

10th Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Koalas in Mermaid Waters on October 1



More than 10 world-class acts and a Hollywood writer/ producer rally to help save koalas from extinction

MORE than 10 world-class acts and a Hollywood writer/ producer will rally to help save koalas from extinction at the 10th annual Animal Action event on October 1 at Quality Hotel Mermaid Waters on the Gold Coast.

Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Koalas will feature an all-star cast including co-founder of the internationally-acclaimed Ten Tenors, Roger Davy; highly acclaimed bass baritone singer Lawrie Esmond; the man discovered by Dean Vegas (voted Best Elvis Tribute Performer in the World) Stuey V and internationally acclaimed belly dancer Sheherazade and stars of the Sahara Troupe.

MC will be Hollywood writer/ producer Lynn Santer, who is in partnership with Priscilla Presley.

"Guests will be lavished with prizes and entertainment - the likes of which the Gold Coast has never seen before," Lynn said.

"Priscilla has even signed and sent over the stunning Shades of Elvis coffee table book as one of the prizes."

Renowned indigenous artist Torry Madkrab has painted a unique, collectable creation on a surfboard, depicting the history of the koala. This will go up for auction by highly-respected Gold Coast attorney Clinton Smith.

Animal Action Events founder Aldwyn Altuney said the event would raise funds for Wildcare Australia and Friends of the Koalas, which care for injured koalas from northern NSW to Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast.

"Australia's most iconic and beloved marsupial, the koala, is vulnerable to extinction and currently endangered," Aldwyn said.

"It is under threat from loss and degradation of habitat, urban and semi-urban development, fire, drought, disease, road deaths and dog attacks."

NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change Senior Principal Research Scientist Dan Lunney said koalas were being forced out of trees and on to the ground to search for food, putting them in danger.

"As koalas change trees they have to walk across the ground. If they walk across the ground, they are vulnerable to dogs and if there are roads in the middle, they are vulnerable to cars as well," he said.

Conservationists recently called on the Federal Environment Minister to urgently declare south-east Queensland's koala population critically endangered after numbers fell from 25,000 to 4000 in 10 years.

Post-mortem examinations of around 700 koalas in the region found most were 'wasted' – or starving – when they died. Koala numbers have been diminishing at an astonishing rate for over a decade and while there once may have been millions of koalas, there are now less than 50,000 koalas left. Koala populations have been dropping off by up to 85% across the nation as both natural and human related threats pose risk to their lives.

Koalas have a long history, probably evolving on the Australian continent some 45 million years ago, but since European settlement, the numbers have declined so severely that extinction may be imminent.

Koalas are a flagship for the plight of Australia's wildlife and there is a strong need to change the direction of the way we impact the land to save them.

"We hope this once in a lifetime occasion will help change the direction for our iconic koala," Lynn said.

The night also features fire dancer Neal Webb from Energy Entertainments, Aboriginal musician, actor and artist Rodney Boschman (known for his role in The Proposition movie with Nick Cave), Spanish guitarist Terence Schindler, Native American performers Walter Smith and Len Morgan, original blues rock performer Pietar and improv flautist/ guitarist Anthony Branagan.

Speakers include Aldwyn Altuney, Friends of the Koala care co-ordinator Susannah Keogh and Wildcare Australia volunteer Jasmine Rasmussen.

Tickets for Animal Action Night: Inspiring Action for Koalas are \$67 each or \$62 each for a table of 10, including booking fee, entertainment, welcome drink and 2 course vegan or vegetarian meal. There will also be roving masseuse Mario Fabris, stalls and 10 raffle prizes.

For more details, call 0409 895 055 or visit www.animalactionday.com and the Facebook page 'Animal Action Events'.

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