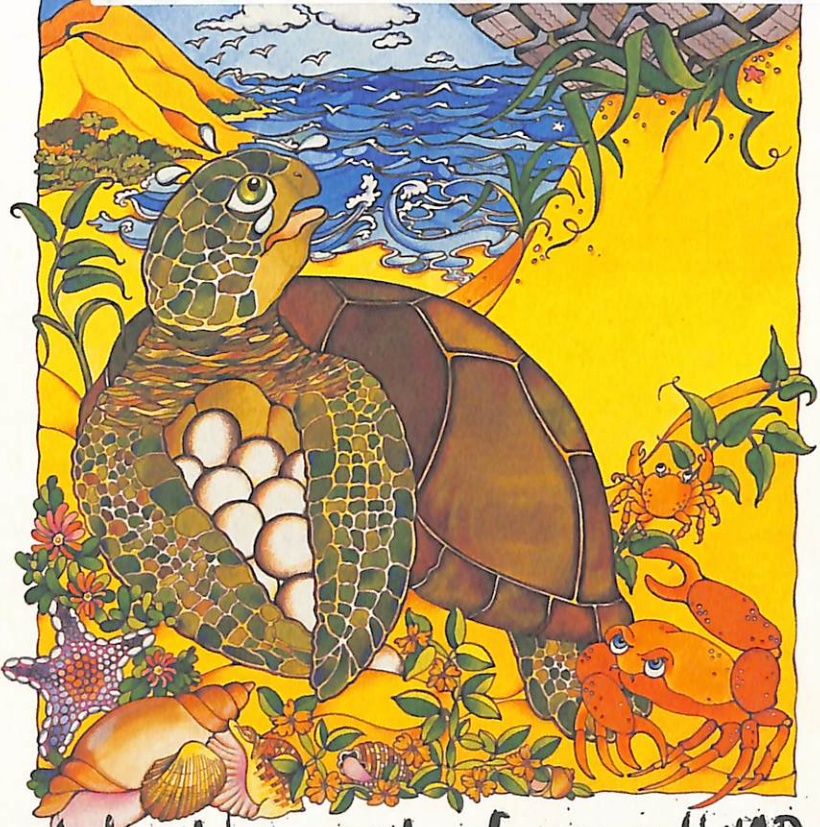




TLA OHV Library

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Make the cost of your 4WD
the only cost.

Some helpful tips on reducing your impact
on the coastal environment

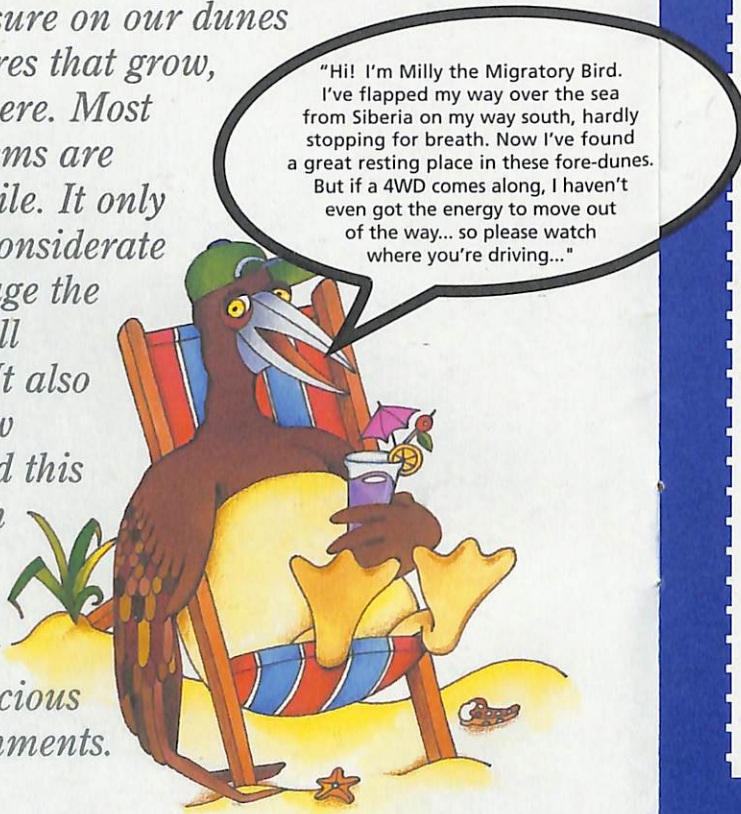
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Australia's beaches attract millions of visitors each year. Most come on foot to swim, surf, dive, fish, camp or just get away for a relaxing break. In some states, 4WD access to a limited number of beaches is allowed, particularly for the more remote and difficult to get to areas. Drivers must check regulations in their state before going near a beach because in some states, like Victoria, driving on the beach is illegal.

