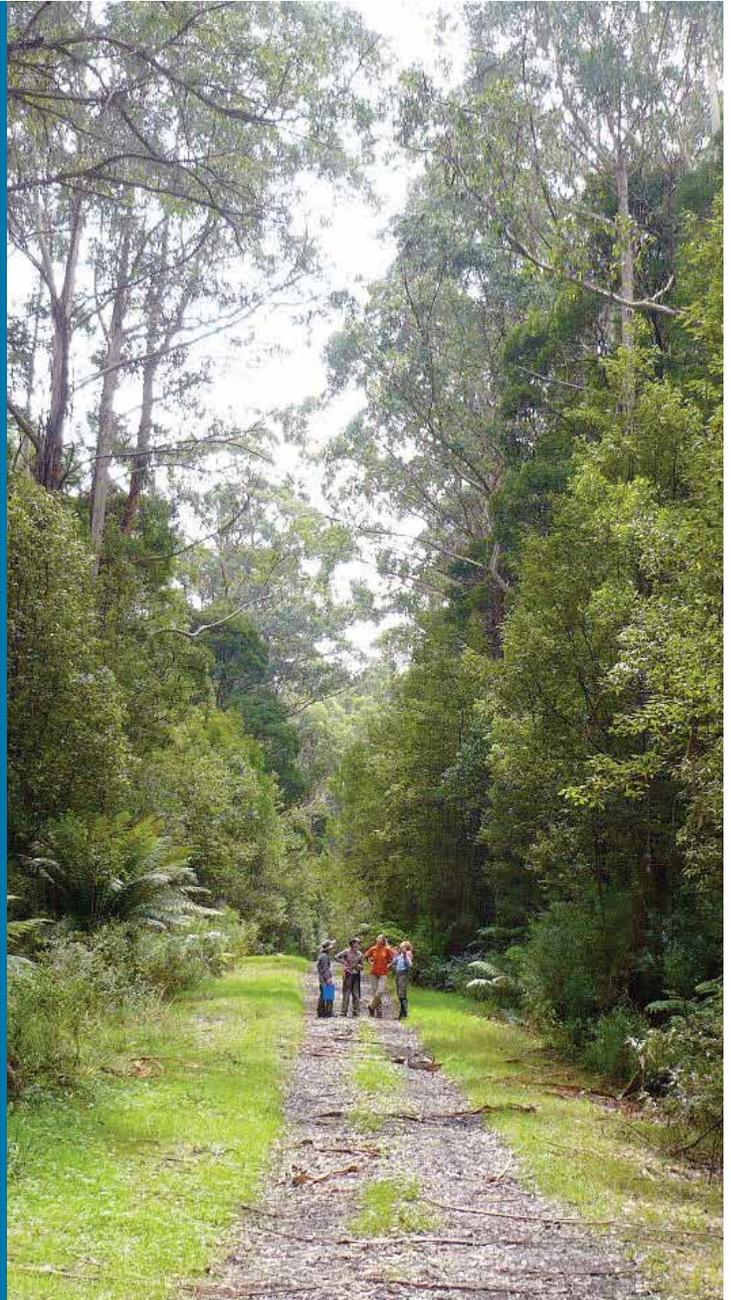
Thanks again for joining our expedition and helping us with this important research. We hope that your experience will be an enjoyable and rewarding one.

Sincerely,  
Desley Whisson



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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## CONSERVING KOALA COUNTRY



### EARTHWATCH SCIENTISTS

Dr. Desley Whisson (Deakin University),  
Dr. Alistair Melzer (Central Queensland University)

### RESEARCH SITE

Otway National Park, Victoria

### EXPEDITION DATES

**Team 1:** Feb. 3–Feb. 12, 2016

**Team 2:** Sept. 7– Sept. 16, 2016

**Team 3:** Nov. 16–Nov. 25, 2016

**Complete travel information is not available in this version of the briefing.**

**Please contact Earthwatch with any questions.**



# TRIP PLANNER

## CONSERVING KOALA COUNTRY

### IMMEDIATELY

- Make sure you understand and agree to Earthwatch's **Terms and Conditions** and the **Participant Code of Conduct**.
- If you plan to purchase additional travel insurance, note that some policies require purchase when your expedition is booked.
- Send Earthwatch a scanned, color copy of the front page of your passport for the research permit to enter the park.

### 90 DAYS PRIOR TO EXPEDITION

- Log in at [earthwatch.org](http://earthwatch.org) to complete your volunteer forms.
- Pay any outstanding balance for your expedition.
- Book travel arrangements (see the Travel Planning section for details).
- If traveling internationally, make sure your passport is current and, if necessary, obtain a visa for your destination country.

### 60 DAYS PRIOR TO EXPEDITION

- Make sure you have all the necessary vaccinations for your project site.
- Review the Packing Checklist to make sure you have all the clothing, personal supplies and equipment needed.

### 30 DAYS PRIOR TO EXPEDITION

- Leave the Earthwatch 24-hour helpline number with a relative or friend.
- Leave copies of your passport, visa, and airline tickets with a relative or friend.

**Read this expedition briefing thoroughly.** It provides the most accurate information available at the time of your Earthwatch scientist's project planning, and will likely answer any questions you have about the project. However, please also keep in mind that research requires improvisation, and you may need to be flexible. Research plans evolve in response to new findings, as well as to unpredictable factors such as weather, equipment failure, and travel challenges. To enjoy your expedition to the fullest, remember to expect the unexpected, be tolerant of repetitive tasks, and try to find humor in difficult situations. If there are any major changes in the research plan or field logistics, Earthwatch will make every effort to keep you well informed before you go into the field



# THE RESEARCH

## CONSERVING KOALA COUNTRY



### THE STORY

The koala (*phascolarctos cinereus*) is an iconic Australian species that attracts considerable public attention.

