

Stricken koala rescued

SPRING has sprung and has brought with it a few problems for Cranbourne's dwindling koala population.

Last Thursday, an injured koala, possibly hit by a car, was found sitting dazed by the side of the South Gippsland Highway at Cranbourne East.

Initial attempts to catch the marsupial proved fruitless and a major rescue effort ensued after the six-year-old male climbed a tree and refused to budge.

Michelle Thomas of Australian Wildlife Assistance Rescue and Education managed to snare the animal, with the help of Dandenong fire brigade's hydraulic platform.

She said the koala had facial injuries and would be X-rayed and assessed to determine the extent of its injuries.

It will eventually be released back into the wild.

She said development in the Cranbourne area was causing massive problems for the koala population. "Every spring we get calls almost every day about koalas injured or wandering on the roads in and around Cranbourne."

Ms Thomas, who founded AWARE, said the rescue service was desperate for carers and rescue volunteers in the Cranbourne area.

Anyone interested in attending an information session in November, should contact Amy Correll on 0439463279.



Wily escapee: Rescue workers found a very unco-operative patient when they tried to retrieve this injured koala from a tree in Cranbourne East.

Picture: Kelth Pakenham, CFA