Over the years, increased traffic has seen mounting pressure on our dunes and the creatures that grow, live and rest there. Most coastal ecosystems are sandy and fragile. It only takes a few inconsiderate people to damage the reputation of all 4WD owners. It also only takes a few minutes to read this brochure which outlines common sense tips for helping protect our precious coastal environments.



Did you know

plants, birds and animals live on the beach?

Some people don't realise that our beaches and sand dunes are alive and active ecosystems with a huge range of precious plants and animals.

Many birds nest in sand dunes, turtles and penguins come out of the ocean to lay their eggs, and they're home to thousands of creatures like crabs, lizards and insects. Many coastal animals also rely on native grasses, shrubs and flowers for food and shelter that, if destroyed, may never be replaced.

Most animals are very sensitive to humans. Some birds will not land if they know people are about and others won't return to a place if footprints or tyre tracks have disturbed it. The noise of loud vehicles can disrupt feeding, resting or breeding wildlife.

Insensitive four wheel driving causes major problems for the plants and animals that live in

our sand dunes and beaches. Turtle and penguin eggs can be crushed, nests destroyed, native plants ripped up and entire ecosystems unbalanced.

Other creatures visit to feed on the shells and fish that live on the water's edge. Vehicles can damage this vital food supply for birds. Eventually they won't visit to feed and breed, interrupting the coastal cycle of life. Rubbish like plastic bags or fishing line left behind can tangle the wings or legs of our native animals and birds, causing restricted feeding and movement and a slow death.

Common complaints about vehicles on beaches

- Disturbance to wildlife such as nesting birds, turtles and crabs
- Beach and dune erosion
- Damage to vegetation
- Danger and annoyance to other beach users
- Air and noise pollution
- Littering
- Increasing the likelihood of weed infestations
- The cost of repairing damaged dunes
- Visual disturbances like tyre tracks.



Did you know

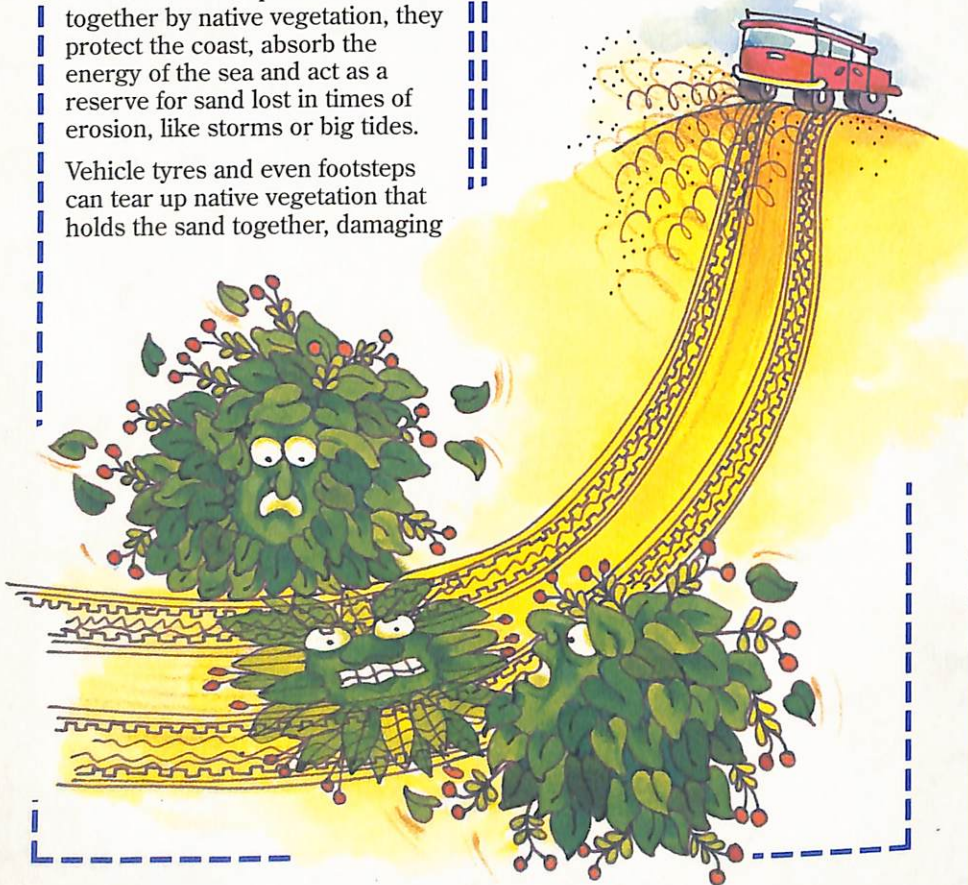
dunes are not just a pile of sand?