The conservation status of the koala is uncertain. Across most of its range it is considered vulnerable to extinction and in places localized extinctions have occurred. However, around Cape Otway and in southern Australia generally the species is considered secure.

The species has suffered declines due primarily to habitat loss and fragmentation, and hunting following European settlement of Australia. More recently drought, heat waves, fire, disease, dog attacks and road deaths have all contributed to regional populations declines—especially in northern Australia.

Climate change is likely to have significant adverse effects on koala populations. Mortality rates will potentially increase as a result of koalas' low tolerance for prolonged hot weather and the potential for more extreme and frequent bushfires. Furthermore, koala food resources may decline due to climate-induced changes in the composition and structure of eucalypt

communities, and the nutritional quality and moisture content of leaves. In areas of mainland Victoria and for some islands where koala densities are locally high, increased browsing pressure on preferred trees is an additional factor threatening populations.

An understanding of the response of koalas to environmental change is critical for conservation of their populations and habitats. In Victoria, in the Great Otway National Park and surrounding private land (known as the Otways), koalas are widespread and relatively abundant. The landscape comprises a mosaic of different habitat types that vary in koala food tree composition. Higher densities of koalas are observed in woodlands dominated by preferred food trees and in some instances, concentrated browsing by koalas is causing a decline in tree condition and loss of preferred tree species.

Consequently, habitat change is occurring at a rapid rate, providing a unique opportunity to gain an understanding of the response of koalas to a declining food supply and habitat quality and thus the potential impact of climate change on the species.



## RESEARCH AIMS

### THIS RESEARCH WILL:

- Contribute useful data to a longer-term consideration of climate change and variability issues.
- Further our understanding of the ecology of koalas and their resilience to environmental change through comparing the ecology of this southern koala population with that of koalas in Queensland. The project builds on an Earthwatch-supported study of koalas on St. Bees Island, Queensland.
- Contribute to the conservation of koalas and their habitat.
- Transfer knowledge and ecological understanding to the community through volunteer participation and environmental education.
- Make new knowledge available to the local, national, and international community through lay and scientific peer reviewed publications, seminars, and workshops.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT ARE:

- To assess koala population density, sex structure, and productivity for predominant forest types at a local scale in the Cape Otway study area, and temporal variation associated with habitat change.
- To describe the characteristics of habitats used by koalas and their temporal variation due to climate effects and over-browsing.
- To determine tree selection and use by koalas in different habitat types, home range, and movements of koalas in the landscape, and the energetic costs to koalas of different resource availability.
- To determine other mammal species using koala habitat.

## HOW YOU WILL HELP

You will provide vital support in labor-intensive tasks, including koala population monitoring, habitat surveys, radio tracking, behavioral observations and camera surveys. Staff will train you on all research tasks before you do them, and will always be there to assist or answer queries. The description of research tasks below outlines some of the specific training that will be provided at the start of assignments.

**POPULATION MONITORING:** This study component aims to describe koala population density, sex structure, and productivity for predominant forest types at a local scale in the Cape Otway study area, and temporal variation associated with habitat change. This information will be important in understanding the results of more focused studies on koala tree use, movements, and energetics.

You'll help search for koalas, accompanying the researchers in a systematic traverse of the study area, locating koalas by sight and then recording their location and details including gender and the presence of young. Data will be recorded on datasheets provided. Staff will brief you on the importance of monitoring the koala population and reasons behind the timing and methods, and give training in basic bush-craft (especially safety and navigation), working in teams, and field technical skills.

**HABITAT SURVEYS:** This study component aims to describe the characteristics of habitats used by koalas and their temporal variation.

You will help measure trees (height, trunk circumference, canopy size), and determine tree species density and composition.

Staff will train you in eucalypt identification, habitat assessment techniques and the accurate collection and recording of data. You will work under the direct supervision of the Earthwatch scientist to ensure accuracy of the data collected and to bring a new meaning to "tree hugging".

**KOALA BEHAVIOR:** The objective of this assignment is to determine tree selection and use by koalas in different habitat types, and the energetic costs to koalas of different resource availability. This study will also provide information on home range and movements.

Depending on the specific research aims, on some trips you may be asked to assist with the capture and handling of koalas, tracking of radio-collared koalas, or undertaking behavioral observations. You may also be required to collect koala scat for analysis of their diet.

Where required, staff will instruct you on koala capture and handling techniques prior to catching. You'll assist in the catch (flagging the koala down the tree), and be given hands-on training in restraining the koala for measurements and/or device fitting. An experienced catcher and handler will supervise closely. Staff will also train you in radio tracking and use of a GPS, and once you're competent, you'll work in pairs to locate koalas and record the required data.

**WILDLIFE SURVEYS:** The impacts of canopy defoliation and tree species loss on other wildlife are not well understood. A study by a Deakin University honors student suggests that bird species composition and behaviors at individual trees change with declining condition of tree canopies. Further study is needed to determine if changes are occurring at a larger scale. This study will describe bird and mammal communities in habitats that vary in tree species composition and condition.

Surveys for other wildlife are generally only undertaken on one trip per year.

You'll be involved in all aspects of this study. You'll assist in deployment of cameras, downloading and viewing of images, and spotlighting. Staff will show you how to use remote cameras so that you can deploy and check cameras without direct supervision. You'll also participate in bird surveys after receiving training in bird species identification so that you can undertake surveys with confidence. Sometimes you may provide back up to the field officer rather than serving as the primary data collector.

