



MIAMI METROZOO



**A SPECIAL
DELIVERY FROM
DOWN UNDER.**

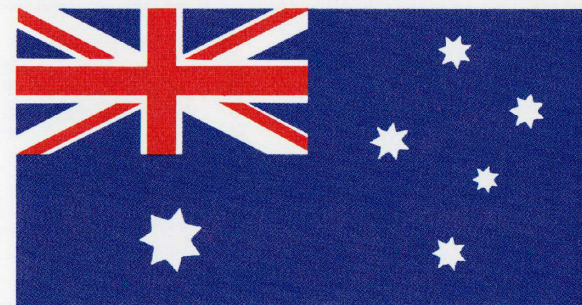
Great news from the Miami outback.

By the end of '87, six fuzzy little Australians will be scaling eucalyptus trees in



Metrozoo and calling Miami home. The Zoological Society is thrilled to report that Metrozoo will be the first zoo on the east coast and only the third zoo in the country (San Diego and L.A. are the other two) to have a permanent koala exhibit.

Like Southern California, South Florida is an ideal environment for koalas and, equally important, for their sole source of nourishment, the eucalyptus tree. Eucalyptus leaves provide koalas with all of the food and much of the water they need to thrive. And because they require a fresh supply of leaves daily, we must grow at least one acre of trees per animal. Seven acres of eucalyptus will soon be planted — 10,000 trees altogether — to feed our six koalas.



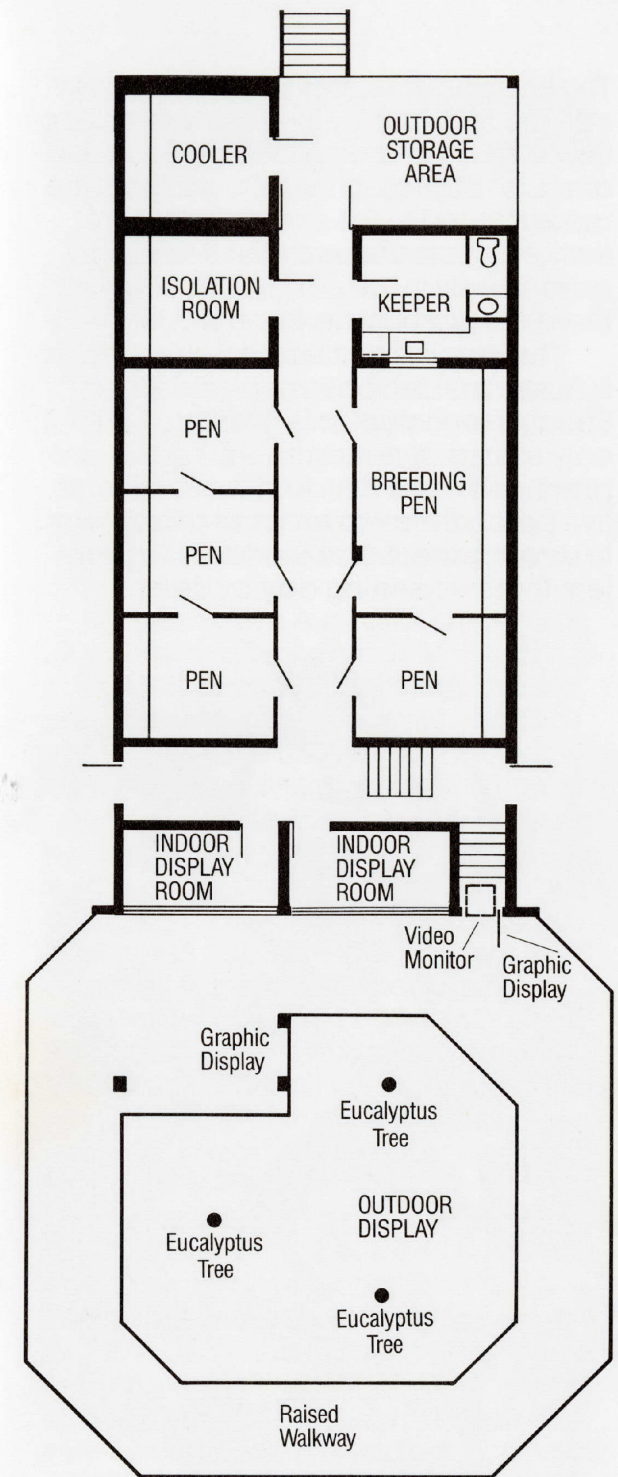
Metrozoo plans to become a primary breeding facility for the unique mammal. In fact, the koala exhibit, Metrozoo's only enclosed climatically controlled area, is being designed with this long-term goal in mind. It will be able to accommodate up to 18 koalas.

