

## WHEN BALLOONS FLY, SEA BIRDS DIE

Every day balloons are released or accidentally escape at outdoor events. Most people are simply not aware that balloons and their attachments can be dangerous for wildlife.

In 2017 Zoos Victoria and Phillip Island Nature Parks are placing a spotlight on this issue and encouraging Australians to make their outdoor events wildlife-friendly by choosing bubbles instead of balloons. Dolphin Research Institute is proud to support this fantastic initiative and promote it to all our schools across the region

The CSIRO recently (2016) outlined balloons to be in the top three most harmful pollutants threatening marine wildlife - along with plastic bags and bottles. Of these three items, balloons and their attachments are the least serviced in the way of community campaigns, initiatives and regulation.

Shearwaters are the currently the most affected seabird when it comes to plastic ingestion.

The decline of flesh-footed shearwaters on Lord Howe Island has been directly linked to the ingestion of foreign debris, with balloons and their plastic attachments one of the most prevalent and readily identifiable items found.

Balloons used outside risk accidental escape. Intentional balloon releases happen regularly across Australia and New Zealand. Both currently pose a very real risk to wildlife. [Think Bubbles - Not Balloons!](#)

For more information check out [www.zoo.org.au](http://www.zoo.org.au)

Thanks to Rebecca Levy at Zoos Victoria for providing the information in this article. Photos: Ian Hutton (top photo shows balloon clips being removed from a flesh-footed shearwater, Lord Howe Island, 2016).



### Welcome to all our City of Kingston Ambassadors, teachers and their schools.

What a busy start to the term – we have certainly hit the bay swimming!

We have had some wonderful host schools that we would like to acknowledge and say thank you:

- Mentone Primary School (Maree)
- St Brigids Primary School (Wendy)
- St Catherines Primary school (Sandra)

We have had over 80 Ambassadors present during the Leadership Training days and what an amazing job they did. All the schools represented on those days should be very proud of their Ambassadors that they have selected.

The Ambassadors worked closely with other schools on the day and learned a program with a strong focus on our amazing marine life and pollution issues. These efforts were entwined with teamwork and leadership skills that will be taken back to their own schools. The Ambassadors all worked outside their comfort zones (some more than others!) and they stepped up to the challenge of presenting a program to the host school's students. We are always amazed and proud of our Ambassadors and these training days were no different. We really look forward to hearing about what our Ambassadors have done with the program once they are back at their own schools.



We would also like to say thank you to all the staff that were able to come and support the Ambassadors during their sessions. Remember to get on to the forum and share your ideas!