# DAILY LIFE IN THE FIELD

## PLANS FOR YOUR TEAM



Topics that we will cover in informal discussions and on-site briefings include:

- Orientation and introduction to Earthwatch
- Overview and objectives of the project
- Introduction to Australian conservation issues and wildlife management

You need no specific skills, and all tasks will be explained fully by the Earthwatch scientist once the team arrives on site. However, a high level of fitness is required due to distances walked and nature of the vegetation and terrain.

A general day consists of an early breakfast and then packing lunch for a full day in the field. The team will complete various research tasks throughout the day. In general, expect to walk several kilometers per day, carrying your own pack containing personal items, water and food. Heavier equipment (e.g., climbing and catching kits) will only occasionally be carried into sites. The work will be carried out in various conditions, ranging from undulating, flat forested or heath areas to sandy or thickly vegetated (especially bracken) areas, which can make walking difficult.

Cape Otway is a cool to cold and wet region. Consequently the research team must collect data in most weather—wherever it is safe to do so.

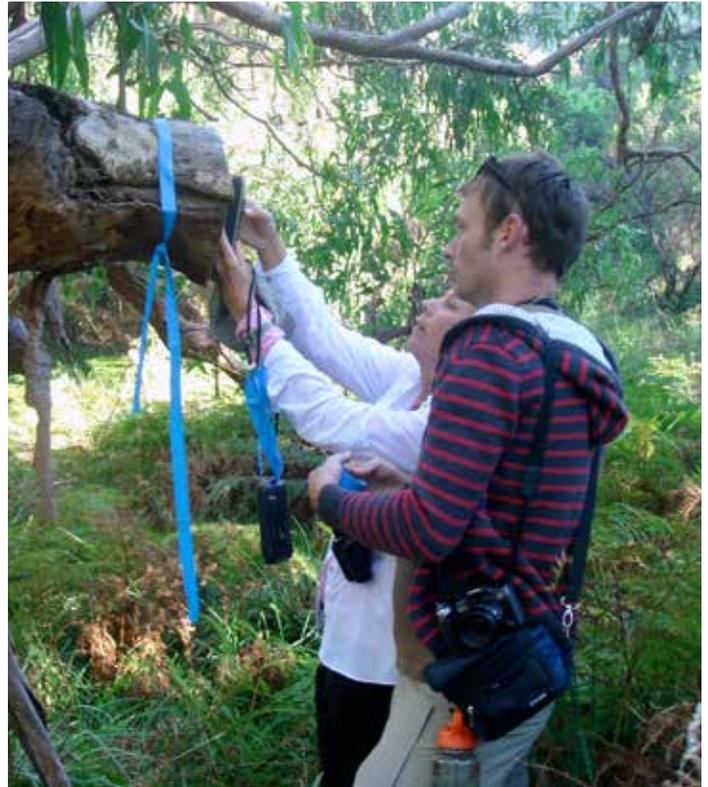
Upon return to the cabins in the late afternoon, you'll help sort field equipment for the following days activities and assist with data entry. After dinner is free time unless spotlighting activities or data entry are scheduled.

Midway through the expedition, we'll have a recreation day. You may choose to stay at Bimbi Park, to partake in one of the many nature walks around Bimbi Park, to ride horses (depending on how many are interested), or it may be possible to arrange a trip to the Twelve Apostles. This is generally discussed in the first few days, and a group decision is made on what activity everyone would like to do.



## DRIVING POLICY

Participants who have driven themselves to the project may not drive whilst on the project. This includes time that has been designated as non-research time. Participants who ignore this policy and do drive or ride in another participant's vehicle during the project will be doing so at their own risk and will not be covered under the Earthwatch insurance policy for the expedition.



## ITINERARY & DAILY SCHEDULE

Weather and research needs can lead to changes in the daily schedule. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

### ITINERARY

<b>DAY 1</b>	Meet at rendezvous and drive to Bimbi Park
<b>DAYS 2-5</b>	Field Work
<b>DAY 6</b>	Recreational Day
<b>DAYS 7-9</b>	Field Work
<b>DAY 10</b>	Pack up and clean cabins. Leave Bimbi Park by 9:00 a.m.

### TYPICAL DAY IN THE FIELD

<b>7:00 A.M.</b>	Breakfast and make lunch
<b>8:00 A.M.</b>	Morning research activity
<b>12:00 P.M.</b>	Packed lunch in the field
<b>1:00 P.M.</b>	Afternoon research activity
<b>5:30 P.M.</b>	Return to base camp, clean and organize gear, data entry, recreational time
<b>7:00 P.M.</b>	Dinner
<b>8:00 P.M.</b>	Scientist presentation, night research activity, data entry, or free time

# ACCOMMODATIONS AND FOOD

## ABOUT YOUR HOME IN THE FIELD



### SLEEPING

Participants will be housed in deluxe cabins that sleep up to six people in three bedrooms. Each room will be twin share and single sex. Cabins are self-contained with a fully equipped kitchen and modern bathroom. Pillows and bed linen will be provided.

It may be possible to accommodate couples together upon request if enough notice is provided. Please note that this option is dependent on team numbers and availability of the accommodation at the time of the team and cannot be guaranteed.

Bedding and towels are provided, but during the September trip, bringing your own sleeping bag is recommended if you feel the cold.

### BATHROOMS

Each deluxe cabin contains a bathroom with one toilet and shower, which will be shared by all participants. There is also a shower and toilet block close by which is open to all holiday park guests. Soap and small shampoo and conditioner are supplied by the accommodations through wall-mounted dispensers in an effort to reduce plastic.