This display is also the first totally self-contained exhibit at Metrozoo. As you can see by the schematic, it will include (off public display) offices, food preparation and storage areas and an isolation/sick ward.

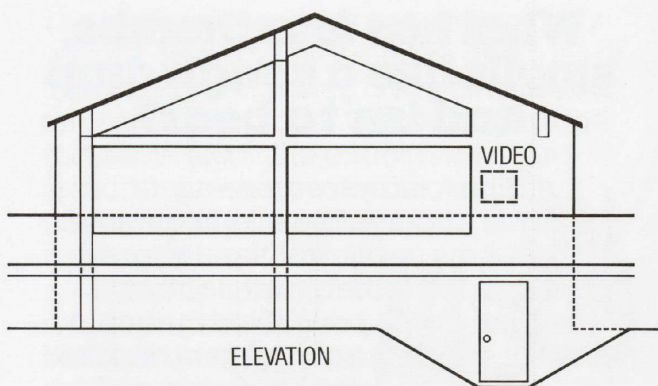
Public viewing areas will include one outside display and two inside displays. The outside area, where the koalas will do what they love to do most — perch in trees, take naps and eat — will be surrounded by a raised walkway allowing people to view the animals eye-to-eye from as little as 10 feet away.

Directly across will be the two indoor viewing displays. Here, people can observe the koalas through glass, even in bad weather. These protected displays will also allow the public to see new babies with their mothers.

In addition, a video monitor will be mounted by the indoor display providing a wonderful close-up view of the koalas that are in the outside display.



FUTURE KOALA EXHIBIT



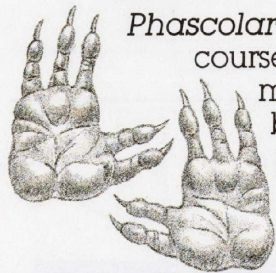
Please kontribute to our Koala Kampaign.

This project is an exciting and important step for the Zoological Society, Metrozoo, and all of South Florida. It will help advance Metrozoo's international reputation, which, in turn, will enable us to receive more funding and undertake more worthwhile endeavors. Our goal is to raise \$150,000 to help finance our Koala Project and we need your help.

Like most animals attempting to survive in their native natural habitats today, koalas are being forced out of their wild homes to make room for man. Please help us make a little room for them here in Miami.

Your tax-deductible contribution will be wisely used and greatly appreciated.

What has four thumbs, smells like a cough drop and isn't a bear?



Phascolarctos cinereus, of course. The scientific name means, literally, "gray bear with leather pouch," but the koala isn't a bear at all. Like the kangaroo and more than 170 other species, it's a marsupial, a mammal that nurtures its undeveloped young in a pouch.

In their native Australia, koalas are also known as bangaroos, koolewongs, narnagoons and buidelbeers. You can call them anything you want, just don't call them late to dinner! Fact is, during the 4 hours a day koalas aren't sleeping (yes, they snooze away about 20 hours each day), they're eating 2½ pounds of eucalyptus leaves. And when it comes to finicky, move over, Morris, because koalas will eat nothing but leaves from eucalyptus trees, and then only the leaves from 35 of the 600 types of eucalyptus that grow in Australia. The oil in these leaves (which is poisonous to most other animals) is responsible for the unusual "cough drop" odor which is characteristic of koalas.

These amazing marsupials spend 95% of their lives in treetops. The koala's double thumb is an adaptation to this arboreal existence which enables it to climb and cling in high branches.

Europe discovered the koala in the early 1800s, and although no one was sure whether it was a bear, a monkey or a sloth, the unique little animal with an identity crisis was about to face another crisis. Because the killing soon began.

