

Capacity building

Koala Care, Closer to Home

SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND LANDCARE LTD

LEP23-024-4-010



Southern
New England
Landcare

Building local veterinary capacity to provide timely koala care, reducing long-distance transfers and improving survival outcomes.

The issue

The Northern Tablelands supports one of New South Wales' most significant inland koala populations and is expected to become a critical climate refuge as temperatures rise. Despite this, koalas face ongoing threats including habitat loss, vehicle strikes, dog attacks, disease, and extreme weather.

Listed as endangered in 2022, populations have declined significantly. A key challenge is limited local expertise in koala care. Sick and injured koalas are often transported long distances to coastal facilities, causing additional stress and reducing survival chances during an already vulnerable stage.

The solution

Southern New England Landcare (SNEL) led an initiative to strengthen local veterinary capacity in koala-specific care. In August 2025, SNEL partnered with the University of New England (UNE) and Koala Conservation Australia (KCA) to deliver the region's first professional veterinary training in koala health.

The program combined expert-led theory with practical training, equipping veterinarians with the skills to diagnose, treat, and manage koalas locally, reducing reliance on distant facilities.

The impact

Nineteen veterinarians from across the region participated in two days of intensive training, combining classroom learning with hands-on experience led by KCA specialists. Participants gained practical skills that can be immediately applied in local clinics. Strengthening local capacity reduces the need for long-distance transfers, improving welfare outcomes and increasing survival rates.

The program also fostered collaboration among regional practitioners, building a stronger network to support koala conservation in the Northern Tablelands.

The Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership is one of nine regional Partnerships under the NSW Koala Strategy.



Key facts

- Upskilled 19 local veterinarians in koala-specific care through intensive training.
- Delivered practical, hands-on learning alongside expert-led theory.
- Reduced reliance on long-distance transfers to coastal facilities.
- Improved koala welfare outcomes and survival rates.

Project Partners



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

01 May, 2026