

# 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.

Koala and Tree Kangaroo were best friends who lived in the Dreamtime. 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 and no water could be found anywhere. "What are we going to do?" asked Koala. Just then, Tree Kangaroo had a plan. He remembered when his mother dug a hole in a dry stream bed. "She dug for hours, until water began to fill the bottom of the dry hole." said Tree Kangaroo. "Let's try that!" replied Koala.

So, Tree Kangaroo and Koala walked until they came to a dry stream bed. Koala said, "I am so thirsty and tired. I need to have a rest." So Koala climbed up the closest tree and left Tree Kangaroo to start digging for the water.

After a while, Tree Kangaroo called out, "Hey Koala, come and help me dig!" 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.

Tree Kangaroo was getting tired. "Koala!" he yelled. "I am tired and I need a rest. It is your turn to come and dig." 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, water began to fill the dry hole. "Hooray! Water!" yelled Tree Kangaroo. Koala quickly jumped down from the tree. He pushed Tree Kangaroo out of the way and started drinking all of the water. Tree Kangaroo was furious! "Save some for me!" he exclaimed.

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, stumpy tail.