### ELECTRICITY

Cabins are supplied with 24-hour access to electricity. All rooms are equipped with working power sockets. The kitchen is equipped with a refrigerator, a gas stove, and a sink connected to running water. Most cabins are well insulated and double-glazed and therefore air conditioning is not necessary. There are fans available during warm days and gas heaters for use during cooler nights.

### PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Otways is a somewhat isolated location with poor mobile phone coverage and intermittent wireless access available at certain locations in Bimbi Park.

Mobile phone reception is poor within the park, but there is a public pay phone available. Mobile phone coverage is good outside of the holiday park and at the research sites, depending on which network you are connected with. Telstra Mobile tends to have the best coverage in Australia. Teams of volunteers on site will communicate via UHF radio.

For further information on the Bimbi Park, see [bimbipark.com](http://bimbipark.com). au or visit them on Facebook at [facebook.com/Bimbipark](https://www.facebook.com/Bimbipark).



## FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

Bimbi Park is a 40-minute drive from the closest town of Apollo Bay. There are no services available other than what the park provides.

## DISTANCE TO THE FIELD SITE

The main field site is based at Bimbi Park and is a 15-minute walk from the accommodation. Heavy equipment can be driven down to this site when needed. Other field sites vary in distance from Bimbi Park, but are no further than a 25-minute drive.

## FOOD AND WATER

A menu will be planned and food purchased prior to each trip (the nearest supermarket is approximately 40 minutes away). The menu will take into account any special dietary needs of team members and be relatively flexible to account for individual tastes and dislikes.

All team members will be responsible for making their own continental breakfasts in the morning.

Lunch will be had in the field, and participants and project staff will be expected to make their own sandwiches in the morning before departing. Fruit and snack foods (e.g., muesli bars) will be available during the day.



The team will cook evening meals. A dinner roster will be established on the first day, and then all team members must participate in the preparation and cooking of meals according to the roster. Cabins have self-equipped kitchens and dining areas that create a fun, social atmosphere. Evening meals will be hearty and comprise meats, vegetables, pastas, and desserts.

**NOTE:** All team members are expected to help with housekeeping.

## TYPICAL MEALS

<b>BREAKFAST</b>	Cereal, toast and spreads, fresh fruit, and yogurt
<b>LUNCH</b>	Sandwich meats, spreads and salads, cheese, fresh fruit, muesli bars
<b>DINNER</b>	Pasta, rice, meat, cooked vegetables, salads, sauces, etc.
<b>SNACKS</b>	Crackers, fruits, sweet biscuits, muesli bars
<b>WATER</b>	Fresh drinking water will always be available at the accommodations. Water at Bimbi Park is untreated spring or rainwater, and should be boiled before drinking. Some bottled water will be provided.
<b>BEVERAGES</b>	Coffee, tea, milk, fruit juices.

## SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Please alert Earthwatch to any special dietary requirements (e.g., diabetes, lactose intolerance, nut or other food allergies, vegetarian or vegan diets) as soon as possible, and note them in the space provided on your volunteer forms.

Accommodating special diets is not guaranteed and can be very difficult due to availability of food, location of field sites, and other local conditions.

# PROJECT CONDITIONS

## THE FIELD ENVIRONMENT

Work will be carried out in various conditions from moderate slopes, to undulating or flat country. Ground conditions are difficult, however. The ground vegetation is often composed of thick fern or dense shrubs to head height or beyond. In the moister forests fallen timber and wet gullies add further complexity as the team climbs over or works around fallen logs or carefully negotiates the muddy banks of minor streams. Usually there are no paths to follow—although Desley or Alistair may lead the team and open a path. Consequently our work can be quite strenuous requiring patience, stamina, good balance and keen eyesight. This is true bush walking with moments of great beauty with grand tall forests, delicate fern gullies and great mossy logs. Imagine the first European explorers or the local indigenous people traversing these landscapes! So, although the team may only walk a few kilometers a day a lot of energy can be expended. However, koalas do use these landscapes, which form the majority of koala habitat in the Otway region. So understanding koala utilization of these plant communities is fundamental to determining how to manage for conservation of the species.

Prospective volunteers need to be prepared to follow the scientist off the beaten track and explore the bush. They need to have moderate levels of aerobic fitness, good balance, moderate stamina with sound knees and ankles as well as being prepared for the occasional trip and fall.

Field clothing should be able to withstand cold wet conditions and abrasion from coarse vegetation and branches.

Temperature at the research site during months of February, September, and November should be mild with average daytime maximum temperatures of around 16° to 22°C (60.8°F–71.6°F) and nighttime temperatures dropping to minimums of approximately 10°C (50°F). There is a good chance of rainfall at the site during spring (September). Average temperatures and rainfall for the region are outlined in the table below.

Those who are unaccustomed to bush walking may find the first few days a bit tiring and should pace themselves accordingly. Volunteers should prepare themselves by exercising prior to the trip, with an emphasis on strengthening leg muscles and ankles and improving their cardio-respiratory fitness.

