



Bush Buddies

VOLUME 11



BUSH HERITAGE
AUSTRALIA



Bush party time!

As we get closer to the end of the year, there's often more celebrations with friends and family than usual. Spending time with loved ones is super special, and even more so if it's in the great outdoors. There's nothing quite like a picnic on a warm day or a BBQ under the stars!

Sometimes though, these events can end up causing unnecessary waste and be taxing on our precious environment. So, we've pulled together a few tips for your next social gathering to help make upcoming celebrations as planet friendly as possible!

1 Leave the car, take the legs!

Transport is the third largest source of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, with cars responsible for roughly half of all transport emissions. Taking the time to walk, ride or even catch public transport are great and greener ways to begin any day's celebrations!

2 Avoid single-use plastics

Encourage your family and friends to ditch the straws, plastic cups, plates, cutlery and single use water bottles. Every year in Australia, one million tonnes of single-use plastics are consumed. Yikes! Cutting back on single-use plastics by bringing food and drinks in reusable containers and eating with cutlery from home are easy and very effective ways to reduce a party's impact on the planet.

3 Bin it right!

Set up a funky, flowing waste system at your next picnic to make sure your trash goes in the right bin. Offering friends and family three distinct bins to throw their food scraps, recyclables and non-recyclables in will make sure recycling efforts aren't contaminated and keep your compost happy. Also, if you're enjoying yourself outside be sure to leave no trace and take all your rubbish with you when it's time to go home.

4 Munch on plastic-free snacks

Encourage your party to snack without plastic! Low plastic snack options include fruit (wrapped in its own ingenious natural packaging), nuts, stove cooked popcorn, homemade hummus, baked goods, fresh veggies or treats bought from the bulk food store.



Closed loop recycling in action.
Photo TOMRA

Protecting our planet

Protecting our planet from challenging environmental threats is going to take a team effort! That's why we've buddied up with friends at TOMRA and the Australian Marine Conservation Society to do our bit when it comes to closing the loop on container recycling.

TOMRA is a global company that run Reverse Vending Machines - where people can take their recyclable cans and bottles, deposit them to be recycled and earn 10c for each bottled returned. Plus, the containers returned are then made back into containers for future use.



Every eligible container
donated helps protect our
land, oceans & wildlife



Across the world TOMRA's Reverse Vending Machines have been proven to reduce container litter and increase recycling rates. Taking recyclable cans and bottles to a collection point (like a TOMRA Reverse Vending Machine) is the best way to make sure they don't end up in landfill.

What's even more amazing is TOMRA gives recyclers the option to donate the 10c from each container returned to organisations like Bush Heritage and the Australian Marine Conservation Society. So, it's a win-win for the planet, helping keep plastic off the streets and putting funds into organisation's pockets that are doing their best to protect our natural world (or other great causes)!

Until the end of April 2023, when you take your recyclable cans and bottles to a TOMRA Reverse Vending Machine in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, ACT or the Northern Territory you can donate your refund to our collaborative "Protect Our Planet" campaign (sorry Victorian and Tasmanian recyclers a container deposit scheme is yet to be rolled out in your state, and South Australia's scheme doesn't yet take donations). All funds will go directly to Bush Heritage and the Australian Marine Conservation Society. Meaning, every bottle returned will help protect our lands, oceans and wildlife.

Find your closest TOMRA Reverse Vending Machine to recycle and donate at here - mytomra.com.au/



