

March

Free

Village Eco News

A publication of Bangalow Land and Rivercare.

Welcome to Village Eco News. For more information about how you can subscribe or contribute see page 4

Shorebirds

By Noelene Plummer

During summer migratory shorebirds join resident shorebirds to roost, rest and feed in local estuaries.

Many migratory shorebirds travel up to 25,000 kilometres each year between their breeding grounds in the Arctic and Australia. Some can fly 9,000 km without stopping and most lose up to 50% of their body weight.

In Australia shorebirds have three basic requirements;

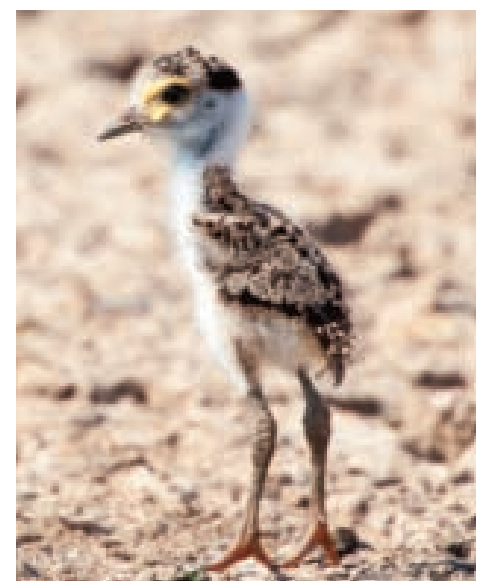
- foraging areas where they can find food
- safe roosting areas where they can rest at high tide
- nesting areas where resident shorebirds can raise their chicks

Threats to Shorebirds

Shorebirds make their shallow nests directly in the sand so they are extremely vulnerable to disturbances by people, dogs, cats and foxes. Even the presence of people or animals near nests can cause the birds stress and they may flee, leaving eggs or chicks unprotected.

How can you help

- obey any signs you see indicating birds are breeding and give them plenty of space.
- don't pull your boat up in a restricted area.
- microchip your dog and cat
- keep cats inside day and night if you live close to a breeding area
- do not let your dog off the lead in restricted areas and keep out of the dunes.



Photos from left to right: Black Winged Stilt, Beach Stone Curlew, Lapwing chick.

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Landcare Working Bee

Our team of friendly volunteers work every Saturday morning, weather permitting from 8.30am to 10.30am rotating through the various sites around Bangalow. All welcome.

What a mess!!

By Dawn Lotty

Contractors working on the extension of Ashton Street, Bangalow, to provide access to a parking area proposed for the old dip site, has left us with a major clean up at our All Souls' Church planting, see below.

Trees were removed and large stumps left standing, branches scattered around the pathway, mounds of mulch (in the wrong place) and dozens of saplings from our community planting broken off at ground level.

Their helpful suggestion was to set fire to the whole pile something we would never contemplate. To make matters worse many think Bangalow Landcare is responsible for the chaos. How anyone can think that is beyond our comprehension.

It is expected that it will take us most of March and possibly longer to rectify the damage. One bright spot is that the Byron Shire Council may be able to help us remove the largest branches.

We do need help. If you can spare just 2 hours on a Saturday morning please contact Liz Gander on (02) 6687 1309 or 0403 720 950



Cape Town, South Africa Today, Australia Tomorrow?



It's Time to Save Water Outdoors

- Hand water your lawn or garden early in the morning or late in evening.
- Don't water on cool, rainy or windy days.
- Use drip irrigation systems if you must.
- Plant natives, drought-tolerant or low water use plants and grasses.
- Use shrubs and ground cover to reduce the amount of grass.
- Place mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and discourage weeds.
- Set your mower blades one notch higher, since longer grass means less evaporation.
- Use a pool cover to cut down on water evaporation.
- Use a bucket instead of a hose to wash your car.
- Use a broom rather than a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways.

The Little Things

By Liz Gander

Plastic strip band-aids, I've always hated them but now even more. On a recent camping trip into some very remote places I encountered so many of these insidious things stuck on trees and rocks, always near water.

Kids think they are the be all and end all when it comes to a cut but the truth is they stick for a few minutes and then stick around for years! Band-aids have their uses and the good news is that there are bio-degradable ones on the market.

Everyday Good band-aids are bio-degradable and even come with emojis to delight the kids. Make the change today, every little thing helps. Available at Santos Organics or online at www.everydaygoodco.com

Please, Protect our Wildlife



Friday 24 February, "I died today".

"I was found by a kind, sweet woman who does wildlife rescue. I was so sick, I could barely open my eyes. She took me inside, cradling me in her warm arms, and made me warm and comfortable. I opened my eyes and looked at her and thanked her for making my last few minutes as comfortable as possible.

But I was too sick to keep fighting anymore. I had eaten a mouse that was poisoned, and it made me very sick. I closed my yellow eyes for the last time and went somewhere else.

Please, all I ask is never use poison to kill the mice. Poison kills owls, like me.

