

Newsletter – August 2022

Friends of Lee Point (FLP) are a community-based group of Darwin residents campaigning to conserve Lee Point while encouraging the efficient use of land, infrastructure and services in Darwin. We acknowledge that the Larrakia are the traditional owners of Lee Point and the land and surrounding sea require protection, management and respect from all.

Greetings Friends,

This month; a **Bulldozer** arrived, **Gouldian Finches** kept visitors entertained and **migratory shorebirds** returned to Lee Point. The **Save Lee Point rally** is at 1200 Thurs, 15 Sept Raintree Park - all links in this newsletter are given on the last page.

1. Bulldozers are here! Rally – Saturday morning 3rd Sept



Part of the rally included painting corflutes with gouldian images.



Up to 200 people attended the public rally and other activities on the day.

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A young person speaking out against destroying the Lee Point environment – Plan, ECNT, Graeme Sawyer, Wildcare and FLP also spoke against the development.

2. Last Chance Tourism Event – Saturday morning 27 Aug

Lots of art happened at the Last Chance Tourism event, photos above. Most people saw up to 100 Gouldians before 8.30am. This Tawny Frogmouth was an added bonus.



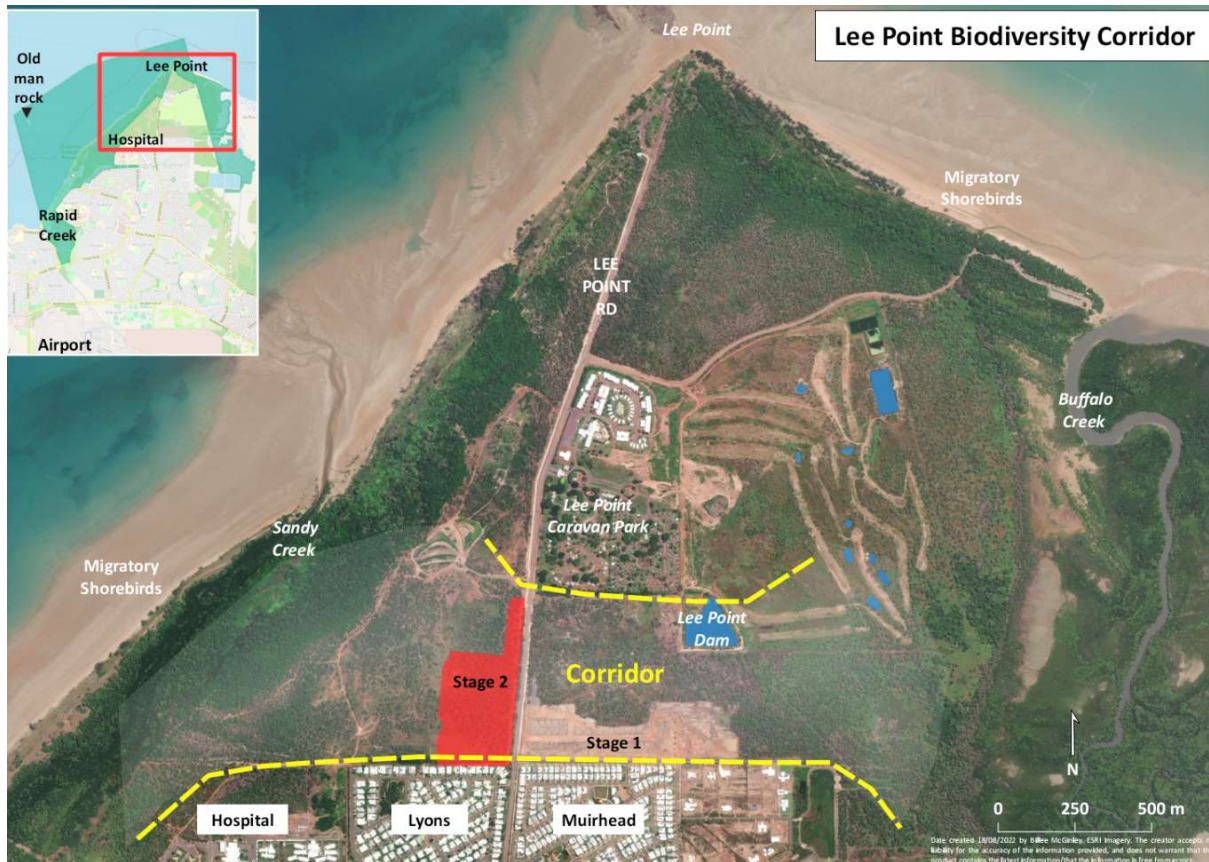
People looking at a Tawny Frogmouth near the Osprey Tower.

The Tawny Frogmouth is a common nocturnal bird of Darwin. It likes insects and small invertebrates and nests in tree hollows. One caravan park visitor said: you should see what happens after dark – lions and tigers!

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3. The fence is up for Stage 2 clearing!!

