

Arrival of Koober
Mussili
Sydney
March '88



MIAMI METROZOO



FROM: Donnelly & Goodman
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KOALA MAKE FLORIDA HOME

Miami Metrozoo is the new home of a trio of these cuddly koalas since the opening of the only permanent American koala exhibit outside of California. Metrozoo, the nation's largest cageless zoo, has built a half-million dollar Australian exhibit to make them feel at home. Because of its climate, and its ability to grow eucalyptus, the Koala's only food, South Florida is one of the few places in the nation physically capable of maintaining and breeding koalas.

For: METROZOO

MEDIA ALERT
FOR TUESDAY MARCH 8TH

CONTACT: Richard Goodman

KOALAS TO ARRIVE AT MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

TRIO FLYING IN ON EASTERN TO NEW HOME AT METROZOO

WHAT: A trio of koalas, one male and two females, will be flying into Miami for their new permanent home at Miami Metrozoo.

They will be the new residents of the only permanent American koala exhibit outside of California, which will open to the public on March 19th.*

WHEN: TUESDAY, MARCH 8TH
Eastern Airlines Flight 504 ETA: 7:20 AM

WHERE: Eastern Airlines meeting room behind the domestic ticket counter between concourse B and C at Miami International Airport.

* A special media preview will be held at Metrozoo at 10 AM March 18th. Because the koalas will be quarantined in their new home until then, the airport arrival will be the only photo opportunity until March 18th.

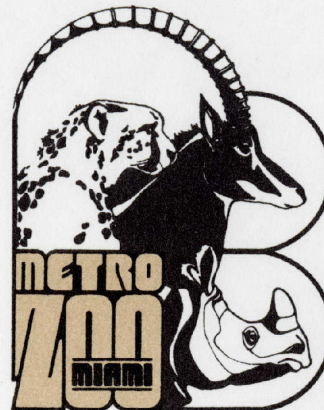
MIAMI--The trio of cuddly koalas, Koobor, the 10 year old male, and the two females, Sydney and Nueseli, will be flying in the first class passenger cabin with their handlers, compliments of Eastern Airlines. They are coming from the San Diego Zoo to their new home at Miami Metrozoo, the nation's largest cageless zoo, where the Zoological Society of Florida has built a half-million dollar Australian exhibit to make them feel at home. Because of its climate, and its ability to grow eucalyptus, the Koala's only food, South Florida is one of the few places in the nation physically capable of maintaining and breeding koala. The only other Koala exhibits in the United States are all located in California.

FOR ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard Goodman, (305) 441-2030

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ABOUT THE KOALA

While the three new residents of Miami Metrozoo are frequently referred to as koala bears, they are not bears. They, like their other neighbors in the Zoo's new half-million dollar Australian exhibit, are marsupials.

As such they carry their young in a pouch, which in the koala opens to the rear. This is particularly handy for allowing baby koalas to hang on mom's back while she makes her way through the trees.

And that is where koala's spend most of their lives. The rare occasions that they do make it down to the ground, are usually to go from one tree to another. These trees are of necessity, eucalyptus trees, since its leaf is the sole source of food for the koala.

Of the more than 350 species of eucalyptus, the koala prefers the leaves from only five, but will eat the leaves of 15 other species, and will consume between two and four pounds of leaves per day. For this reason Metrozoo has planted five acres of eucalyptus. Since eucalyptus requires certain climatic conditions to grow, only a few places in the United States are capable of supporting a population of koala.

Consequently, prior to the creation of the Metrozoo exhibit in Miami,

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Florida, California was the only place in the nation where people could see the fuzzy creatures.

Besides looking cute, and having a luxurious fur coat which made them profitable targets for hunters in the early part of this century, koala have strong claws on both their fingers and toes. The claws aid them in maneuvering through the trees. They also make the animals a lot less cuddly than they appear to be.

The koala is of course strongly associated with Australia. The reason is they can be found, living wild, nowhere else in the world. They are native to an area of eastern Australia now called Queensland. Through the end of the 19th-century into the beginning of the 20th, millions of koala died as a result of epidemics and hunting. Although thousands of koala still die as a consequence of eucalyptus forest fires, koalas, which are now protected by the Australian government, are now experiencing a population resurgence.

The Metrozoo koala population will start with only three, one male and two females. The exhibit compound has been designed permit breeding and will accommodate as many as 20 koala.