### GENERAL CONDITIONS

#### MEAN HUMIDITY

FEB. 66%–73%

SEP. 69%–71%

NOV. 63%–72%

#### TEMPERATURE RANGE

FEB. 14°–22°C (57.2°–71.6°F)

SEP. 9°–15°C (48.2°–59°F)

NOV. 11°–18°C (51.8°–64.4°F)

#### MEAN RAINFALL

FEB. 44 mm (1.6 in)

SEP. 88 mm (3.5 in)

NOV. 62 mm (2.5 in)

### ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

All participants must be able to:

- Follow verbal and/or visual instructions independently or with the assistance of a companion.
- Enjoy being outdoors all day in all types of weather. Weather in Cape Otway can be very unpredictable and change quickly. Volunteers must be able to work in both rain and hot weather. The Australian sun can be extremely harmful and volunteers must be prepared to take precautions against over-exposure.
- Enjoy being in the presence of wild animals and insects. Volunteers will encounter numerous biting insects and leeches, so anyone at risk of severe allergic reactions to insect bites or who has phobias related to insects should consider this carefully when deciding to join the project, and plan to bring any necessary medication.
- Work outside for up to nine hours per day in various terrains: undulating, flat forested or heath areas, sandy or thickly vegetated, bracken areas and steep inclines which can make walking difficult.
- Look up to search for animals in the trees while moving through the dense vegetation, steering clear of obstacles and sharp branches.
- Carry personal daily supplies such as lunch, water, and some small field equipment.
- Be honest to themselves and other team members about their ability to work in certain terrain and their level of fatigue.



# POTENTIAL HAZARDS

## CONSERVING KOALA COUNTRY

HAZARD TYPE	ASSOCIATED RISKS AND PRECAUTIONS
Transportation	Vehicles will be driven on unsealed roads and on occasion will be taken off road in order to reach research sites. All vehicles are equipped with airbags, seatbelts, fire extinguisher, spare tires, first-aid kit, mobile phone, and UHF radios. Only experienced project staff will drive vehicles. Passengers must wear seatbelts at all times whilst the vehicle is in motion. Night driving will be limited, and not on main highways. Off-road-equipped vehicles will only do off-road driving. Participants are not allowed to drive (including their own vehicles) whilst on an Earthwatch team
Walking/Hiking/ Climbing	The work will be carried out in various terrains, some of which can make walking difficult. Participants should bring/wear appropriate footwear whilst doing fieldwork. Sturdy boots and gaiters are recommended. Participants will be instructed to be careful when walking through the bush & forest and to watch for low-lying vegetation, burrows, and woody debris. Be cautious walking up and down the stairs at the accommodations, especially at night.
Terrain	Participants may collide with low level branches whilst in the field, or branches may fall unexpectedly causing head or eye injury. Watch out for low level branches and twigs, and do not walk through the bush with your head down. If there are high wind conditions, fieldwork in densely wooded areas will be reconsidered. You must wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts when working in the field to protect from scratches and cuts.
Animals	<p>Venomous snakes, spiders, and scorpions are present at research sites. If a snake is encountered, move in the opposite direction and do not try to kill or capture the snake. Only scientists who are fully qualified and trained may handle poisonous animals. Sand flies, common bush ticks, stinging ants, mosquitoes, centipedes, bees, and wasps are also present. Apply insect repellent as needed. Centipede bites can be quite painful and should be treated with first aid. Wear long trousers and long-sleeved shirts when in the field, and wear sturdy, closed-toe footwear; watch where you step; check your sleeping area before going to bed; and shake out shoes and clothing before wearing.</p> <p>During koala catches, safety equipment (hard hats, safety glasses) will be provided for those assisting. Koalas are aggressive when captured and are capable of inflicting severe wounds. You must wear long-sleeved shirts and pants while handling them.</p> <p>Leeches may also be present in some areas but they can be easily removed, and most often prevented from attaching if wearing gaiters and/or strong insect repellent.</p>
Climate/Weather	<p>Temperatures should generally be mild, but long days in the sun can lead to dehydration and/or other illness. Bring appropriate clothing, wear sunscreen and hats when working outdoors, and bring and drink plenty of water. If you start to feel unwell, notify a project staff member immediately, rest in a shaded area, and drink water.</p> <p>If it rains for more than a day or temperatures are high, research may need to be ceased, as weather conditions will affect the safety of fieldwork. Bring your their wet-weather gear into the field if rainy conditions are predicted.</p>
Plants	Some plants found at research sites may cause allergic reactions or discomfort. Again, wear long trousers and long-sleeved shirts when in the field. You will be warned on site about any irritating plants you may encounter. Do not eat any plants, berries, or mushrooms and be careful of thorny or prickly vegetation.
Distance from Medical Care	The nearest hospital is 30 kilometers away from the project site, and it may take up to one hour to arrange transport and reach the hospital. If you have a chronic condition which could require immediate medical care (e.g., heart conditions, kidney problems, severe asthma, etc.), or if you are pregnant, please discuss your participation on this expedition with your physician.



# SAFETY

## HEALTH INFORMATION

### EMERGENCIES IN THE FIELD

Medical facilities are available in Apollo Bay (30 kilometers from the site), or for after-hour emergencies at the hospital in Colac (91 kilometers from the site). These towns will be not routinely visited during the project. Volunteers should ensure that they carry sufficient quantities of any prescribed medication, painkillers, etc. to last for the duration. A first-aid kit will be available on site, and basic items may be available from the campground shop.