A TOMRA Reverse Vending Machine Depot.
Photo TOMRA



For every eligible container, 10c is refunded.
Photo TOMRA



Double your impact by recycling and donating.
Photo TOMRA



TOMRA's Reverse Vending Machines are quick and easy to use.
Photo TOMRA

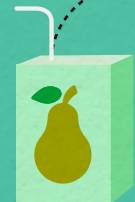
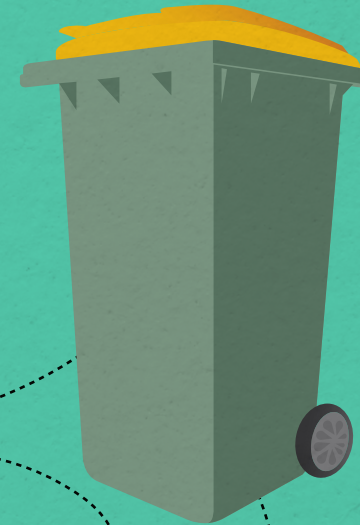
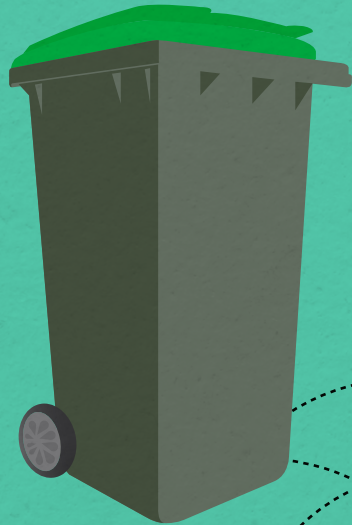
Bin it right!

Follow the squiggly lines to put the waste in the right bin.

Green Bin/Compost

Tomra Reverse
Vending Machine

Yellow Bin/
Standard Recycling



What's that farty sound?!

Just recently our Reserve Manager Sam Fischer decided to enjoy a sunset over the dunes at Eurardy Reserve, Nanda Country in Western Australia.

As he climbed one of the low sandhills, he noticed strange markings in the sand. Tracks, he'd never seen before!

"The dune was alive with tracks from Hopping Mice, beetles, geckoes, and Legless Lizards, but one set of tracks stood out as unusual," said Sam. "They were fresh tracks, shuffling between shrubs, and then seemingly disappearing into the sand."

Then came an even stranger sound. A frog call, but not your classic 'ribbit ribbit'.

Most people wouldn't want to hear squelchy farts whilst they're trying to relax after a long day of fieldwork. But Sam was thrilled! He suspected it could be the sound of a Southern Sandhill Frog (*Arenophryne xiphorhyncha*).

Up until Sam's fateful encounter, there had been no recording of this frog's calls since it was first described in 2008.



What is a Southern Sandhill Frog?

Southern Sandhill Frogs are only 3.5cm long with short legs and a flat rounded body, perfect for burrowing headfirst into sand. They have a limited range from north of Geraldton to just south of Shark Bay in Western Australia.

Sam could see the tracks and record the call but he needed to lay eyes on the frog to know for sure. So, the next night he returned to record the call and find the frogs.

Sitting on the same dune, he waited and listened. The calls seemed to come from all around, but no frogs could be seen. Sam inched forward in the direction of a particular call. Gently digging into the sand with his hands, Sam discovered the source of the squelchy fart. Around 5cm below the surface, just as the sand became moist, was a Southern Sandhill Frog, only slightly larger than a 50c coin.

"It caught me by surprise when I quickly uncovered a plump, little Southern Sandhill Frog! After a couple of quick photos to confirm with the experts, I returned it to the sand."

Recording the call of the Southern Sandhill Frog years after they were first described will help scientists understand more about these sandy schnitzels!

"Being able to contribute towards better understanding this species is incredibly important in being able to better protect it," Sam said. "Being responsible for looking after the population at Eurardy is something I am incredibly proud of."

You can listen to the call of the Southern Sandhill frog on the species' page of the WA Museum Frog Watch - museum.wa.gov.au/explore/frogwatch/frogs/southern-sandhill-frog



Southern Sandhill Frog, WA, Eurardy.
Photo Ben Parkhurst



Sunset, WA, Eurardy.
Photo Tina Schroeder



Southern Sandhill Frog tracks, WA, Eurardy.
Photo Sam Fischer

Can you draw the Southern Sandhill Frog's tracks?

Try copying their special sand markings.



Southern Sandhill Frog tracks, WA, Eurardy.
Photo Sam Fischer

Draw here:



It's turtle time!

Have you ever seen a sea turtle? How would you describe them?

Sea turtles embody peace and calm as they swim through the ocean's salty blue water. With large, hard shells (called carapaces) on their backs to fend off predators, they spend most of their time solo, underwater and use their strong paddle-shaped flippers to swim around.

It is thought that sea turtles have existed for an estimated 110 million years, meaning they were once living alongside dinosaurs!

There are seven species of sea turtles in the world and six of them live in Australian waters:

- Flatback Turtle
- Green Turtle
- Hawksbill Turtle
- Leatherback Turtle
- Loggerhead Turtle
- Olive Ridley Turtle

Bush Heritage's work on reserves and through partnerships is helping to better understand these species and how to protect them.