The koala's dense gray pelt is luxuriously soft and fine, and by the early decades of this century the animal had been hunted almost to extinction. Public outrage at the massacre led to the enactment of protectionary measures by the Australian government in the early 1930s. Happily, these measures have been working.

The only current threat to the species is Australia's disappearing wilderness. Because eucalyptus leaves are their only source of nourishment, koalas are prisoners to their diet. And the continent's five percent tree cover is fast giving way to development. It's a world-wide problem that's worsening day by day.



Thank you for reaching into your "pouch."



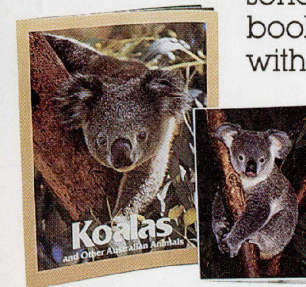
We're offering some exciting gifts as a token of our appreciation for your much-needed moral and financial support.

For your contribution of \$250 or more, the Zoological Society will present you with a limited edition bronze statue depicting three koalas perched in a tree. Entitled

"Out On A Limb", it was especially crafted for this occasion.

When you donate \$100 or more, we'll

send you a beautiful 18-page book about koalas filled with color photos, illustrations and lots of fascinating information. Plus a charming full color photograph of a koala in its favorite pose — perched in a eucalyptus tree.



A contribution of \$50 or more will earn you the Koala Book. And for **your donation of \$25 or more**, you'll receive the color photograph.

Thank you very much for your generosity.

12400 S.W. 152 Street
Miami, Florida 33177
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FRIENDS OF METROZOO

Creative services donated by McFarland & Drier, Inc. Typesetting donated by Graphic Composing Systems, Inc. Color separations donated by Gold Coast Graphics, Inc. Printing donated by The Colour Group, Inc. Koala photography donated by the Zoological Society of San Diego.



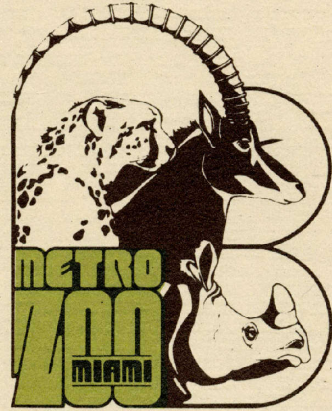
Koalas

and Other Australian Animals

Contact: Janet Ross
(305) 251-0403

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Sweeney, the Koala, Arrives to Meet the Press Tuesday Koala Exhibit Opens at Metrozoo to Public Saturday, March 15

A Queensland koala is making a rare venture outside the state of California for a one-month visit to the Miami Metrozoo. Sweeney, the koala, and his San Diego zookeeper, Valerie Thompson, arrive in Miami, courtesy of Eastern Airlines, on Tuesday afternoon, March 11.

After a brief meeting with attending media, Sweeney will be whisked to Metrozoo to settle in to his new surroundings before he goes on display at the zoo March 15 through April 13.

The koala is unquestionably one of the most popular exhibit animals found at American zoos. Only three zoos in the United States (the San Diego Zoo, the Los Angeles Zoo and the San Francisco Zoo) house permanent collections of koalas. The Miami Metrozoo will be the next. The Zoological Society of Florida has been raising funds to build Metrozoo's indoor/outdoor koala exhibit, scheduled to open in 1987, and to plant the eucalyptus trees needed to feed the rare marsupials. The fund-raising drive was kicked off with a donation by The Wertheim Foundation and a Koala Ball at Lord & Taylor last fall.

Metrozoo officials expect a dramatic increase in attendance during the one-month koala visit. Other American zoos that have had koalas on loan have even had attendance figures double for the month. Only two other zoos will have a San Diego koala on loan this year. Because Metrozoo officials expect large crowds on weekends, they recommend visitors come on weekdays when possible. The public will also be admitted to the zoo one hour earlier, at 9 a.m., to view the koala, with other zoo animals going on exhibit at 10 a.m.