### STAFF CERTIFIED IN SAFETY TRAINING:

**DR. DESLEY WHISSON** (First Aid/CPR)

**DR. ALISTAIR MELZER** (First Aid/CPR)

### NEAREST MEDICAL CENTER:

#### APOLLO BAY HOSPITAL

75 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay VIC 3233 Australia

Tel: + 61 (3) 5237 8500

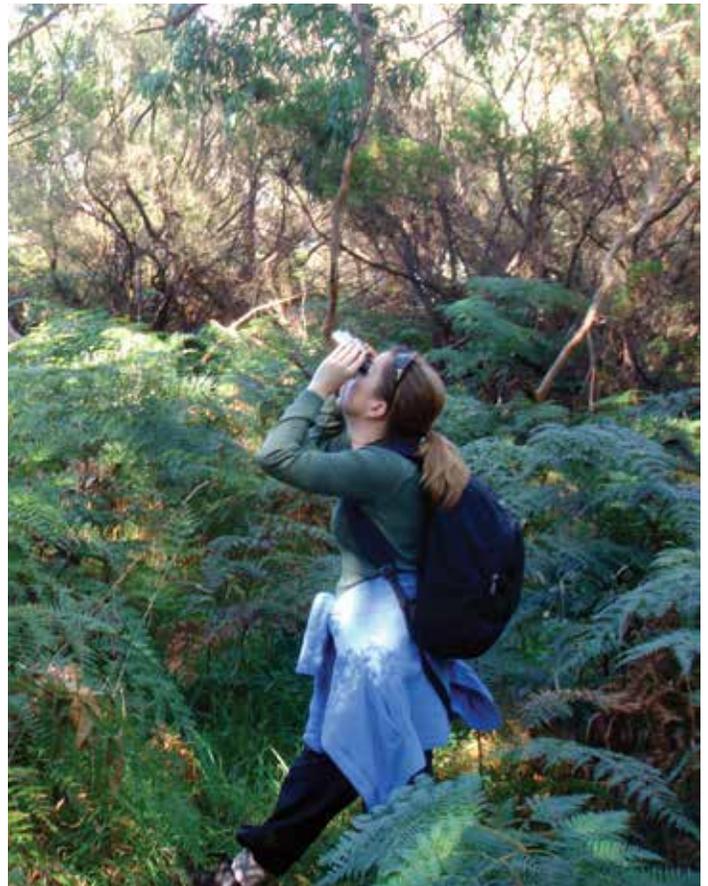
Fax: +61 (3) 5237 6172

Travel time from project site: 30 kilometers; 40 minutes

For emergency assistance in the field, please contact Earthwatch's 24-hour emergency hotline number on the last page of this briefing. Earthwatch is available to assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; someone is always on call to respond to messages that come into our live answering service.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

Please be sure your routine immunizations are up-to-date (for example: diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella). Medical decisions are the responsibility of each volunteer and his or her doctor, and the following are recommendations only. Visit the Healix Travel Oracle website through the "Travel Assistance and Advice" page in your Earthwatch portal, [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) or [who.int](http://who.int) for guidance on immunizations.



### PROJECT VACCINATIONS

**REQUIRED** If traveling from countries or region where yellow fever is endemic, you must have a certificate of vaccination.

**RECOMMENDED FOR HEALTH REASONS:** none

**Note**OTE: Any prescription medication brought into Australia needs to be accompanied with a letter from your doctor for Customs Inspection purposes.



# TRAVEL TIPS

## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ROAD

### YOUR DESTINATION

**LANGUAGE:** English

**TIME ZONE:** UTC/GMT +10 hours.

**LUGGAGE:** Do not bring more luggage than you can carry and handle on your own. If travelling by air and checking your luggage, we advise you to pack an extra set of field clothing and personal essentials in your carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost or delayed. Many airlines have strict baggage policies. Please check with your airline(s) on baggage weight limits, liquid restrictions, fees for checked baggage, etc.

Please note that if you will be taking an international flight that has one or more connections within the country of your destination, you must collect any checked bags at the airport where you first arrive in the destination country. After proceeding through customs, you will have to recheck your luggage before flying to your final destination.

**ELECTRICITY:** 240 volts, 50 Hz, three-pronged plug with flat blades.

**TELEPHONE DIALING CODES:** When calling Australia from another country, dial the country's international dialing code, followed by 61 and the number. When calling within Australia, omit the 61. When calling another country from Australia dial 0011, followed by the other country's country code and the number. **PLEASE NOTE:** you should check with your mobile phone provider to obtain any carrier-specific dialing codes you may need; many providers have dialing procedures that may differ in whole or in part from these directions..

### MONEY MATTERS

**LOCAL CURRENCY:** Australian Dollars

**PERSONAL FUNDS:** You may wish to bring some cash to buy snacks and beverages before entering the park, or for purchase of small items at Bimbi Park. There will be a recreational day scheduled into the program, so you can enjoy some of the scenic attractions the Great Ocean Road has to offer. If you wish to participate, please bring money for entrance fees (approx. \$15 to \$20 per adult), and possibly souvenirs. Also, you may want money if you wish to have more than a packed lunch on this day. Pub or café lunches in Australia cost approximately \$20AUD per person. For those travelling from overseas, airports and most major towns will offer banks and/or exchange bureaus during business hours, as well as ATMs for cash withdrawals (please check with your bank beforehand to see if yours cards are compatible with Australian ATMs). In most locations you can use EFTPOS or credit cards for large purchases but smaller purchases are paid for with cash.

### PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Passport and visa requirements are subject to change. Check with your travel advisor, embassy or consulate in your home country for requirements specific to your circumstances. Generally, passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of entry and a return ticket is required.

