



Newsletter – March 2021

Friends of Lee Point (**FLP**) are a community-based group of Darwin residents campaigning to conserve the natural beauty and wildlife at Lee Point for future generations. Please share your photos of Lee Point, send to: info@saveleepoint.org.au

Darwin has just exceeded its annual average rainfall of 1723 mm. As of 30 March, total rainfall was 1731mm (from NT News).

Migratory Shorebirds (over 20 species) are about to leave Lee Point - an internationally recognised migratory shorebird site; some have already left. Every year in August - September they arrive from the subarctic eg. Siberia, a journey of some 10,000km. Most leave in March - April after spending about seven months in Australia to fly to their breeding grounds in the subarctic. Migratory shorebirds live on beaches, coastal mudflats and estuaries. They cannot land on water.

Lee Point is visited by thousands of migratory shorebirds. We think they are more Australian than Russian because they spend more time here.

Far Eastern Curlew* - is the largest migratory shorebird to visit Australia and is critically endangered.

In its lifetime (all going well) this shorebird is expected to live up to 20 years and fly ~400,000km. That's 10 times around the world or to the moon and back.

Another endangered migratory shorebird to visit Lee Point is the **Great Knot***. At times you can see over 1% of the world's population of Great Knots at Lee Point.

Bar Tailed Godwit* - is the world record holder for the longest non-stop flight by a migratory shorebird.

In October 2020, it was tracked as flying non-stop ~12,000km. That's further than most commercial jet airliners.



Far Eastern Curlew at Lee Point – Feb 2021



Bar Tailed Godwit at Sandy Ck – Feb 2021

*Wikipedia has more photos/information on these amazing birds.

BirdLife Top End and Planning Action Network are hosting a free breakfast event. For more information, please refer to: <https://www.facebook.com/birdlifetopend>

Farewell Shorebirds



Join us to say goodbye to the shorebirds before they leave for their annual migration

We will have some light breakfast options, shorebird viewing on the beach, postcard colouring in for the kids and short talks about shorebirds

Free event, everybody welcome



Saturday 3 April, 10am - 12pm

Lee Point at the bird statues,
Casuarina Coastal Reserve

Darwin City - CO2 emissions and urban planning

City of Darwin provided a breakup of estimated CO2 emissions as part of its consultation to develop a climate strategy, submissions closed 12 Feb 2021. Road transport contributed to 44% of the CO2 emissions for Darwin City (pop 84,926).

Urban planning is recognised as a key way to reduce CO2 emissions from transport.

For instance, by relocating the proposed (800) housing development from Lee Point to Berrimah would potentially half the car travel CO2 emissions (FLP assessment). Hopefully this will get looked at in a future urban planning study for Lee Point.

Save Lee Point website

FLP assisted by the Planning Action Network group; www.planinc.org.au launched its campaign website www.savleepoint.org.au last month. Lee Point needs an urban planning study and it needs your support to make this happen. Please register your details; name, suburb and email address, at info@savleepoint.org.au so we can get a petition happening.

Mangroves of Lee Point

Mangroves are salt-tolerant trees that have adapted to life in harsh coastal conditions. They provide a sanctuary/nursery for marine life, and are important for protecting coastal areas.

Grey mangrove* – is the commonest mangrove tree species in Australia. The name comes from the grey colour on the underside of the leaf.

The smooth bark is pale yellow but bright green when wet. The orange flowers smell like old apricots. Flowering is Oct-Nov, fruiting is Jan-Feb. Sea turtles eat the fruit.

The tree can grow anywhere in the tidal area, from the landward to the seaward zones, and is Darwin's only mangrove species to do so.

Larrakia people have used this tree for food and medicinal purposes.

Ref: David Percival

*Wikipedia has more photos/information.



Grey mangroves at Lee Point (*Avicennia marina*)



Grey mangrove pencil roots “breathing tubes”

Flowers of Lee Point

This plant is commonly called a **Polynesian arrowroot** and comes from the same family as the Bat flower.

Flowering usually happens Oct-Mar and fruiting Jan-Apr. The roots and fruit are eaten by Aboriginal people, with roots requiring thorough preparation. The tuber is used overseas to make arrowroot

Ref: John Brock, Top End Native Plants.

Please send in your photos from Lee Point with plant name and date to:
info@saveleepoint.org.au



Polynesian arrowroot (*Tacca leontopetaloides*)
Photo at Lee Point by Peter Brown – Feb 2020.

Lee Point trivia (answers at bottom of page)

Q1. What proportion of land at Lee Point does the government own?

- A. 30% B. 50% C. 70% D. 90%

Q2. What proportion of land at Lee Point is freely available to the public?

- A. 30% B. 50% C. 70% D. 90%

Planning for Lee Point (Part 2) - *Part 1 finished with the NT Government being responsible for planning – refer previous newsletter at INFO www.saveleepoint.org.au*

The [NT Planning Act 1999](#) (legislation passed by the NT Parliament) regulates the use and development of land in the Northern Territory through the [NT Planning Scheme \(NTPS\)](#). NTPS is the 'rule book' for land use and development in the NT*.

Understandably the objectives of the NT Planning Act and the NTPS are similar, some objectives from the NT Planning Act 1999 include:

- to ensure that strategic planning is applied to planning schemes and implemented in individual planning decisions;
- to ensure that strategic planning reflects the wishes and needs of the community; and
- to promote the sustainable development of land.

The Minister for Planning makes and changes planning rules in the NTPS. In this way new Area Plans are introduced or amended in the NTPS.

In Part 3 of our next newsletter, we will discuss zoning.

*The NT Law Handbook provides useful information on Planning and Development in the NT.

Until next time wishing you a cool, knock 'em down season.

Answer Q1 – D 90% All land is owned by the government except the Resort and Caravan Park.

Answer Q2 – B 50% Half of Lee Point is taken up by; Resort and Caravan Park land, disused defence land plus disused golf course land (owned by government).