



WINTER EDITION

Dear Craig!

Welcome to the Winter edition of Noosa Oyster Chronicle! No doubt a few of us have the beanie's and Ugg Boots out for a few months of cooler temperatures (but don't tell the southerners).

This edition is about Reef Builder in Noosa, community partnerships, site plans, construction permits, Shuck Don't Chuck and other shellfish reef related news. Feel free to share this update with your friends and networks.



REEF BUILDER

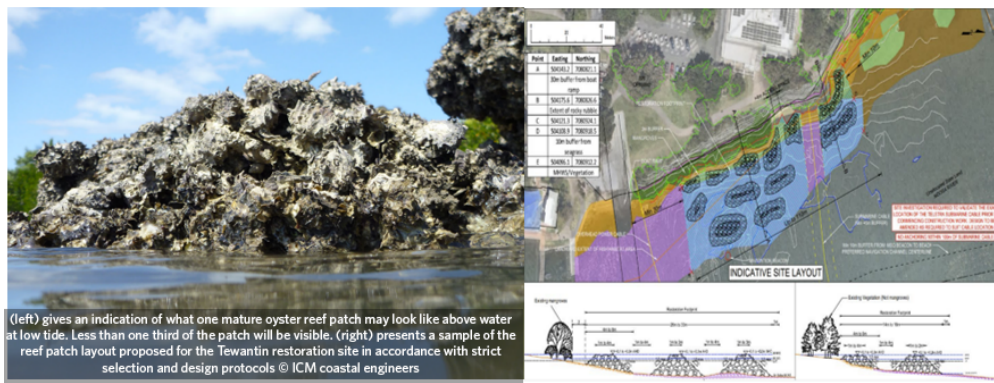
In January, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) kicked off the Australia-wide [Reef Builder](#) initiative for 2021. The initiative aims to bring shellfish reef ecosystems back from the brink of extinction – for the benefit of both people and nature. This is an exciting partnership between the Australian Government and TNC. For Noosa, Reef Builder funds means the restoration of another 1 hectare of oyster beds on top of the 1 hectare we are already restoring with our partners, Noosa Shire Council and The Thomas Foundation.

Designs for proposed oyster ecosystem restoration sites released

For the last 18 months, we have been working alongside community members, local indigenous elders, hydrographic surveyors, marine ecologists, coastal engineers and government agencies to select the most appropriate sites and reef designs for the restoration of oyster ecosystems in the Noosa River estuary. We have produced a special update to share this information with you.

With government approval, the project plans to work at two sites this summer (to be confirmed) and two sites the following summer. The actual construction work should take several weeks to complete.

Read the [Project Update here](#), or visit the [TNC Noosa webpage](#) for more info.



Restoration Permits

With the support of Noosa Shire Council we have submitted the draft restoration plans for the project to the Queensland government. The plans were well received, and a meeting was held between TNC and the agencies in June to discuss next steps. At the meeting, government agencies provided technical advice to help navigate the myriad of government requirements. This advice is helping ensure the project meets the highest possible standards. The team is currently working through feedback and will submit the refined plans to government for their formal assessment and permitting.

Just add water – Noosa’s Festival of Water 2021

In June, Noosa’s famous Festival of Water 2021 was held. Our project partner, Noosa Community Biosphere Association (NCBA), used their creative minds to run some exciting kids events which communicate the importance of river health and oyster ecosystem restoration. The NCBA team, worked with Noosa’s kids to produce these endearing oyster friends!



Working with Noosa Integrated Catchment Association

Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) is partnering with TNC to record water quality information around the oyster ecosystem restoration sites and to roll out oyster gardening. Oyster gardening is an activity where Noosa jetty owners help the restoration effort by growing local juvenile oysters (or 'spat'), settled onto clean oyster shells and hung in bags suspended from their jetties. Once the juvenile oysters are large enough to survive on their own, they are carefully placed onto the oyster reef patches to help kick start ecosystem recovery.

SHUCK DON'T CHUCK – Our shell collection is growing!

It was great to see a profile of our partner restaurants, Noosa Yacht & Rowing Club, Grenny's Noosa by the River, and Noosa Harbour Fish Market in the Noosa News recently. Their contributions are helping build our collection of cured oyster shell that will soon be used to produce 'seeded oyster cultch' – local Noosa juvenile oysters (or oyster spat') that has been settled onto desiccated (cured) oyster shell (or cultch).



Shell curing protocols

To ensure the oyster shell's we use are clean and safe, TNC follows strict biosecurity protocols. These include:

1. Shell is only cured at the designated and sign-posted shell curing site
2. Clean, shucked oyster shell is collected by the contractor from wholesaler/s, in bulk, in 1 tonne food-safe seafood transport containers and delivered to the shell curing site
3. Pre-washed shell is collected by the contractor from oyster retailers in Noosa in clean 20 litre buckets, and delivered to the designated shell curing site
4. All containers used for shell transport are thoroughly washed and disinfected before storage and re-use
5. At the shell curing site, shell is placed on the ground in rows separated and sign-posted by month collected
6. The shell is dried and cured (desiccated) in direct sunlight for 6 months, which is two months more than is required by the End of Waste Code
7. The shell is turned after three months of curing, as an additional desiccation measure
8. Each shell pile is no higher than 1 metre, which further enhances the desiccation process
9. The site is regularly monitored and maintained to reduce contamination of the shell piles
10. The curing site is located in an isolated area of the depot, so the risk of contamination from the depot's other waste management activities is negligible

11. Once cured, and prior to its removal from the depot, oyster shell may be washed with freshwater to remove any cumulated sediment or dried organic matter
12. The shell, when needed, is transported in clean containers

Oyster Broodstock

For oyster seeding the project only uses a handful of adult rock oysters collected from the Noosa River as brood stock, to provide the 'seeds' for the oyster shell. These will be collected against strict biosecurity protocols and permit conditions prescribed by the Queensland Government for this purpose.

VOLUNTEER HELP WANTED

We will soon embark on our spring shell cleaning and bagging activity, to prepare oyster shells for seeding with oyster spat in the government-run hatchery.

If you would like to get your hands dirty and get some direct experience with oyster ecosystem restoration work,
email> helenbowyer@tnc.org.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT VOLUNTEERING!

Thank you for your support. We appreciate all you can do to help restore these ecosystems for the benefit of people and nature.



**Craig Bohm,
Marine Coordinator, SE Queensland
The Nature Conservancy Australia**

We acknowledge the Kabi Kabi Traditional Owners who are the custodians of cultural knowledge and their collective memories of the Noosa River and Lakes region and advise this project accordingly. The project is located on Kabi Kabi Sea Country.

The Nature Conservancy gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our partners and donors.

Banner photo credit: Lower Noosa Estuary © Craig Bohm / TNC

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