

French connection to run for koalas

By Judith Kerr

MORE than 500 people will be pounding the pavements of Cleveland on Sunday for the inaugural Redland City Koala Fun Run.

The event has attracted people from across the globe including French television star and wildlife documentary filmmaker Olivia Mokiejewski.

Olivia has been in Cleveland for two weeks to film the plight of the koala for her wildlife documentary series *Les Orphelins du Paradis* or *Wildlife Orphans*.

She is this year's International Fund for Animal Welfare ambassador, taking over from last year's ambassador film star Leonardo Di Caprio.

When Olivia found out about the Koala Fun Run she registered straight away to enter the 3.7km circuit, which starts at 8am.

"I have spoken with many people in the Redlands who have all told me that the koala population is dwindling and I am worried about this.

"There are some wonderful people here who are fighting to save the last koalas but I think all the development may be the main problem."

Redland City Council is playing a large role in getting the koala in South East Queensland on the "endangered" species list. At the

moment, the koala is listed as "vulnerable".

Redland City Mayor Melva Hobson will fire the starting gun for the

10km run which starts at 7am.

The 3.7km and 5km runs both start at 8am. Registrations for the

event close today. For details go to Redland City Council's website at www.koalacentral.com.au/koala-fun-run.php



KOALA PLIGHT: French television presenter Olivia Mokiejewski is making a documentary on wildlife in the Redlands called *Wild Orphans* and will take part in the Koala fun run on Sunday. **Photo by Jon Michael Mooney - taken at Lone Pine Sanctuary.**