A special display trailer is being modified to house Sweeney during his Miami stay. Mayor's Jewelers is donating the necessary funds needed to purchase the self-contained exhibit. After Sweeney returns home, the trailer will be used to display young animals at the zoo and to take zoo displays to special events off zoo grounds.

Other special events featured during the one-month koala visit, March 15 to April 13, include a concert by Paul Revere and the Raiders on Sunday, March 30, and performances by Disney characters and The Kids of the Kingdom from Disney World on Sunday, April 13.

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The koala arrives on Eastern flight #518 at 3:40 p.m. Media can be present for arrival, and a brief introduction to the koala and his keeper in Eastern Airlines Group Room 1, one floor above Concourse B.



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Telephone (305) 251-0401

ORDER: Marsupialia
FAMILY: Phalangeridae
GENUS: Phascolarctos
SPECIES: Phascolarctos cinereus

COMMON NAME: KOALA

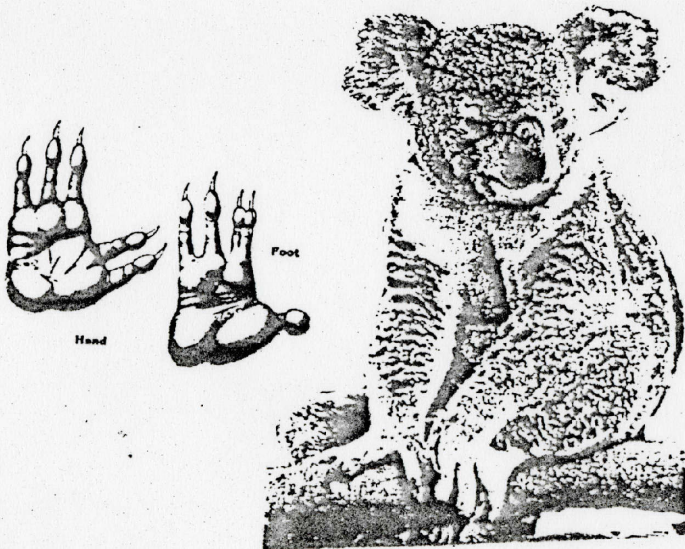
DISTRIBUTION: Discontinuous distribution in eastern Australia.



MORPHOLOGY: Weights and Measurements,

Length: 2-3 feet (60-82 cm)
Weight: 10-30 lbs. (4-16 kg)

Not a bear, but a marsupial. Unlike most marsupials, pouch is a vertical slit opening to the rear; soft dense, ash-gray fur with tinge of brown on upper parts; yellowish-white on hindquarters and white on stomach. Small eyes with vertically-slit pupils. Large, round ears covered with thick fur. Strong claws on fingers and toes. Five digits, but arrangement differs: On front feet, first two digits are opposable to other three; hind feet, only the first digit opposable, the second and third toes are connected (see illustration). Have cheek pouches for food storage.



DIET: Diet highly specialized, consisting solely of eucalyptus leaves. Of the over 350 species of eucalyptus, koalas prefer only 10% of the available species. Preferences change with the time of year and climate. Eat approximately 2-4 pounds a day. Digestive systems contain special microorganisms necessary to digest the leaves. Will also swallow soil and gravel to aid in breaking down the fibrous leaves. Rarely drink water in the wild and only occasionally in captivity. Very difficult to keep in captivity because of specialized diet.

HABITS: Slow moving; spends almost all of its life in eucalyptus trees. Nocturnal, sleeps most of day in forked branches. Occasionally climbs down to ground to move across to another tree. Most vulnerable when on ground to its natural enemy, the dingo.

REPRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT: Mature female capable of producing a baby every year, but every other year is more common in captivity. Mating in wild occurs from September to January; in captivity, between March and May. Male very vocal, jealously guards his harem. Gestation period is 25-30 days. At birth, young approximately 3/4 inch long, weighs 1/5 of an ounce or less. Young remains in pouch attached to one of two nipples for six months, remaining dependent for at least one year. When too large for pouch, spends time on mother's back. Young weaned by eating pre-digested eucalyptus leaves from mother's digestive tract. Sexually mature at four years.