Sand dunes are the backbone of the beach. Built up and held together by native vegetation, they protect the coast, absorb the energy of the sea and act as a reserve for sand lost in times of erosion, like storms or big tides.

Vehicle tyres and even footsteps can tear up native vegetation that holds the sand together, damaging

or killing plants and causing erosion. If sand blows away, dunes are lowered and it's harder for them to do their job. Four wheel drive tyres can also hold weed seeds that may grow and choke out native vegetation on dunes.

Severe erosion drastically affects the ability of the coastal environment to function properly and this is one reason for restrictions and banning of 4WD vehicles in some coastal regions.



Coastcare Tips

Before you start.

- Before driving on a beach, find out local rules, restrictions, regulations and the need for permits. Check with your state or local conservation agency or local government to see if you can access the beach with your vehicle.
- Make a decision about whether you really need to take your vehicle onto the beach and walk in if you can. Footprints have less impact than car tyres but when walking over dunes, stick to tracks and walk carefully to avoid disturbing nests or plants.
- Plan your trip so that you use your four wheel drive to get to your destination with as little impact as possible. Ring ahead to find out tide times and the condition of beaches and sand tracks.
- Ensure your vehicle is mechanically sound with an efficient muffler to reduce noise, air pollution and potential fire hazards.
- Clean out tyres before accessing beaches to avoid introducing the seeds from weeds or other plants that shouldn't grow along the coast.

Accessing the beach.

- When crossing dunes (if access permitted), always stick to existing access tracks and recognised crossing points to and from the beach.
- Do not make new tracks across the dunes or through the bush. "Trail blazing" or "dune busting" is just plain stupid. People who do this look like idiots and wreck the places we all want to visit.
- Never drive on vegetated sand dunes.
- Travel along previous tyre marks to minimise the area of beach affected by wheel marks and to reduce the chance of getting bogged.
- If you reach an obstruction or can't continue, reverse back along the track by which you entered the beach rather than turn on the dunes.



Did you know

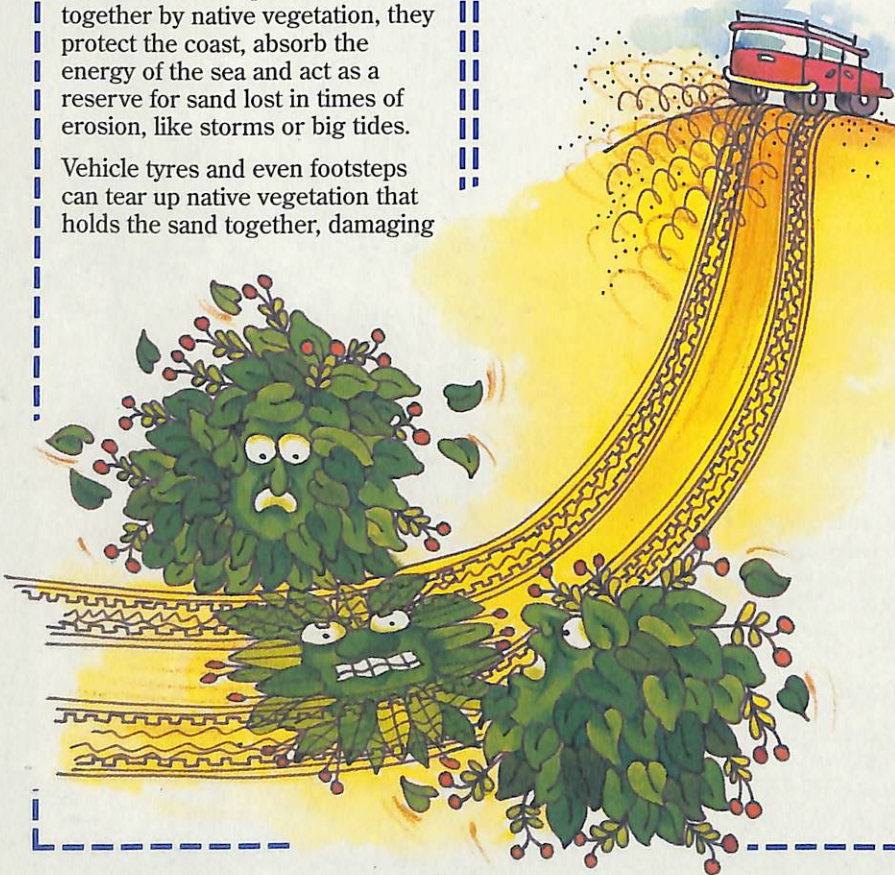
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Coastcare Tips

Using the beach.

