



## Newsletter – February 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,

**Lee Point Art Competition** – refer <https://saveleepoint.org.au/lee-point-art-competition/>

This Sunday morning we are celebrating the Lee Point Art Competition with a walk to look at migratory shorebirds, nature and a morning tea. The migratory shorebirds will leave around mid April for places like Siberia (10,000km away) to breed. At they moment they are starting to put on colour to impress.

Event details at: <https://saveleepoint.org.au/lee-point-art-competition-launch-nature-walk/>



Artwork by an under 8 year old, medium is chalk on concrete

## FRIENDS OF LEE POINT

### Birds at Lee Point beach

Many birds use the Lee Point beach including 20 species of migratory shorebirds (they breed outside Australia). Here are some resident birds that breed in the Top End.



Red-capped Plover nesting on a Lee Point beach in February



Caspian Terns (red beak) with Crested Terns (one having a bad hair day) and a Silver Gull

The Caspian Tern is the largest tern in the world, enjoys fish, and like all terns are good fliers. Q1. Can you spot the second Caspian Tern? Answer at end of this newsletter.

# FRIENDS OF LEE POINT

## Leanyer Sewage Ponds near Lee Point

Leanyer sewage ponds (like Lee Point) offers great birding opportunities and rare birds have been seen here triggering interest around Australia. There is no access to the ponds at present. Hopefully this can be worked out (a viewing platform?) to allow birdwatching. Some places to watch birds: <https://www.experiencethewild.com.au/?p=Where-to-Watch-Leanyer>



Brahminy Kite



The sewage ponds have been emitting offensive odours. This is due to recent rains cooling the pond top layer (making it denser) and the top layer mixing with lower layers (called de-stratification). De-stratification is a major odour source from the ponds and happens every year. The planned Lee Point housing development will make the situation worse.

## Lee Point and deforestation

The majority of carbon in forests is stored in the soil (roots, fungi, microbes).

# FRIENDS OF LEE POINT



Open woodland forest with cycads in Stage 1 prior to clearing in Oct 2021.

Changes to land use (such as deforestation) is the second largest manmade emitter of CO2 after fossil fuel burning. Australia and the majority of UN countries committed to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 at COP26 in Nov 2021 as part of reducing emissions.

## Lee Point Area Plan and development

NT Govt Approvals (as of 25 Feb 2022)	Stage 1 North of Muirhead (97 lots)	Stage 2 North of Lyons	Stage 3-5 North of Lyons	Stage 6-7 North of Muirhead	Stage 8 North of Lyons
Planning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Construction	Yes	No*	No	No	No

\*To date, DHA has not lodged an application with the NT Government for Stage 2 construction.

City of Darwin want works halted at Lee Point until the NT Planning Commission has completed a comprehensive Area Plan for the whole of Lee Point. All the people FLP have spoken to in the tourism industry are strongly opposed to housing thousands of people at Lee Point.

The Planning Action Network (**Plan**) and FLP believe that the Lee Point Area Plan is bad for Territorians, find out why: <https://saveleepoint.org.au/the-area-plan-for-lee-point-is-bad-for-territorians/>

## Lee Point Trivia

Q1. Internationally bird-based tourism is growing rapidly. What is the estimated annual economic value of bird watching in the US (in USD)?

- A. under \$1 Billion    B. \$5 Billion    C. \$20 Billion    D. over \$40 Billion

# FRIENDS OF LEE POINT

## Dragonflies and bees at Lee Point



Freshwater habitat



Green Skimmer dragonfly (*Orthetrum serapia*)

## FRIENDS OF LEE POINT

Dragonflies and damselflies are generally found near freshwater habitats. These ancient flying insects first appeared 250 million years ago (**mya**), after cycads 300 mya and before the dinosaurs 230 mya.

Dragonfly numbers are considered a good indicator of freshwater ecosystems, because they are near the top of the foodchain and need good quality water to reproduce.



Female Carpenter Bee (*Xylocopa*) visiting a sesame flower at Lee Point

Carpenters Bees are the largest native bees in Australia and sometimes seen in Darwin gardens. By using their mouthparts and buzzing they are able to make burrows in dead wood to nest (hence their name). Buzzing in a flower helps loosen pollen.

Bees are important, about one third of our food crops depend on bees for pollination.

***Until next time, enjoy the wet season at Lee Point***

Answers

Q1. The second Caspian Tern is at the top right.

Q2 – D. Over \$40 Billion USD. The 2011, the US Fisheries and Wildlife Service survey estimated that the annual economic value of US bird watching was \$15 billion for trip-related and \$26 billion for equipment-related expenditures, generating a total of \$41 billion and creating a total industry output (direct, indirect and induced) across the United States of \$107 billion:

<https://www.responsibletravel.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/213/2021/03/market-analysis-bird-based-tourism.pdf>