All I wanted was a mouse for dinner.

Stop the use of poison for rats or mice. Live traps are the best to use or catch and release.

Please. Save a precious life today, because all life is precious. It only takes one Facebook share to spread the word".

Reprinted with kind permission by Bonnie Brown.

Weed of the Month Coffee

Coffea arabica

We love our morning coffee and celebrate our local coffee growers.

Unfortunately so do the birds and animals that feast of the berries and then spread them throughout the area.

The coffee shrub or small tree can grow to 5 metres tall, has glossy leaves with wavy margins.

In autumn white fragrant flowers occur in small clusters along the stem and the fruit is red, slightly elongated, with a thin layer of flesh covering the seeds that appears in late autumn to spring.

The plants are shade tolerant and love our rainforest under story while competing with the native trees forming a dense carpet.

Control methods

Seedlings can be hand pulled, ensuring to remove the deep taproot. Larger plants need to be cut down and removed.

Source: Byron Shire Council



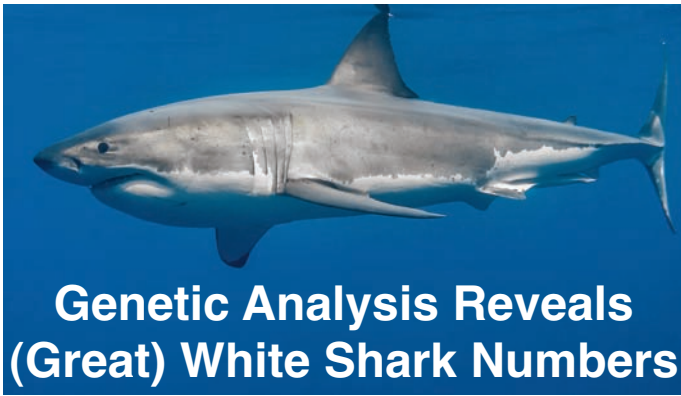
Organic Bio Compost Workshop

Learn the tools to be more productive in your backyard, farm, greenhouse or apartment. Increase production and vitality using natural chemical free processes. This hands on workshop will be the first of a series. *WORKSHOP ONE* is on *BIO INOCULUM COMPOST* for restoring degraded soils, protecting plants from disease and reducing needs for fertilisers.

To be held at: 10am on Saturday 24 March at 96 Granuaille Road, Bangalow.

Cost \$65 Early bird \$50

RSVP to blair@96bangalow.com or tickets at www.96bangalow.com



Genetic Analysis Reveals (Great) White Shark Numbers

The Great White Shark was reduced to the level of a 'vulnerable species' until it was placed on the Environmental Protection Act in 1999.

Caught as by-catch, traded as trophy products such as jaws and teeth and their fins removed for 'shark fin soup' the decline in numbers was leading to the demise of this apex predator.

The potential danger from (very rare) human interaction has made the debate of the great white shark population both vigorous and contested while ignoring the ramifications of shark cage diving and shark boat tours that attract the sharks to specific areas by releasing fish oil or animal products into the water.

There has never been an accurate assessment of numbers until now with researchers having to rely on historical catch data, various shark control programs, migration and population structure from electronic tagging, but these did not tell us the whole story.

Now, for the first time the CSIRO researchers used world-first genetic analysis to investigate white shark populations and estimate that the total number of adult sharks on the eastern sea-board is likely to be in excess of 5,460.

Only time will tell if this is a sustainable number but the public appears to be losing its appetite for wide spread culling as shown by a large majority of people surveyed in both Perth and Ballina who viewed shark bites as accidental rather than intentional. Fear alone apparently does not cause people to support killing sharks.

Source: SMH, The Conversation.
Edited by Dawn Lotty



Washing Soda by Noelene Plummer

Washing soda is an all natural household cleaner, environmentally friendly and contains no phosphates or dyes. It is also known as sodium carbonate, soda ash or soda crystals and is very alkaline with a ph of 11 which helps it remove stains.

Washing soda works out very economical at \$3.99 a kilo. You can find it in the laundry section of your supermarket. I buy the "Lectic" brand which is an Australian owned company that has operated in Victoria for the past 50 years.

Washing Soda has many uses in the kitchen, laundry, bathroom, garden, outdoor bbq's and great for removing stains from concrete.

Here is a Miracle Spray Recipe:

- 1.5 litres of boiled water
- 300ml vinegar
- 60ml dishwashing liquid
- 25ml eucalyptus oil
- 3 dessertspoons of washing soda

Mix washing soda with boiling water to dissolve, add remainder of ingredients, pour into spray bottles. It will make 2 litres.

Do not use on lacquered surfaces, aluminium or fibreglass.

Village Eco News

Our aim is to inform, interest, amuse and educate our readers on all things environmental. We welcome you to submit your contributions or to subscribe to this free Newsletter send your name and email address to:

bangalowlandcare@gmail.com

Please pass this publication on to your family and friends. Receiving our Newsletter online will help to save the environment we work to preserve.



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