

Frodo scarred but in remarkable climb back to health

BUT for the red tag in her ear and some fading scars, Frodo looked like any other koala as she scampered up a towering eucalyptus tree.

The moment marked a return to the wild for the furry critter who tugged on the state's heart strings when she was found blasted with shotgun pellets next to her dead mother last year.

Since then, Frodo has staged a remarkable recovery, overcoming horrific injuries to be released back into the bush by her carers from the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital.

Vet Amber Gillett, who nursed Frodo back from the brink, said their final goodbye on the Sunshine Coast was sweet, but emotional.

There were moments when she didn't believe Frodo would pull through. Her injuries included a fractured skull and terrible internal injuries from 15 shotgun pellets found lodged in her tiny body.

"Releasing Frodo back into the wild was a great feeling. She was such a special case," Dr Gillett said yesterday.

"When Frodo was admitted, she was a very sick little girl and her chance of survival was unknown.

"She was at risk for several months from succumbing to lead poisoning from the number of pellets in her tiny body. Luckily she overcame that."

Australia Zoo rescue unit chief Brian Coulter said everything possible had been done to prepare Frodo for her new life back in the bush, including a period of minimal contact in the lead-up to her release.

Frodo's carers aren't saying exactly when or where she was released.

They are hoping they have seen the last of her and she will not again require their help.



NEWS 17

Plea to list dwindling koalas

By Brian Williams
Illustration by [unreadable]

COULD AN EXTENSIVE new census of koalas be conducted in the Sunshine Coast region to help determine their true numbers? Queensland's Environment and Heritage Minister, Brian Williams, has called for a statewide survey of koalas to be conducted in the next few years. Williams said the survey would help determine the true numbers of koalas in Queensland and help determine the best way to protect them. Williams said the survey would be conducted in the next few years and would be the first of its kind in Queensland.



Post-surgery Frodo on the mend at last

REDA A year ago, Frodo, who sustained a broken skull and internal injuries from 15 shotgun pellets, has started to recover. The koala is now on the mend and is expected to be released back into the wild in the next few weeks. Frodo's recovery has been remarkable, and she is now able to climb trees and eat eucalyptus leaves. Her carers at the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital are pleased with her progress and are looking forward to seeing her back in the bush.

SEE YOU LATER: Australia Zoo carers release Frodo after her recovery from shotgun wounds; and (inset) how *The Courier-Mail* covered Frodo's plight.