Where do marine turtles live?

The largest population of sea turtles can be found in the Great Barrier Reef's waters and the Caribbean Islands.

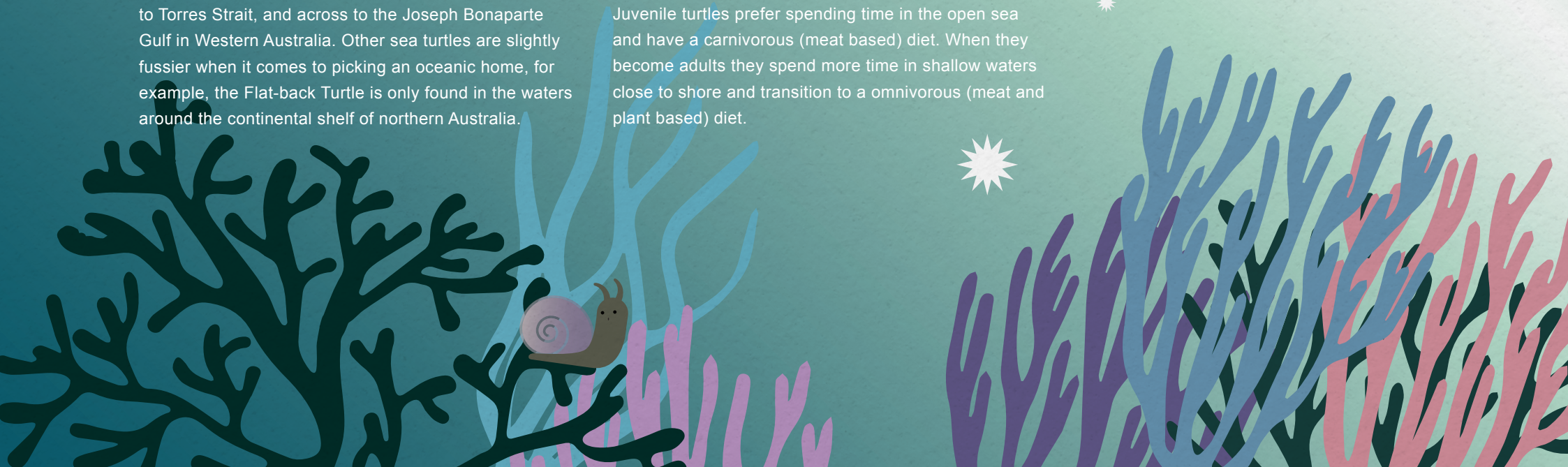
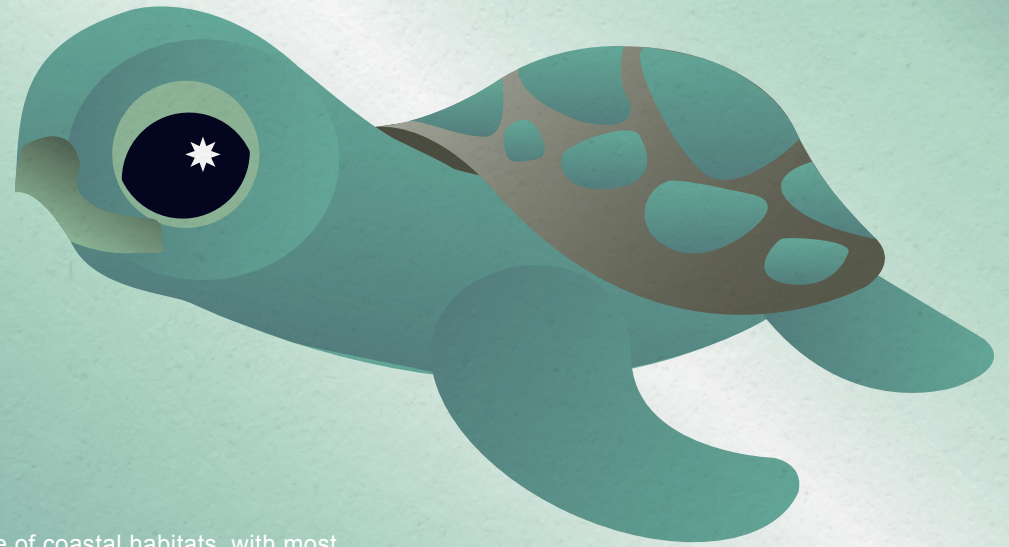
Some sea turtle species, such as the Green Turtle and Loggerhead Turtle, can be found across the globe, travelling great distances between their nesting and feeding sites.

