

## Shocking dead koala image shames our nation

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Koalas killed in a single week by cars or dogs. Picture: Joel Sartore/National Geographic  
*Source:* The Sunday Telegraph

**WARNING - GRAPHIC IMAGE: NATIONAL Geographic magazine has exposed Australia's shame in failing to protect one of its most precious species - the koala.**

In its May edition, staff photographer Joel Sartore has captured images of the dead animals, killed by cars, dog bites and barbed wire, just as the cuddly creatures were identified by the federal government as vulnerable.

Mr Sartore took the photographs at a Queensland clinic after staff asked him to get the images of dead koalas out to the world.

"The little baby in its mother's arms was really depressing," Mr Sartore said.

"And I saw that many times. I watched them die on the operating table. It's very sad.

"The koalas you see there represent one clinic's weekly take of dead koalas.

"And so a lot of these places don't want to look bad to the public because people will think they're failing even though it's not their fault. It's all our fault."

The photo comes after Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke last month said koalas in NSW, Queensland and the ACT will be classified as "vulnerable".

The ruling means the conditions could be imposed on new mines, housing developments and timber operations to stop the disturbance of the koala's natural habitat.

"Koalas are an iconic Australian animal and they hold a special place in the community. People have made it very clear to me that they want to make sure the koala is protected for future generations," Mr Burke said.

Conservationists have called for the koala to be listed as a vulnerable species in areas of serious population decline due to habitat loss, car accidents, dog attacks and disease.

"In places like New South Wales and Queensland, their numbers have been taking a massive hit," Mr Burke said.

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Herald Sun



The May 2012 cover of National Geographic. Picture: Joel Sartore  
Source: The Sunday Telegraph