

Why the Koala Has a Stumpy Tail

The following story is based on a traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime story of how the koala came to have a short, stumpy tail.

Long ago in the Dreamtime lived Koala and Tree Kangaroo. They were best friends. Back then, Koala had a very long, furry tail just like his friend, Tree Kangaroo.



One year, all the rivers and lakes were dried up. There was no water anywhere. "What are we going to do?" asked Koala. Then, Tree Kangaroo had a plan. He remembered when his mother dug a hole in a dry stream bed. "She dug until water began to fill the dry hole," said Tree Kangaroo. "Let's try that!" said Koala.

So, Tree Kangaroo and Koala walked until they came to a dry stream bed. Koala was thirsty and tired so he climbed up the closest tree and left Tree Kangaroo to start digging for the water.

After a while, Tree Kangaroo called out to Koala. Koala climbed down the tree until he said, "Ouch!" Koala had got a thorn in his foot. He couldn't dig with a sore foot, so Tree Kangaroo kept on digging and let Koala rest.

Then, Tree Kangaroo was getting tired. He called out to Koala. Koala climbed down the tree until he said, "I am so dizzy. I need to rest longer". Tree Kangaroo was getting very angry!

At last, some water began to appear in the dry hole. "Hooray, I can see water!" yelled Tree Kangaroo. Koala heard this and he quickly jumped from the tree. He pushed Tree Kangaroo out of the way, stuck his head down the hole and began drinking all the water. Tree Kangaroo was furious! "Save some for me!" he shouted, but Koala just kept on drinking.

Tree Kangaroo grabbed Koala's tail to pull him out of the hole. He pulled ever so hard until Koala's tail broke off.

This is why the koala has a short and stumpy tail.