- Drive on the hard, wet sand section between the high and low tide marks. Never drive above the high tide mark as this is where plants are starting to grow and some birds nest.
- Travel at or around low tide when the sand is firm and avoid driving one hour either side of high tide. It will make driving easier AND help protect the beach.
- Don't drive on sandy areas along the debris or drift lines as plants and animals live and feed here and they are sites for the natural building of new dunes.
- Never drive in sand dunes where there are no existing tracks.

Please note:

All of these 'Coastcare Tips' also apply to horse and trail bike riders.

Reducing your impact.

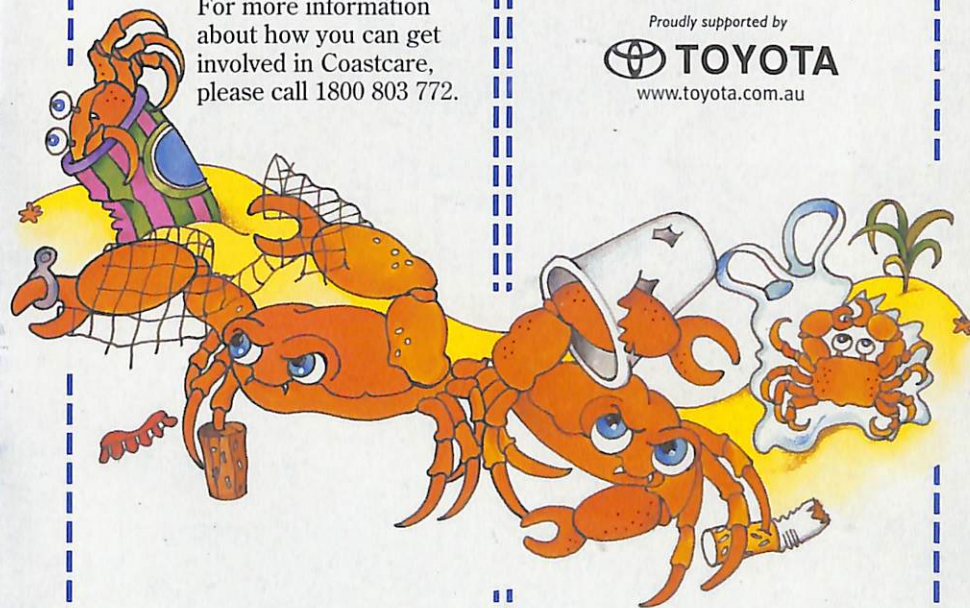
- Keep alert and on the lookout so you can avoid nests, resting birds or other animals. Give resting birds as much room as possible and slow down so that they are not scared into flight as you pass.
- Take your rubbish and fishing gear home or place in the rubbish bins, if provided. Dumped rubbish is unsightly and a hazard to wildlife and people.
- Slow right down when passing people on the beach. They often won't see or hear you coming.
- When driving on sand and inland tracks, keep 4WD engaged for your convenience and to minimise track damage.
- Normal traffic rules apply on the beach. Respect speed limits and wear a seatbelt.
- Support, join or form a local Coastcare group to help protect and preserve our precious coastal environments.

To find out how, call 1800 803 772.

What is Coastcare?

Coastcare is communities caring for their coast, supported by Federal, State and Local Governments. It is a community movement to protect and preserve Australia's precious coastal and marine environments. There are about 700 Coastcare support groups working on local environmental problems such as dune erosion, weeds, storm water pollution and loss of habitat. These groups are made up of volunteers who could use your help.

For more information about how you can get involved in Coastcare, please call 1800 803 772.



How is Toyota supporting Coastcare?

Toyota Australia is a strong supporter of Coastcare in each state and is working hard to find ways of reducing the impact of vehicles on the environment.

Toyota, through its sponsorship of Coastcare, is helping educate new and existing 4WD owners and drivers about the safe use of these vehicles in the coastal zone.

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For more information,
please call:

Environment Australia's Community Information Unit
Ph 1800 803 772

or your State Conservation Agency
or your Local Council.

Please keep this brochure in your glove box, or pass it on
to someone else who needs to know this information.

Coastcare is established in all states and soon the Northern Territory.
It is delivered jointly in Victoria with Coast Action
and in Western Australia with CoastWest.



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