

Road claims yet another koala

By PETER GARDINER

NOOSA'S koala-killing road tragically claimed another victim on Saturday night, a strapping, healthy male called Bedford whose chance of helping his species defy local extinction was abruptly ended by a car bumper after 7pm.

And worse was to follow with a former road victim, Prince Valiant, struck on Noosa's Eenie Creek Rd on Tuesday morning and rushed to Australia Zoo, where it is hoped he will survive his injuries which include head trauma and a broken clavicle.

Six-year-old, 8.3kg Bedford was the third koala to be struck and fatally injured along Eenie Creek Rd in 13 months and the fifth fatality since the relatively new road was built to connect Noosaville to Sunshine Beach and Noosa Heads.

For Carolyn Beaton, co-founder of the online Koala Diaries, this



DYING BREED: Noosa's koalas are fast disappearing.

was another blow in the battle to save Noosa's fast-disappearing koalas.

Ms Beaton said horrified motorists watched helplessly as the koala was struck trying to cross the road not far from the Noosa Civic shopping centre.

The koala, christened Bedford as it lay helpless by the roadside, was rushed by the Sunshine

Coast Koala and Wildlife Rescue to Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, but died overnight from internal injuries.

Ray Chambers of SCKWR had travelled around 500km that day throughout south-east Queensland rescuing four other koalas, but the sight of Bedford was both gut-wrenching and galling.

"What really was tough to take about this was that he was so healthy - he had no chlamydia," Mr Chambers said.

Ms Beaton has been in contact with the Sunshine Coast council about improving fencing protection along Eenie Ck Rd as part of an overall survival management plan for the three small sub-populations of koalas living around it.

She said to achieve a sustainable koala population within the Noosa Biosphere Reserve, a multi-faceted koala recovery and management plan involving some of Australia's leading koala experts needed to be implemented.