

August

Free

Village Eco News

A publication of Bangalow Land and Rivercare.

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Shark Nets: an illusion of safety

by Noelene Plummer



The shark nets surrounding Ballina beaches were removed in May, at the beginning of the whale migration season.

Since they were first installed in Northern NSW in late 2016, shark nets have captured 417 animals and killed 202. This includes 8 dolphins, 9 turtles (including a critically endangered hawksbill turtle), 30 protected hammerhead sharks, and more than 100 rays.

Of all the animals killed, only seven were target species, including four bull sharks. Now the NSW government is deciding whether a third year of trials will proceed this summer. But many in the community have already made up their minds, believing it is unacceptable to kill so much marine life for a few bull sharks. Especially when studies suggest the shark nets do not work to keep swimmers safe.

There is 30 kilometres of beach between Ballina and Lennox Heads. The nets do not go from headland to headland. They are only 150 metres long and are placed 500 metres out from the lifeguard tower. Any animal can easily

swim over, under, or around them. Indeed, there is footage of sharks sighted on the beach side of the nets, where people are swimming. All the nets do is give people a false sense of security, at a huge cost to our local marine life.

SMART drumlines are more successful. The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) did a six month trial of the SMART (Shark Management Alert in Real Time) drumlines in Ballina and found them to be four times more effective than nets, with much lower bycatch numbers. The sharks are caught, tagged and released further out to sea. This usually deters them from coming back, and if the sharks do come back the tag allows them to be monitored. Boats can be sent out to drive them out to sea and alert the public.

Alternatively, resources could be better spent on community based funding programs, such as drone surveillance, shark-spotter programs, and helicopters.

The North Coast is known for beautiful beaches and thriving marine life. But if the shark nets are deployed for a third trial, hundreds of marine animals, including many threatened species, will suffocate and die in the nets.

If you feel there is no justification to put shark nets back in the water on the North Coast, please email the Ballina Council General Manager to let them know at:

council@ballina.nsw.gov.au

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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.

Bangalow Koalas Tree Planting

Date and time: 18 August at 9.00am

Where: 69 Dudgeons Land, Bangalow

No Weeding

No Digging

No Whipper Snipping

Just planting trees in pre-dug holes and mulching - EASY

There are 600 Koala food trees to plant so Bangalow Koalas are having another Working Bee.

Free Sausage Sizzle provided by the Bangalow Lions and Sandwiches kindly made by Julie Frankham.

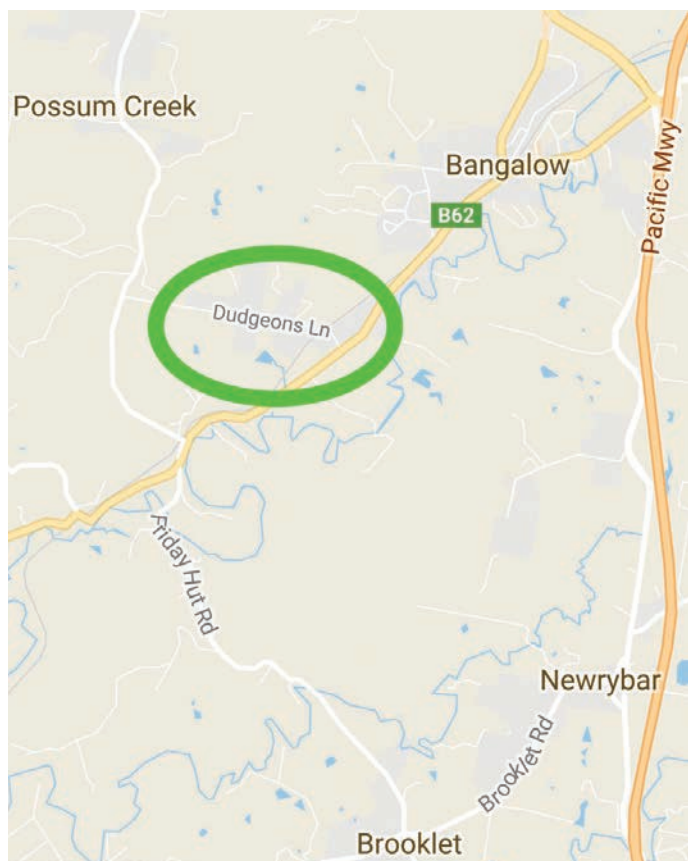
What you need to bring and wear:

Towel, bucket, drinking water and sunscreen. Long sleeves, long pants, gloves, fully enclosed footwear and a hat.

Note: Ticks are about so maybe mix a bit of Tea Tree Oil into some sunscreen or moisturiser and rub it in, we hear that ticks don't like that.

If you want to volunteer a couple of hours of your time then please see below for details.

RSVP Linda Sparrow on
twodogsmedia@optusnet.com.au



Africa's Oldest Baobab Trees Dying at a 'shocking' Rate

Some of Africa's largest and oldest Baobab trees are dying off. Aged between 1,100 and 2,500 years, researchers suspect climate change as a cause.

Researchers from Romania, South Africa and the United States reported that nine of the 13 oldest Baobabs had either died altogether, or that at least some of their oldest parts and stems had collapsed and died. All the dead trees were located in the south of the continent in Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, and Zambia.

