

September

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

## Thongs - A World Traveler

Thongs may look simple and cheap, but they are part of a bigger and more complicated story.

They are the world's highest selling shoe out-selling even trainers. Uncounted billions of them are made every year, often in small factories in China. Their sales rise with world population. As one billion people globally still walk barefoot, they are a first step into the world of shoes across the global south.

Many of us may regard them as beachwear, but in some places they are a prized pair of shoes for everyday use. They also tell stories of how globalisation actually works on the ground.

Thongs are made from plastics, and so their story begins in the hydrocarbon economy in the oilfields of the Middle East.

The raw material from which they are made is drilled by migrant workers from Syria and southern India, who live in desert camps and work on drilling rigs for 12-hour shifts in the searing heat.

Some of the petrochemicals extracted from crude oil are made into little plastic pellets in giant peopless plants in the South Korean city of Daesan and bought by millions of small and medium-sized factories throughout the world



Like Us On  facebook

### 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.

in production clusters where labour is cheap, places like Vietnam and various parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Rural migrants still make them in southeast China, in small factories in industrial villages that sprout up on farmland. Plastic waste is heaped around the countryside like small colourful mountains of acid pink and blue.

As China crept up the value chain, so production moved to other places and shaped the lives of other workers who live in equally precarious ways.

The story ends on a landfill site called Koshe on the outskirts of Addis Ababa. The site is visually spectacular, vast and piled with rotting debris in muted colours. Often non recyclable, the plastic off cuts, pictured below, will lie in the garbage for more than a hundred years before decomposing.

This trail pieces together an unfamiliar picture of globalisation as an ad hoc mosaic of shifting connections between lives and ways of getting by, rather than the smooth operation of global commodity chains as we have been led to believe. Connecting smugglers, disposable workers, garbage pickers or scratchers and the poorest of consumers, this is one of globalisation's darker stories.

Tracing a piece of Chinese plastic supplying a first step into the world of shoes for the poor led to a landscape of impoverishment and displacement. So treat your beach things with respect. There is more to them than first appears.

*Source; The Conversation, edited, Dawn Lotty*



## How to handle your rubbish without buying bin liners

By Dawn Lotty

With overwhelming community support for the removal of single use plastic bags it came as a shock to most people why there was such a backlash from supermarket shoppers.

The reason soon became obvious from the interviews conducted of some disgruntled customers. Without the free single use plastic bags they would have to pay for bin liners.

But there are other options besides paying for plastic bin liners. We can do as our parents and grandparents did and line our bins or wrap our rubbish in newspaper. There are even free local newspaper, if not home delivered, at least available at the local shops.

While looking along supermarket shelves it seemed there was another simple answer as nearly every product we buy comes in a plastic bag or wrap.

All we need to do is save and re-use these plastic bags or wrappers from sliced bread, breakfast cereal, potato chips, toilet paper and frozen vegetables etc. For oil or fat pour it into empty milk, juice or other 'liquid paperboard' cartons.

### Be daring - Go Naked

Most councils now have green waste bins that take household food scraps including leftovers, meat bones, tea bags and coffee grounds for industrial scale composting. These items can be placed in the green bin without being wrap, just wash out the bin after it has been emptied.



*newspaper lined kitchen tidy*

## Bangalow Koalas Tree Planting

The 100 members of the community that banded together to plant 600 Koala food trees on properties along Dudgeons Lane, Bangalow on Saturday 18 August deserve to be congratulated for their efforts.

The aim of the planting was to draw our local Koalas away from the hazards associated with the urbanisation occurring around town and the introduction of dogs, cats and cars.



*Photos from the community planting.*

# 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## COME AND HELP US CELEBRATE!

Bangalow Land and Rivercare invites the community to help us celebrate our 20 years of planting and maintaining buffer zones along the banks of Byron Creek behind the Sports Fields and All Souls Church, Paddy's and Maori Creeks in town and the Bangalow Wetlands.

**Join us on Saturday 6 October from 8 am to 12 noon at the Bangalow Parklands. It's a 'Picnic in the Park' and you are all invited!**

Free morning tea will be provided and BBQ's are available in the Park. Lots of fun activities and games for the children and guided walks will also take place through two of our plantings.

There will be a selection of stalls, lots of information about our bio diverse sub tropical rainforest area and free plants for your garden.

Workshop tables will include plant ID, weed ID and control. Feel free to bring samples of any plant you need identified.

Representatives from The Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers, The Byron Bird Buddies, Friends of the Koala and Bangalow Koalas, Big Scrub Landcare, Bangalow Parklands and more are also participating. Come and talk to these groups and see what's been happening. It's all about your environment.





## Greater Glider hot spot logged

The Greater Glider, pictured above, a small marsupial that feeds on eucalyptus leaves, is listed as vulnerable to extinction.

The Greater Glider population is at risk of being wiped out in Victoria in a similar manner to the population on the south coast of NSW as the Victorian government allows irresponsible logging experiments that environmental groups say is *"unethical"* and *"unnecessary"*.

The Wilderness Society and the Goongerah Environment Centre Office say the state government-owned *VicForests* is conducting a controversial experiment in East Gippsland that it admits is *"very likely"* to kill Greater Gliders.

The two groups have called on the Andrews Labor government to act to protect the vulnerable species, saying it's ignoring its own scientific advice.

*"VicForests admits it is killing endangered Greater Gliders when it logs its habitat so it can work out how many will survive,"* Wilderness Society Victorian campaigns manager Amelia Young said in a statement.

*"The government doesn't need to allow, and shouldn't allow, its loggers to conduct these cruel and irresponsible logging experiments simply to see if Greater Gliders may survive the onslaught of the chainsaws, bulldozers and industrial logging fires."*

GECO spokesman Ed Hill likened the logging experiment to hunting whales for scientific research, describing it as *"abhorrent"* and *"unethical"*. *"Environment Minister Lily D'Ambrosio must put a stop to this cruel experiment. A government action statement required to be put in place over a year ago is well overdue"* Mr Hill said.

Both groups called on the state government to create the 'Emerald Link' proposal, which would protect the vulnerable species habitat in a continuous network of protected forests from the Australian Alps to the East Gippsland coast.

*VicForests* manager of biodiversity conservation Tim McBride told the ABC the company did have a *"vested interest"* in conservation. *"But they are also interested in supplying an outcome to stakeholders and the timber industry stakeholders,"* the ABC reported Mr McBride as saying. *"And we want to maintain a wood-flow to them, and so finding that balance is key."*

Source: SMH & ABC

### *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](mailto: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.

Edited and layout: Dawn Lotty  
Printed by: DiGi PRiNT PRO, Bangalow