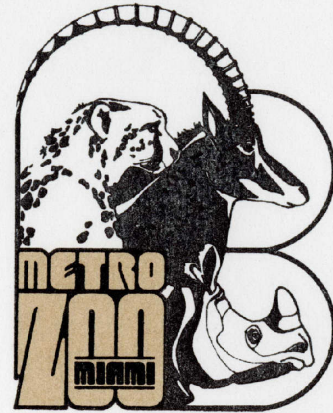
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ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY BUILDS HOME FOR METROZOO KOALAS

KOALA EXHIBIT COMFORTABLE FOR OCCUPANTS AND VISITORS

MIAMI—The newly built Dr. Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Koala Exhibit at Miami Metrozoo, was designed to be a comfortable and safe home for the koala and a convenient place for visitors to see them.

To accomplish this, the Zoological Society of Florida and the animal curator staff of Metrozoo, developed criteria for what would be needed for the welfare of the animals and for the enjoyment of visitors.

The result is an exhibit that permits visitors numerous options and opportunities to see the cute, but often reclusive and slow moving, koalas. As such it is the first exhibit at Metrozoo to allow visitors to walk completely around the animal's compound, virtually assuring visitors an opportunity to see the koala in action, or inaction.

And while the animals will be on view in the outside display area most of the year, the exhibit includes two climate controlled glass enclosed areas, where the koalas will be displayed during exceptionally hot or humid periods. The exhibit will also include videotape information about the koala's origins and living habits.

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For the animal, and the plans to breed koala at Metrozoo, the exhibit, which is part of the Zoo's newly built Australia area, was designed to be a self-contained facility, the first at Metrozoo. This means that in addition to the public viewing areas, the structure includes offices, food preparation and storage areas, and very significantly, breeding pens.

The facility, which features redundant electrical and air conditioning systems to assure the maintenance of a safe and comfortable environment for the koalas, also has other special features. For example, since eucalyptus leaves are the primary source of water for the koala, it is critical that the leaves retain their moisture while they are being stored for later consumption by the animals. To assure this, the food storage room is refrigerated.

The \$350,000 koala exhibit was built by the Zoological Society of Florida with contributions from individuals and businesses, and was given to Dade County. It is formally named the Dr. Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Koala Exhibit in recognition of the major grant from the Wertheim Foundation. Other major contributors include American Express, Lord & Taylor, Eastern Airlines, Mayors Jewelers, Ackerley Communications, and radio station WLVE/Love 94.

In addition, numerous businesses made contributions of products and services to actually construct the exhibit. Among them were Denis Arden Architects, Inc. who donated the architectural services, as well as Ace Window & Door Center; Bug Busters; J&F Contractors; 'Z' Development, Inc.; Aztec Roofing Company; F&H Painting Company; Thermo Products Insulation, and UCI Paint Factory.

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METROZOO OPENS EAST'S ONLY KOALA EXHIBIT

MIAMI FEATURES ONLY U.S. KOALA EXHIBIT OUTSIDE OF CALIFORNIA

MIAMI--Miami Metrozoo, the largest cageless zoo in the nation, has opened the only koala exhibit in an American zoo outside of California.

The first residents of the newly constructed exhibit are a ten year old male named Koobor, and two young females, Sydney and Mueseli. They went on display for the first time on March 18th.

The addition of the koalas to the Miami zoo is particularly significant because South Florida is one of the few places in the nation physically capable of maintaining and breeding koala. To house the new residents, a completely new half-million dollar Australian exhibit which will also feature red kangaroo and tree kangaroo was constructed at the zoo. The other parts of the exhibit are expected to open during the summer.

"Koala eat only eucalyptus," according to Robert Yokel, director of Metrozoo. "And to provide enough of the tree's tender young leaves preferred by the animal, requires a minimum of one acre of eucalyptus per koala per year," he explained. "The best way to maintain a permanent

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population of koalas is to grow your own food supply," he said. And, according to Mr. Yokel, within the continental United States, that is practical only in South Florida or in California.

The animals are on view in an outside display area most of the year, and in a climate controlled glass enclosed area during exceptionally hot periods. The exhibit also includes videotape information about the koala's origins and living habits.

While popularly referred to as "bears," because they look like cuddly "teddy bears," the koala is a marsupial, a pouched animal, like the kangaroo. They spend most of their lives among the branches of trees, eating. When they do venture on to the ground it is usually just to change trees. If let free in a eucalyptus forest they would be hard to see.

To allow visitors to actually observe the creatures, the Metrozoo exhibit was constructed with an artificial eucalyptus tree in the center of an elevated walkway. The tree is designed to hold both the animal and a supply of eucalyptus branches and leaves, providing visitors with a clear view of the cuddly, but sometimes reclusive, creatures.