Stage 2 will destroy the Corridor – who benefits from this – not the community, tourism industry or wildlife!! Why Lee Point Corridor needs protecting



A bulldozer arrived late August, fences went up and cycads were removed from Stage 2. We still don't know what happened to the cycads from Stage 1.

4. A change in direction on the Lee Point development?

People are calling on Federal Minister for Environment - Tanya Plibersek to save the Gouldian Finches from the NT defence development. Our Chief Minister – Natasha Fyles is seeking discussions with Tanya Plibersek on the matter. Lets hope Lee Point is the winner!

This has attracted media attention from: [ABC News](#), [NT News](#), [Guardian](#) and [Yahoo News](#). [Larrakia](#) is calling for Lee Point to be saved for future generations. Please sign; [Save the Gouldians petition](#) and find out - [What to do next](#)

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5. Food for grass finches in Lee Point Corridor

The Corridor has lots of different grass seeds and watering points for grass finches. Grass finches breed when food is plentiful, some breed all year round. Gouldian Finches (a type of grass finch) typically breed in tree hollows during April – May.



Sorghum grass in late March along Lee Point Road looking south from Osprey Tower

Native Sorghum seeds are eaten by ants and grass finches. Speargrass is a type of sorghum. Grass finches eat insects to supplement their diet. Insects like termites are high in protein.



Termites building a nest at Lee Point

6. Lee Point Trivia (answers at the end)

Q1. The Gouldian Finches at Lee Point have been attracting visitors to Darwin. Approximately how much is birdwatching tourism worth to Australia each year?

- A. \$50M B. \$100M C. \$200M D. \$300M

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7. Biodiversity and birdlife

The Star Finch and Black-breasted Buzzard are uncommon in Darwin but both have recently been seen in the Corridor.

The Black-breasted Buzzard is building a nest, a first for Darwin. They are known for [using rocks to break emu and brolga eggs](#) – only two bird species in the world use this technique.



Black-breasted Buzzard south of Lee Point Dam – photo Tobias Akesson

8. Migratory shorebirds are back at Lee Point



Eastern Curlews (critically endangered) returned from places like Siberia (~10,000km away).

Professor [Stephen Garnett talks to the ABC](#) about the threats migratory shorebirds face.

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9. Flowering plants in Lee Point Corridor



Red-flowering Kurrajong (*Brachychiton megaphyllus*) is the [City of Darwin's Floral Emblem](#)



Kapok Bush or Tree (*Cochlospermum fraseri*) east of the Lee Point caravan park
Late dry season can be bad for biting insects; please check this [Calendar](#)

Until next time, enjoy the last of the Dry Season at Lee Point

Answer Q1. D. Approx \$300M. In 2022, Birdlife Australia assessed the value of birdwatching to the tourist industry as \$283M. Birdlife also said bird-focused tourism is a fast-growing niche market in Australia and that birders spend more than the average tourist.

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Links used in the newsletter:

1. Save Lee Point rally: <https://saveleepoint.org.au/save-lee-point-rally-2/>
2. Why Lee Point Corridor needs protecting: <https://saveleepoint.org.au/why-lee-point-corridor-needs-protecting/>
3. MEDIA STORIES:
 - ABC News: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofLeePoint/videos/778802060212706>
 - NT News: https://www.ntnews.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=NTWEB_WRE170_a_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ntnews.com.au%2Fbusiness%2Fnt-business%2Ffederal-government-reviewing-controversial-lee-point-defence-housing-development%2Fnews-story%2Ffac69a5a0f39bbc4925bb3038a61c739&memtype=anonymous&mode=premium
 - Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/sep/05/tanya-plibersek-urged-to-save-gouldian-finches-from-nt-defence-development>
 - Yahoo News: <https://au.news.yahoo.com/why-pictures-gouldian-finches-are-appearing-darwin-011144027.html?guccounter=1>
4. Larrakia: <https://www.facebook.com/EnvironmentCentreNT/videos/525972242671559>
5. Save the Gouldians petition: https://www.ecnt.org.au/save_the_gouldians?fbclid=IwAR0IM-CD2iKQ6rL-TZZUxP1vHXpESv0vN32vJih-FXpini2kzETutx7iETw
6. What to do next: <https://saveleepoint.org.au/what-to-do-next/>
7. rocks to break emu and brolga eggs: <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/blogs/creatura-blog/2018/11/the-black-breasted-buzzard-is-australias-craftiest-raptor/>
8. Stephen Garnett talks to the ABC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa3EPNp-lxl>
9. City of Darwin's emblem: [Darwin's Floral Emblem | City of Darwin | Darwin Council, Northern Territory](#)
10. Calendar: <https://digitallibrary.health.nt.gov.au/prodjspui/handle/10137/11953>
11. Value of birdwatching: <https://www.birdlife.org.au/australian-birdlife/detail/on-the-map-bird-tourism-in-australia>