The Loggerhead Turtle lives in the coastal waters of more than 140 countries, in and around shallow lagoons, coral reefs, salt marshes and seagrass beds near the shore.

Olive Ridley Turtles occur along the coast from southern Queensland and the Great Barrier Reef, northwards to Torres Strait, and across to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf in Western Australia. Other sea turtles are slightly fussier when it comes to picking an oceanic home, for example, the Flat-back Turtle is only found in the waters around the continental shelf of northern Australia.

Sea turtles live in a range of coastal habitats, with most species' hatchlings preferring the open sea, where they're exposed to fewer predators before their shells have a chance to harden.

Juvenile turtles prefer spending time in the open sea and have a carnivorous (meat based) diet. When they become adults they spend more time in shallow waters close to shore and transition to a omnivorous (meat and plant based) diet.



Turtle Behaviour

Once male turtles have left their natal beach they rarely return to land, spending the rest of their days riding the ocean's currents. On the other flipper, females do come ashore when it's time to nest, and usually return to the same beach. Whilst at sea, turtles migrate for hundreds of thousands of kilometres.

Whilst sea turtles appear to be the picture of peace, some species such as the Loggerheads are known to spar over feeding grounds. The confrontation begins with circling behaviour and can escalate to more direct conflict and snapping at each other's jaws.

Some sea turtles hibernate in the cooler months, submerging themselves for up to seven hours and surfacing for only seven minutes to breathe. The amount of time turtles can hold their breath underwater depends on their activity levels.

Perhaps one of the most interesting habits of marine turtles is the long journeys they make across oceans to mate and then deposit their eggs on specific beaches – sometimes the very same beaches where they were born.



Hatchlings make their dash to the ocean.
Photo Marc Andre Julien



Shoreline of adjacent beach to Bush Heritage's Reedy Creek Reserve, Bailai, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang & Taribelang Bunda Country.
Photo Carl Moller



Most turtles love solo time in the big blue!
Photo Naja Bertolt Jensen



Threats to sea turtles

Across the globe conservationists are worried about declining sea turtle populations. This is due to the many threats that sea turtles face, including; increased artificial lighting near nesting sites, pollution of once pristine beaches, changes to shorelines that cause beach erosion and introduced feral predator's attacks on nests.

Climate change also poses a serious threat to sea turtles where rising sand temperatures has the potential to impact breeding and survival. Plus, rising sea levels and stronger more frequent storms could further damage precious beach habitats.



Learning more about the species will help us better protect them.
Photo Josh Miller



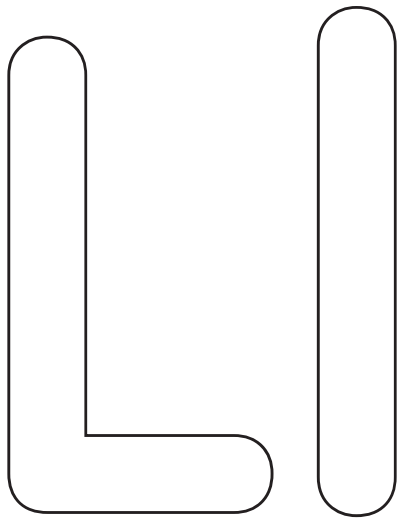
Hatching turtle, QLD, Reedy Creek.
Photo Steve Heggie

What's Bush Heritage doing?