With over 285 acres developed, and featuring more than 100 species of animals, Miami Metrozoo is the largest cageless zoo in the nation. Conveniently reached from downtown Miami, the beaches, and the Florida Keys, Metrozoo is open daily from 10 AM to 5:30 PM.

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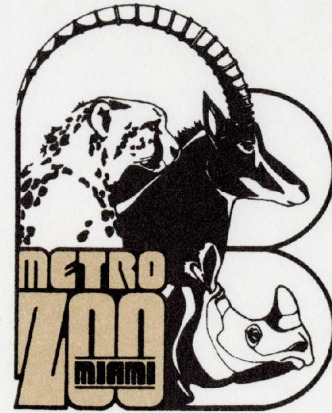
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Photos available upon request

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METROZOO KOALA EXHIBIT OPENS MARCH 19TH

MIAMI FEATURES ONLY U.S. KOALA EXHIBIT OUTSIDE OF CALIFORNIA

MIAMI--Miami Metrozoo, the largest cageless zoo in the nation, opens the only koala exhibit in an American zoo outside of California, on Friday, March 19th.

The first residents of the newly constructed exhibit, a ten year old male named Koobor, and two females, Sydney and Mueseli, arrived in Miami from the San Diego zoo on March 8th. They flew here accompanied by their two human keepers as first class passengers, compliments of Eastern Airlines.

The addition of the koalas to the Miami zoo is particularly significant because South Florida is one of the few places in the nation physically capable of maintaining and breeding koala. To house the new residents, a completely new half-million dollar Australian exhibit which will also feature red kangaroo and tree kangaroo was constructed at the zoo. The other parts of the exhibit are expected to open during the summer.

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"Koala eat only eucalyptus," according to Robert Yokel, director of Metrozoo. "And to provide enough of the tree's tender young leaves preferred by the animal, requires a minimum of one acre of eucalyptus per koala per year," he explained. Since the little creatures consume so much of the plant, 2-1/2 pounds per day, "the only way to maintain a permanent population of koalas is to grow your own food supply," he said. And, according to Mr. Yokel, within the continental United States, that is practical only here in South Florida or in California.

The completely new koala exhibit was built by the Zoological Society of Florida and given to Dade County. It is formally named the Dr. Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Koala Exhibit in recognition of the major grant from the Wertheim Foundation. Other major contributors include American Express, Lord & Taylor, Eastern Airlines, Mayors Jewelers, Ackerley Communications, and radio station WLVE/Love 94.

The koala exhibit is the zoo's only self-contained exhibit, in that in addition to public viewing areas, the structure was designed to include offices, food preparation and storage areas. The facility, which features redundant electrical and air conditioning systems to assure the maintenance of a safe and comfortable environment for the koalas, offers visitors opportunities to view the koalas regardless of the weather.

The animals will be on view in an outside display area most of the year, and in a climate controlled glass enclosed area during exceptionally hot periods. The exhibit will also include videotape information about the koala's origins and living habits.

While popularly referred to as "bears," because they look like cuddly "teddy bears," the koala is a marsupial, a pouched animal, like the kangaroo. They spend most of their lives among the branches of trees, eating. When they do venture on to the ground it is usually just to change trees. If let free in a eucalyptus forest they would be hard to see. So to allow visitors to actually observe the creatures, Metrozoo has constructed a forest of artificial eucalyptus trees made of specially formulated reinforced glass fiber. The trees are designed to hold both the animal and a supply of eucalyptus branches and leaves.

Out of view of most visitors to the zoo will be a five acre forest of real eucalyptus that will be maintained under cultivation to feed the trio and their potential offspring. In the wild koala eat several different varieties of this plant, which is poisonous to most animals. So to keep them content and healthy, the Zoo's eucalyptus grove will contain five different types.

With over 285 acres developed, and featuring more than 100 species of animals, Miami Metrozoo is the largest cageless zoo in the nation. Conveniently reached from downtown Miami, the beaches, and the Florida Keys, Metrozoo is open daily from 10 AM to 5:30 PM.

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METROZOO KOALA EXHIBIT TO OPEN MARCH 19TH

MIAMI OPENS ONLY U.S. KOALA EXHIBIT OUTSIDE OF CALIFORNIA

MIAMI, March 3 — The only koala exhibit in an American zoo outside of California, will open to the public on March 19th at Miami Metrozoo.

The first residents of the newly constructed exhibit, a ten year old male named Koobor, and two females, Sydney and Nueseli, are coming to Miami from the San Diego zoo. The trio are flying here on March 8th accompanied by their two human keepers as first class passengers, compliments of Eastern Airlines.

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Editors: B&W and Color photos available upon request
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