CITIZENSHIP	PASSPORT REQUIRED?	VISA REQUIRED?
United States	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes
Europe	Yes	Yes
Australia	Yes	No
Japan	Yes	Yes

If a visa is required, participants should apply for a TOURIST visa. Please note that obtaining a visa can take weeks or even months. We strongly recommend using a visa agency, which can both expedite and simplify the process.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

You may be required to list the following contact information on your visa application and immigration form, or if your luggage does not make it to baggage claim at your destination:

**Cassandra Nichols**

Earthwatch Australia  
126 Bank Street  
South Melbourne  
VIC 3205, Australia

**Email:** [cnichols@earthwatch.org.au](mailto:cnichols@earthwatch.org.au)

**Ph.:** +61 (0) 3 8102 1210



# EXPEDITION PACKING LIST

## WHAT TO BRING

### EXPEDITION PACKING CHECKLIST

#### GENERAL

- This expedition briefing
- Your travel plans, rendezvous details, and Earthwatch's emergency contact information
- Photocopies of your passport, flight itinerary, and credit cards in case the originals are lost or stolen; the copies should be packed separately from the original documents
- Passport and/or visa (if necessary)
- Certification of vaccination (if necessary)
- Documentation for travel by minors (if necessary)

#### CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR FIELDWORK

- Earthwatch T-shirt
- Waterproof overpants
- Gardening or leather gloves (for pushing through foliage)

#### CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR LEISURE

- One set of clothing to keep clean for end of expedition
- Sandals for walking around holiday park
- Shorts
- Pants and/or jeans
- T-shirts
- Jumpers
- Wool hat and scarf for evenings (especially for September team.)

#### FIELD SUPPLIES

- Binoculars (koalas can be high in trees & we need you to be able to look for ear tags)
- Drybag or plastic sealable bags (good for protecting equipment such as camera from dust, humidity, and water)
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight or head torch
- Sunglasses

#### BEDDING AND BATHING

**NOTE:** Towels are supplied by the accommodations.

- Sleeping bag (September and November trips only). Blankets and linen are provided, but if you tend to feel cold, a sleeping bag for extra warmth is recommended at these times of year.

#### PERSONAL SUPPLIES

- Personal toiletries (biodegradable soaps and shampoos are encouraged)
- Antibacterial wipes or lotion (good for cleaning hands while in the field)
- Personal first aid kit (e.g., anti-diarrhea pills, antibiotics, antiseptic, itch-relief, pain reliever, bandages, blister covers, etc.) and medications
- Spending money

#### OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Flip flops or sandals for the shower
- Camera, film or memory card(s), extra camera battery
- Hardware for sharing digital photographs at the end of the expedition
- Books, games, art supplies, etc. for free time
- Earplugs for light sleepers

**NOTE:** Do not bring more luggage than you can carry and handle on your own. If traveling by air and checking your luggage, we advise you to pack an extra set of field clothing and personal essentials in your carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost or delayed.



# PROJECT STAFF

## YOUR RESOURCES IN THE FIELD



**DR. DESLEY WHISSON**, Lecturer in Wildlife and Conservation Biology, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Deakin University. Desley first began working with koalas in 2004 when she was a wildlife officer with the South Australian government on Kangaroo Island, South Australia. She continued her research on koalas (with the help of students) in 2007 when she joined Deakin University. In addition to koalas, Desley is also fascinated by the alpine region and its wildlife and has a number of research projects underway in Victoria's high country. Desley is originally from Brisbane, Queensland but has spent much of her working life overseas, conducting research on a diversity of wildlife species in Mexico and the U.S. She moved back to Australia in 2004 to reconnect with her roots. **Desley will join Teams 1 and 3.**



**DR. ALISTAIR MELZER**, Adjunct research Fellow at Central Queensland University's Koala Research Centre of Central Queensland within the School of Medical and Applied Sciences in Rockhampton. Alistair has been working with koalas since 1988 and is a terrestrial ecologist with interests in sustainable land management and the conservation of Australia's flora and fauna. His staff and students work on projects related to the koala, bridled nail-tail wallaby, and the hairy-nosed wombat as well as habitat restoration and ecosystem management programs. He lives in the bush east of Rockhampton in Central Queensland with his wife and abundant wildlife (including possums, scrub turkeys, frogs and dingoes). **Alistair will join Team 2.**

**EARTHWATCH FIELD STAFF,** An Earthwatch Australia team leader will be present on every team to assist with operational management, to provide logistical support and oversee the safety of the project and its participants.

**NOTE:** Staff schedules are subject to change.



# RECOMMENDED READING

## YOUR RESOURCES AT HOME

### RESOURCES

#### ARTICLES

- Melzer A., Carrick F., Menkhorst P., Lunney D. and St John B. Overview, critical assessment and conservation implications of koala distribution and abundance. *Conservation Biology* 14 (3) 619-628, 2000.
- The National Koala Conservation Strategy 2009-2014: [environment.gov.au/resource/national-koala-conservation-and-management-strategy-2009-2014first-implementation-report](http://environment.gov.au/resource/national-koala-conservation-and-management-strategy-2009-2014first-implementation-report).

#### BOOKS

- Martin, R., Handasyde, K. *The Koala: Natural History, Conservation and Management*. Sydney, UNSW Press, 1999.

#### WEBSITES

- Desley has created a blog that discusses the achievements of each expedition, explains koala issues in Cape Otway, and gives updates on each of the individual koalas: [otwaykoalas.blogspot.com.au/](http://otwaykoalas.blogspot.com.au/)
- Bimbi Park: [bimbipark.com.au](http://bimbipark.com.au)
- Skybus: [skybus.com.au/](http://skybus.com.au/)
- Victoria Public Transport: [viclink.com.au/](http://viclink.com.au/)

#### SOCIAL MEDIA: EARTHWATCH AUSTRALIA

- FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/EarthwatchAustralia](https://facebook.com/EarthwatchAustralia)
- TWITTER: [twitter.com/Earthwatch\\_Aus](https://twitter.com/Earthwatch_Aus)
- YOUTUBE: [youtube.com/user/EarthWebBoy](https://youtube.com/user/EarthWebBoy)
- INSTAGRAM: [instawebgram.com/i/earthwatch\\_australia](https://instawebgram.com/i/earthwatch_australia)
- PINTEREST: [pinterest.com/earthwatchaus/](https://pinterest.com/earthwatchaus/)
- GOOGLE+: [plus.google.com/+EarthwatchSouthMelbourne/posts](https://plus.google.com/+EarthwatchSouthMelbourne/posts)
- FLICKR: [flickr.com/photos/earthwatchaustralia/](https://flickr.com/photos/earthwatchaustralia/)