NOTES: Protected. As recently as 1924, 2 million furs exported from Australia. Millions of koalas were eradicated from 1887 to 1889 and 1900 to 1903 due to widespread epidemics. Thousands have been lost due to forest fires. Population now stable and perhaps on upswing. May live up to 20 years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 1) Grzimek's Animal Life Encyclopedia, 1972
- 2) International Wildlife Encyclopedia, 1969
- 3) Walker, Mammals of the World, 4th ed, 1983

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FACT SHEET ON THE SPECIAL EXHIBIT TRAILER

1. A custom built, climatically controlled trailer has been constructed to display the visiting koala.
2. Mayor's Jewelers has made a major contribution to underwrite the cost of the special trailer.
3. The front half of the trailer has three sides of windows for public viewing. The back half, off public display, will be set up as the support facility with areas for food preparation, cages and storage.
4. After the koala returns to San Diego, the exhibit will be used at the zoo periodically to display baby animals. Since the trailer is mobile, it was designed so the zoo could also display animals at special events off zoo grounds.

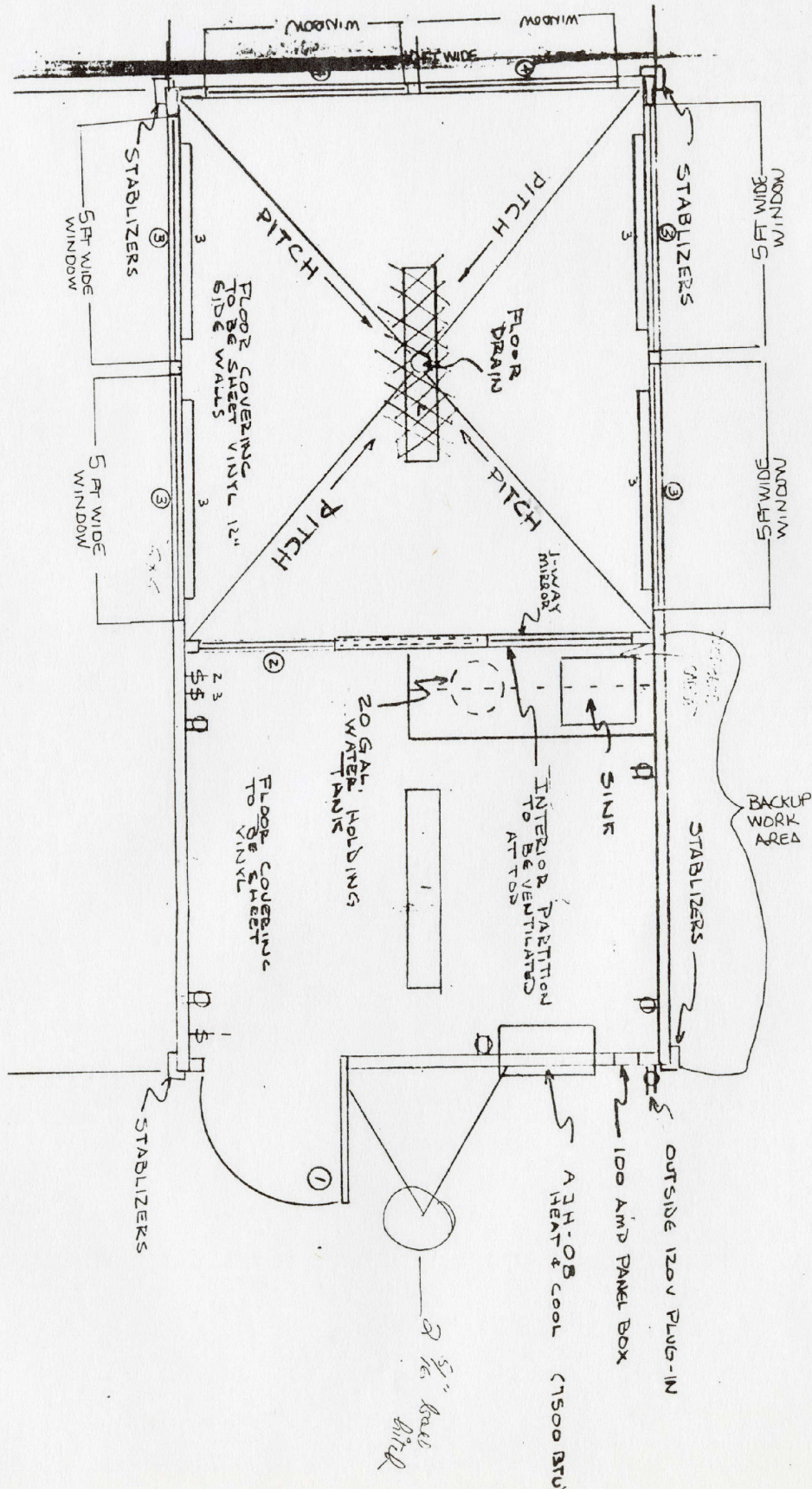
Dimensions: 10' x 20'
Viewing Area: 10' x 12'
Backup Area: 10' x 8'

