

Name _____



The Life Cycle of a Koala

Koalas are fascinating animals native to Australia. Their life cycle begins when a tiny baby koala, called a joey, is born. The joey is born blind, hairless, and about the size of a jellybean. It climbs into its mother's pouch right after birth, where it stays safe and warm.

For the first six months, the joey remains in the pouch, drinking its mother's milk and growing stronger. During this time, it continues to develop eyesight and fur. Around six months old, the joey begins to peek out of the pouch and may start eating a special substance called pap. Pap is partially digested eucalyptus leaves that help the joey get used to its future diet.

By the time the joey is about eight months old, it starts venturing out of the pouch more often. It rides on its mother's back and explores the surroundings while still nursing. When the joey reaches one year old, it becomes fully independent and begins living on its own.

Koalas typically live between 10 to 15 years in the wild. As they grow older, they face challenges such as finding food and avoiding predators. Adult koalas spend most of their time in eucalyptus trees, eating leaves and resting. They are solitary animals, usually living alone in their own home range.

Understanding the life cycle of koalas helps us appreciate these unique creatures and the importance of protecting their habitats.