

Protocol for Koala Scat Collection:

1. Find koala/koala scat

Fresh scat is best for successful DNA extraction. Scat collected from underneath a koala, or where a koala has been recently heard maximises the chance of isolating high quality DNA.

2. Identify fresh scat

Fresh scat will have a strong eucalypt smell, a moist or dry shiny mucus coating, and a bullet-shaped appearance. Avoid collecting scat after rain events - DNA will be washed off scat surface.

3. Collect scat without contact with your skin (push it in the container with a leave, use latex gloves, a toothpick, a stick...)

This avoids potential contamination, and loss of koala DNA from the scat.

4. Store scat in a suitable container

An egg-box wrapped in cling film (scats in each compartment), or clean Ziploc bags. Do not mix scat from different animals in one container.

5. Label and record scat information

This is extremely important, as we need to be able to know where and when the scat was collected to be able to use any of the genetic / health info. Record: name, contact details, site location (address), **GPS point, date**, photograph of koala is possible, any other information (sick animal, mum and bub...)

6. Store in freezer (-20° or below)

This will slow down the degradation rate of the DNA in the scats.

7. Collection

Email us and we will arrange to come collect it!

Email: rcristes@usc.edu.au

Project: The University of the Sunshine Coast "Detection Dogs for Conservation" are collecting scats as part of three large koala research projects in the Gympie area and with the support of the Gympie Council:

- 1/ mapping distribution and health of koalas,
- 2/ understanding the impact of habitat fragmentation on koala populations and
- 3/ determining criteria for successful habitat rehabilitation for koalas.



Thank you, any new scat sample that yields successful koala DNA is a great addition to our knowledge!