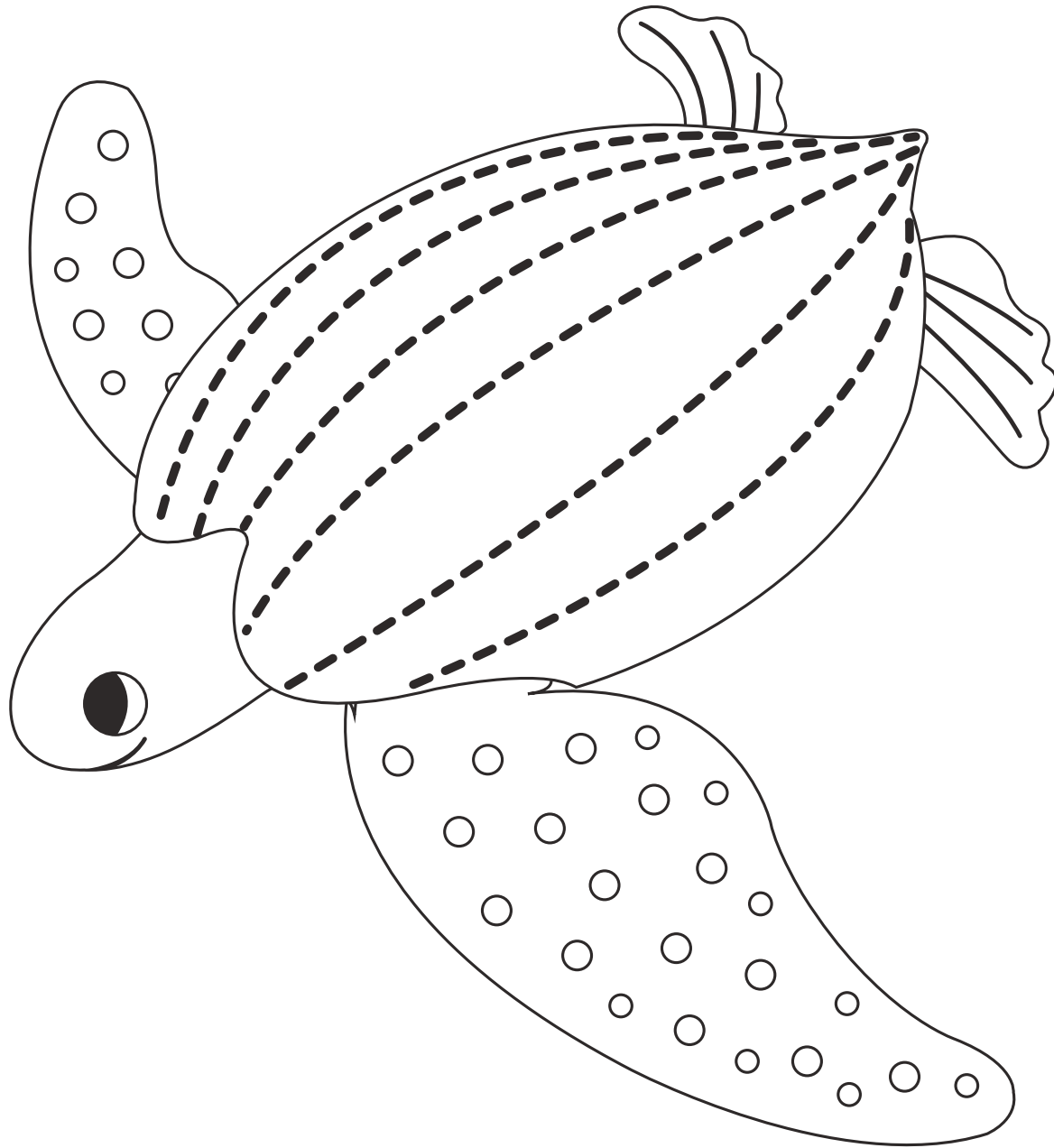
At Bush Heritage's Reedy Creek Reserve, on the traditional lands of the Bailai, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang and Taribelang Bunda, Loggerhead, Green and Flatback turtles come in from the Coral Sea to nest on a beach just near the reserve. The female turtles come ashore from November to February, when the tides are higher. Controlling foxes in the area is key to making sure as many hatchlings survive as possible. Bush Heritage is reducing the number of feral foxes on its Reedy Creek Reserve to minimise the threat to turtle hatchlings.

Flatback Turtles are also culturally important to the Wunambal Gaambera people on the far north-west coast of the Kimberley. Since 2011 we've worked in partnership with the Wunambal Gaambera, to help plan and implement conservation works.





is for
Leatherback
Sea Turtle



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Tell us what you think of
Bush Buddies.

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Illustration by Donna Hunt