Equipment: Reverse air conditioner, sink, water tank, refrigerators, storage cabinets and cages.

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SPECIAL EXHIBIT TRAILER FOR THE KOALA--SPONSORED BY MAYOR'S JEWELERS



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Contact: Cynthia W. Zeigler
(305) 255-5551

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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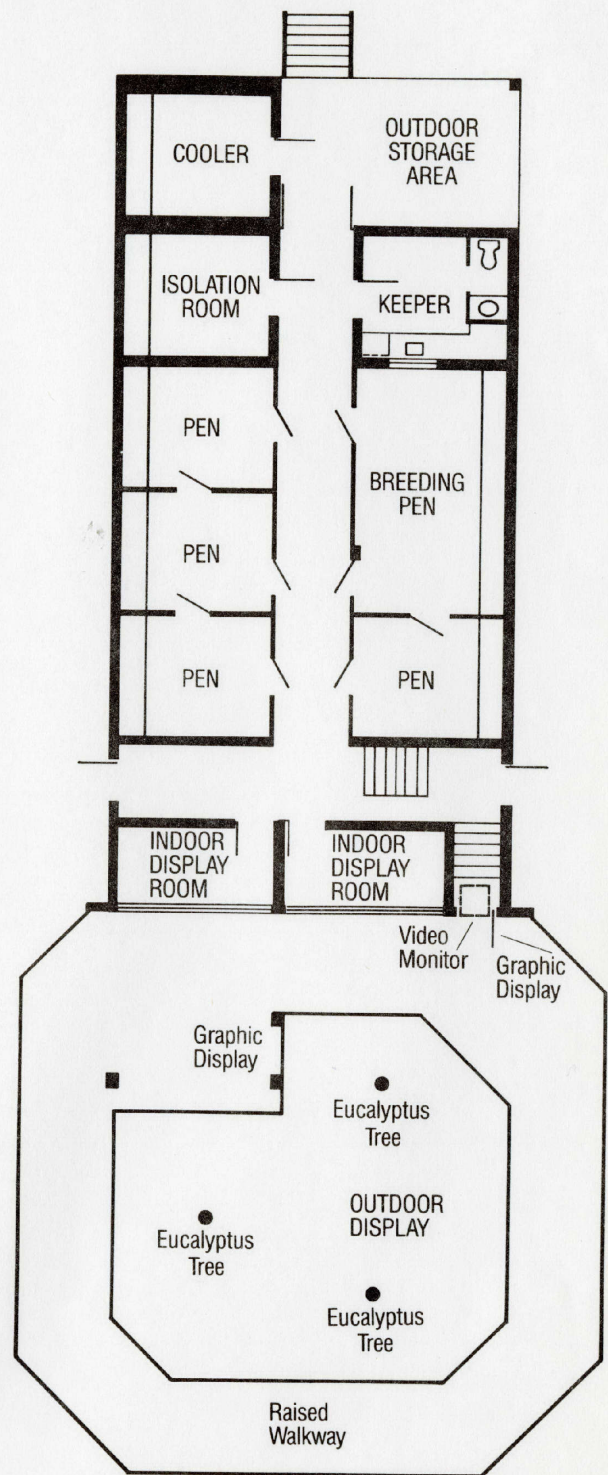
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 Page Two

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