#### SOCIAL MEDIA: EARTHWATCH INTERNATIONAL

- FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/Earthwatch](https://facebook.com/Earthwatch)
- TWITTER: [twitter.com/earthwatch\\_org](https://twitter.com/earthwatch_org)
- INSTAGRAM: [instagram.com/earthwatch](https://instagram.com/earthwatch)
- BLOG: [earthwatchunlocked.wordpress.com](http://earthwatchunlocked.wordpress.com)
- YOUTUBE: [youtube.com/earthwatchinstitute](https://youtube.com/earthwatchinstitute)



# LITERATURE CITED

## LITERATURE

- Chandler, D. S., D. Manski, C. Donahue, and A. Alyokhin. 2012. Biodiversity of the Schoodic Peninsula: Results of the insect and arachnid bioblitzes at the Schoodic District of Acadia National Park, Maine. Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station, University of Maine, Orono, ME.
- Greene, C. W., L. L. Gregory, G. H. Mittelhauser, S. C. Rooney, and J. E. Weber. 2005. Vascular flora of the Acadia National Park region, Maine. *Rhodora* 107:117-185.
- Miller-Rushing, A. J., D. W. Inouye, and R. B. Primack. 2008a. How well do first flowering dates measure plant responses to climate change? The effects of population size and sampling frequency. *Journal of Ecology* 96:1289-1296.
- Miller-Rushing, A. J., T. L. Lloyd-Evans, R. B. Primack, and P. Satzinger. 2008b. Bird migration times, climate change, and changing population sizes. *Global Change Biology* 14:1959-1972.



# EMERGENCY NUMBERS

## AROUND-THE-CLOCK SUPPORT



### **EARTHWATCH'S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOTLINE**

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Call Earthwatch's 24-hour on-call duty officer in the U.S.:

+1 (978) 461.0081

+1 (800) 776.0188 (toll-free for calls placed from within the U.S.)

After business hours, leave a message with our living answering service. State that you have an emergency and give the name of your expedition, your name, the location from which you are calling, and if possible, a phone number where you can be reached. An Earthwatch staff member will respond to your call within one hour.

### **TRAVEL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER: HEALIX INTERNATIONAL**

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+44.20.3667.8991 (collect calls and reverse charges accepted)

**U.S. TOLL FREE:** +1.877.759.3917

**U.K. FREE PHONE:** 0.800.19.5180

**E-MAIL:** [earthwatch@healix.com](mailto:earthwatch@healix.com)

You may contact Healix International at any time. They can assist in the event of a medical or evacuation emergency or for routine medical and travel advice, such as advice on visas and vaccine requirements.

### **FOR VOLUNTEERS BOOKED THROUGH THE EARTHWATCH AUSTRALIA OFFICE:**

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### **Earthwatch Australia 24-Hour Emergency Helpline**

+61.0.3.8508.5537



# MESSAGE FROM EARTHWATCH

DEAR EARTHWATCHER,

Hello and welcome to the team!

You will soon be embarking on an exciting and meaningful adventure to some of the most spectacular regions of our planet. It's a special place here on Earth, and with your help we are working hard to keep it that way for all life that exists.

We unfortunately face a variety of environmental pressures today and by joining this Earthwatch expedition you are not only saying you care, but more significantly, that you are prepared to do something about it. The work you will undertake will help contribute to solving critical environmental issues, help shape policies and behaviours and enhance protection of culture, wildlife and ecosystems. Without your help scientists would need to spend weeks, months or even years collecting the same amount of data you and your team will collect in just a few days!

We can't thank you enough for your choice to take a slightly different holiday this year, and we hope you get out of the experience as much as we do by bringing scientists and volunteers together to work towards a better future.

If you have questions as you prepare for your expedition, please contact our Earthwatch office. Thank you for your support, and enjoy your expedition!

Best regards,

Cassandra Nichols  
Chief Executive Officer, Earthwatch Australia



Earthwatch U.S.  
114 Western Ave.  
Boston, MA 02134  
United States

[info@earthwatch.org](mailto:info@earthwatch.org)  
[earthwatch.org](http://earthwatch.org)

Phone: 1-978-461-0081  
Toll-Free: 1-800-776-0188  
Fax: 1-978-461-2332

Earthwatch Europe  
Mayfield House  
256 Banbury Rd.  
Oxford, OX2 7DE  
United Kingdom

[info@earthwatch.org.uk](mailto:info@earthwatch.org.uk)  
[earthwatch.org](http://earthwatch.org)

Phone: 44-0-1865-318-838  
Fax: 44-0-1865-311-383

Earthwatch Australia  
126 Bank St.  
South Melbourne,  
VIC 3205  
Australia

[earth@earthwatch.org.au](mailto:earth@earthwatch.org.au)  
[earthwatch.org](http://earthwatch.org)

Phone: 61-0-3-9016-7590  
Fax: 61-0-3-9686-3652

Earthwatch Japan  
Food Science Bldg. 4F  
The University of Tokyo  
1-1-1, Yayoi, Bunkyo-ku  
Tokyo 113-8657, Japan

[info@earthwatch.jp](mailto:info@earthwatch.jp)  
[earthwatch.org](http://earthwatch.org)

Phone: 81-0-3-6686-0300  
Fax: 81-0-3-6686-0477