

May

Free

Village Eco News

A publication of Bangalow Land and Rivercare.

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Recycling in Australia

By Noelene Plummer

A lot of people may be concerned about the state of recycling in Australia after hearing on the news that China is no longer buying Australia's recycling. I don't think that shipping our recycling on boats all the way to China was a very smart solution anyway. Australia should be investing in developing our recycling facilities here in Australia which is better for the environment and provides local jobs.

Councils in the Northern Rivers including Byron are NOT sending their recyclables to China or to landfill. Recyclables, that is the contents of our yellow bins are managed at Lismore City Council's regional sorting facility. This facility uses best practices. The glass is crushed into a sand product which is used in road base and other industrial uses. The clean plastics and paper products are bundled and sold here in Australia. Meanwhile the Lismore facility is continuing to develop ways of using recyclables.

Continue your recycling but make sure you put the correct items in the correct bins. It's important to keep your recycling clean, no dirty paper or cardboard like tissues and dirty pizza boxes. No nappies, food, clothing, string, chip packets or baby food pouches and definitely no DOG poo bags which should go in the red bins.

Recycling bins are for aluminium, steel, glass, all hard plastics, bagged soft plastics, clean paper and cardboard. What we consume and the packaging it comes in creates over a tonne of waste per household per year so refuse plastics, reduce waste, reuse and recycle.



Lismore City Council's regional sorting facility turns bottles into a reusable 'sand' product

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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.



Long Necked Turtle

Turtles in our Creek

By Liz Gander

NSW is home to seven species of freshwater turtles, two of which are found nowhere else.

Most of these species are specific to a locality, the two you will see in our creeks are the Eastern Long Neck Turtle which is fairly wide-spread in NSW and the Eastern Saw -Shelled Turtle which occurs in QLD and NT but only as far south as the Richmond River in NSW.

All species spend most of their lives in water coming onto land only to migrate between bodies of water or to nest, this is when they are most vulnerable.

Turtles live in rivers, lakes, ponds, swamps and even farm dams. Little is known of the lifespan of these turtles but it is thought they can live for around 50 years.

Development to sexual maturity is rather slow taking 10 years until reproduction. Turtles dig a hole in the ground near water and lay up to 25 eggs. The eggs take a few months to hatch and the hatchling turtles must then make their way to the water. Young turtles are prey for other species so many will not live until maturity.

Turtles are in decline world wide mostly due to habitat loss, human impact, feral animal predation, poor water quality and climate change drying out the waterholes.

How can we help our turtles?

Stop rubbish and polluted run-off from entering our water ways. Cigarette butts and plastic bags are the worst.

Protect the riverbanks from development, erosion and soil compaction so they can nest in peace. Control domestic and feral animals. Pigs and foxes do the most damage and prevent toxic run-off into our waterways.

Removing anything these creatures can get tangled in such as fishing nets and fishing line, hooks and sinkers to prevent drowning, turtles need to breathe too.

Byron Creek currently has a turtle population, lets try to keep it that way.



Eastern Saw-Shelled Turtle

The Little Things

By Liz Gander

As I move towards a plastic free environment I start to notice more things around the house that I take for granted come in a plastic bottle, for instance bathroom products but specifically shampoo and conditioner.

Because most of us wash our hair it's time to give those the flick too and invest in shampoo bars. The bars can come with conditioner included thus eliminating two bottles.

If you like to make your own there are plenty of recipes online but for around the price of your normal shampoo/conditioner a bought bar lasts for several months and is also perfect for traveling.

It may be trial and error with your hair to find the perfect one but I can recommend *LUSH* because they make the lovely products (pictured below) ethically.



Plants You Might Not Know Are Weeds. Part 2

by Liz Gander

As I explained in Part 1 of this topic most of us think we know a weed when we see it... right? Wrong. Weeds come in many shapes and sizes, not all of them obvious. Most of us know the common weeds like dandelions and soursobs but what about the pretty garden plants that you can buy in your local nursery that can become bushland monsters? Here are 6 more that you might not know about:



Marraya. A favourite hedge plant around Bangalow it is highly ranked as one of our most invasive weeds in our area as it self propagates



African Tulip Tree. Highly invasive, crowding out native vegetation along streams and found to be extremely harmful to native stingless bees



Cocos Palm. Producing a large number of fruit, germinating easily and quick growing it spreads rapidly in wetlands



Arrowhead Vine. Often dumped in garden waste it creeps and climbs rampantly over native vegetation in moist shady areas and fertile soil



Asparagus Fern. It tolerates a wide range of soil types forming dense infestations. It reproduces from both seeds and rhizomes



Mother of Millions. A common site along road sides infesting grasslands, woodlands and open sand dunes and is poisonous to stock.



Ethical Puffer Jackets

by Dawn Lotty

If you're looking to replace your old winter coat, there is every possibility that one of the Michelin-man-looking puffer jackets has caught your eye for its warmth, lightness and associations with trekking through the wilderness. However, the environmental, ethical and social impacts of your puffer jacket might not leave you feeling so warm and fuzzy.

Quality of materials

Puffer jackets outer shell is typically made from polyester a synthetic fibre derived from a non-renewable petrochemical origin, the use of which contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.

The fluffy interiors also need to be considered. Of concern is the treatment of the birds whose down and feathers are harvested for jackets. Reports have emerged of geese and ducks being live-plucked.

Certifications such as the *Responsible Down Standard* and the *Global Traceable Down Standard* are a means by which companies can assure consumers that the down was ethically sourced, using the best practice of animal care.

Each standard ensures there are no live-plucking or force-feeding practices, and that the animals providing down and feathers are humanely treated according to the five freedoms of animal welfare.

Whatever the price of the jacket, check first whether the company has signed up to the appropriate Certifications.

The main alternative to down is polyester filling, such as the recycled polyester ECOdown that does not lose its insulating qualities when wet. However it is slightly heavier than duck or goose down. Brands that use ECOdown include *Trenery* and *HoodLamb*. Other natural alternatives, such as batting made from merino wool, as used by *Icebreaker*, or the recycled goose down used by *Patagonia*.

Manufacturing processes

Well Made Clothes is a website that allows you to choose clothing that aligns with your values, be they environmental, social, ethical treatment of animals, or all three.

Coat care

Selecting a brand that will repair your damaged coat ensures that you remain motivated to care for your garment. Finally, in terms of disposal, brands such as *Kathmandu* and *H&M* offer a take-back service at the end of the garment's life and high-quality coats will always be in demand at op shops.

Why not wear what you wore last winter?

Retailers might not like this, but you should ask yourself whether you even need a new coat and, if so, whether it needs to be bought new. The most environmentally friendly item is the one we already own.

Increased sales of second-hand clothing results in savings in carbon emissions, waste and water usage per tonne of clothing. Despite the supposed vagaries of fashion, winter coats are an excellent example of a garment that need not require constant refreshing but rather can be worn for many seasons if cared for correctly.

Source: *Ethical Shopping*

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