The massive trees serve as an important store of water, the fruit feeds animals and humans and the leaves can be boiled and eaten as an accompaniment similar to spinach, or used to make traditional medicines. The bark, when pounded, can be woven into rope, baskets, cloth and hats.

The oldest tree, the 2,500-year-old *Panke* tree in Zimbabwe, saw all its stems collapse between 2010 and 2011. Meanwhile, arguably the most famous Baobab, the 1,400-year-old *Chapman* in Botswana, which bears the carved initials of explorer David Livingstone, saw all its six stems topple at once in January 2016.

While the reasons behind the trees sudden and apparently concurrent difficulties remains unclear, the researchers said they suspect the demise may be associated at least in part with significant modifications of climate conditions that affect southern Africa in particular. What was clear is that the deaths were not caused by an epidemic and there were no signs of disease."

Source 'The Conversation' edited by Dawn Lotty



Helping Native Baby Birds

Spring and Summer are always busy months during which baby birds begin to fledge and leave the safety of their nest and occasionally find themselves on the ground and in harms way.

It is extremely important that every effort is made to reunite or re-nest these healthy or uninjured baby bird with it's parents.

Firstly you will need to correctly identify the bird as not all baby birds are raised in a nest.

Precocial birds are born covered in down, with their eyes open and can feed themselves and walk soon after hatching such as ducks, masked lapwings (plovers) swamphens and moorhens and will stay on the ground under the watchful eye of their parents until they are independent.

A Precocial baby does not need to be placed in a nest. If it appears to be in danger and the parents are nearby place it under a dense bush or scrub and keep watch to ensure the parents rejoin it.

Altricial birds usually nest in trees or off the ground and are born completely or near naked with their eyes closed and are cared for by their parents until they are mature enough to leave the nest. These include garden birds, parrots, pigeons, carnivores and most raptors.

Most healthy, uninjured Altricial baby birds with considerable down or feathers whose parents are nearby are suitable to re-nest. The parents will continue to care for their baby bird in the new nest.

Native birds that raise their young in tree hollows or closed nests are difficult to re-nest and should be immediately placed into care.

What you will Need to Re-Nest a Altricial Bird

A plastic bucket about 30 to 35 cm deep with a handle, an ice cream container or a basket that can be tied onto a branch or tree.

A handful of leaves or grass.

A stick or branch. This will allow the parents to get in and out easily.

Drill or punch holes, if needed, in the bottom of the container to provide drainage. Place the leaves or grass on the bottom and place the stick in the container at an angle by securing it into one of the drainage holes.

Place the baby bird in its new home and hang the container above head height in a leafy tree away from sunlight and predators as close as possible to where you found the baby bird.

Watch from a distance to make sure the parents return to feed the baby bird, this may take several hours. If the parents do not return the baby bird will need to be placed into care.

Do not offer the baby bird any water or food, it's best to leave the feeding to the parents.

If a baby bird has any injuries, or has been in the mouth of a dog or cat, is cold or lathargic or the parents are dead nearby the baby bird will need to be placed in care immediately.

Information provided by: Wildcare Australia.

Wildcare Australia 24 hour hotline

(07) 5527 2444

Northern Rivers WIRES:

hotline (02) 6628 1898

Or the nearest [Avian](#) Veterinarian

**AN ADULT BIRD WILL NOT REJECT ITS YOUNG
BECAUSE IT WAS HANDLED BY A HUMAN!**





Edie Franks, right with her daughter Liz Gander and below with granddaughter Lydia Whalan at the 2016 All Souls' Planting

Edie Franks 1926 -2018

Vale to an environmental warrior **by Liz Ganger**

My mum Edie Franks passed away in June, 91 years young. Still with a sparkle in her eye and overwhelming joy to see all who walked through her door despite her late age struggles.

Edie lived in Byron shire most of her life and did much for the environment in many ways, an activist way ahead of the times. During the years she lived in Bangalow she spent her spare time re-vegetating the riparian area of Paddy's Creek reserve.

This was her first venture into rainforest restoration and at the time the only nursery around to supply her was Terania Creek. Mistakes were made but the legacy endures and these days Bangalow Land and Rivercare are the caretakers of this beautiful work.

This was the inspiration behind my setting up the *Ragged Blossom Nursery*. as I learned to grow the rainforest plants she needed.

Mum worked in my nursery potting up trees for the last 10 years or more, the years rolled on and I've lost track of when it started. At first I was not keen as I was used to doing things my own way but she persisted and became an

important part of my business.

Edie loved getting the 'new babies' out and giving them life and more than once I found tiny splints on broken stems, so mortified if she broke one, exasperating but funny. There were also plenty of weeds potted up as her eyesight failed but I never told her.

I do know how much I miss her there with me every week but perhaps not the pesto and feta cheese sandwiches she always brought us for lunch. It's just not the same without her there and never will be.

So as you walk around the many plantings the Bangalow Land and Rivercare group have done spare a thought for the wonderful caring lady who fussed over many of these trees and found great joy in knowing they were planted and growing strong.

Mum loved the natural world and did all she could in her life to protect and enhance this beautiful shire and beyond inspiring many to take things into their own hands and make a difference leaving a living legacy for all to enjoy.



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 Pass this publication on to your family and friends. Receive our Newsletter online and help us to save the environment.

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