



## Newsletter – February 2023

Friends of Lee Point (FLP) are a community-based group of Darwin residents campaigning to conserve the natural beauty and biodiversity of Lee Point 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 newsletter includes; Farewell to Shorebirds, Lee Point development update, Darwin woodland, plants and wildlife - [links](#) used in this newsletter are given on the last page.

### 1. Farewell to Shorebirds - Sat morning 11 March at Lee Point

Soon the migratory shorebirds will start flying north to places like Siberia (10,000km away) to breed. Come and join us at a free birdwatching event to see these birds and the other birds that call Lee Point home, details at: [Farewell to Shorebirds 2023](#)



Great knots and a Black-tailed godwit (flying) – Feb 2023



Red-capped plover – Feb 2023

The migratory shorebirds (left) are under threat, [ABC footage](#) from Lee Point explains why and [Living with Shorebirds at Lee Point](#) has additional information.

# FRIENDS OF LEE POINT

## 2. Update on DHA Lee Point development

The Australian Government is still assessing the area for gouldian finch habitat.

Having Lee Point intact makes life better for people and wildlife in Darwin/Palmerston.

Please sign this new [PETITION](#) to help relocate the DHA development to a suitable area.



Fig 1. Map showing DHA Stage 2.

## 3. Darwin woodland/tree hollows



Fig 2. Fungi and termites help form tree hollows in trees over time – Feb 2023

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Fig 3 Tree hollows in Lee Point corridor

Gouldian Finches and a lot of other wildlife rely on [tree hollows](#) that are found in large woodland trees.

The good news is that gouldian finch numbers have been increasing - according to recent CDU research. We believe that the Lee Point corridor (Fig 1) is prime real estate for gouldian finches because it offers:

- Some of the best old-growth woodland in the Darwin/Palmerston area - lots of good tree hollows to choose from.
- Great variety of grass seeds (11 of the 20 Australian grass finch species fed here in 2022)
- Outstanding selection of watering points – dry season access to 10 dams and sprinklers (caravan park only)

For more information on where the large woodland trees are in Darwin/Palmerston area, refer [Darwin's large woodland trees - a preliminary study](#).

### 4. Lee Point Trivea - Name these birds, answers at the end.



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### 5. Plants and wildlife - photos taken at Lee Point Feb 2023 unless noted.

Many plants and fungi flourish at Lee Point with the wet season rains.



Polynesian arrowroot (*Tacca leontopetaloides*) has started flowering at Lee Point.



Fungi (probably *Chantharellus* spp.) fruiting in woodland.

## FRIENDS OF LEE POINT



Ipomea (*Ipomea spp.*) and beach spinefix grass – both help protect coastal dunes from erosion.



Ipomea in monsoon forest – Apr 2022



Ipomea in woodland

IPOMEA - There are at least a few species of Ipomea growing at Lee Point. One of the species found on the beach gets called [Beach Morning Glory](#) . The attractive red-flowered one, called [Cypress Vine](#) (*Ipomea quamoclit*) is an invasive weed in Darwin.

## FRIENDS OF LEE POINT



Woodland at Lee Point in wet season rain



Eastern reef egret



Lesser frigatebird

Eastern reef egrets (*Egretta sacra*) occur in two colour morphs a white or a slatey grey. These two were seen fishing at Lee Point (they are the same species).

Frigate birds are large tropical seabirds that can spend days aloft. They are good flyers and capture prey (especially flying fish), drink in flight and sometimes make spectacular aerial pursuits to steal food from other seabirds. Source – Australian Bird Guide. They are more often seen in Darwin when storms are happening.

### ***Enjoy the wet season at Lee Point***

Answer: Beach Stone Curlew (left) and Bush Stone Curlew (right)

The Beach Stone Curlew is a shorebird (or wader). It lives on beaches and forages mainly for crabs. It is the world's heaviest shorebird and near threatened due to habitat disturbance. Generally uncommon but can be seen at Lee Point.

The Bush Stone Curlew is a ground dwelling bird that favours open plains and woodlands, and can also be seen in Darwin suburbs. It is active at night and is more often heard than seen, making loud eerie wails.

## FRIENDS OF LEE POINT

### Links used in the newsletter:

1. Farewell to Shorebirds 2023: <https://saveleepoint.org.au/farewell-to-shorebirds-2023/>
2. ABC footage: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa3EPNp-lxl>
3. Living with shorebirds at Lee Point:  
[https://planinc.org.au/images/documents/Living\\_with\\_Migratory\\_Shorebirds\\_at\\_Lee\\_Point-compressed.pdf](https://planinc.org.au/images/documents/Living_with_Migratory_Shorebirds_at_Lee_Point-compressed.pdf)
4. PETITION: <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/stop-the-defence-housing-project-at-lee-point/>
5. tree hollows: [https://nt.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0012/204213/sensitive-vegetation-old-growth-forest-english.pdf](https://nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/204213/sensitive-vegetation-old-growth-forest-english.pdf)
6. Darwin's large woodland trees - a preliminary study:  
<https://saveleepoint.org.au/darwins-large-woodland-trees-a-preliminary-study/>
7. Polynesian arrowroot: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tacca\\_leontopetaloides](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tacca_leontopetaloides)
8. Beach Morning Glory:  
<https://www.somemagneticislandplants.com.au/plants/beach-morning-glory>
9. Cypress Vine: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ipomoea\\_quamoclit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ipomoea_quamoclit)