Love Queensland. Let's keep it clean

— from balloon litter

It's easy to forget about the consequence of a released balloon while celebrating an event—but the aftermath can be deadly.

Whether released deliberately or by accident, balloons often end up polluting our environment and harming wildlife...

Photo: Tangaroa Blue Foundation

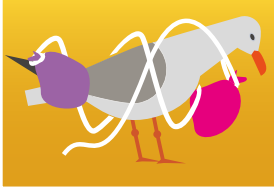
ANIMAL IMPACTS

Balloons have been identified as one of the MOST HARMFUL waste items to wildlife.

Birds and turtles not only ingest burst balloons, they actively select them as food. Burst balloons can resemble jellyfish—a turtle's natural food source.

Ingesting these items can cause intestinal blockages and result in a slow painful death through starvation.

Wildlife, both terrestrial and marine, can become entangled in balloon ribbons and strings, causing injury or death through drowning, suffocation, an inability to feed or avoid predators.



Nearly half of all seabirds are likely to ingest debris, eating everything from balloons to metal hooks and fishing line.

Queensland Government

RELEASING BALLOONS IS LITTERING

In Queensland, the release of a balloon into the environment is considered to be littering under the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011*.

While a person may have permission from the occupier of a place to release a balloon, once the balloon leaves that place it becomes litter.

The law does not differentiate if the waste is biodegradable or not. The release of single or multiple balloons can constitute either littering or illegal dumping—depending on the volume released.

Penalties apply, which you can find at www.qld.gov/litter.

PLASTIC IN THE ENVIRONMENT

The volume of plastic waste in the environment is a major concern around the world. In Australia, approximately three-quarters of coastal rubbish is plastic.

Foil coated (mylar) balloons are not biodegradable, and along with attached ribbons and plastic clips, remain in the environment **forever**—adding to the ever-growing load of plastic pollution.

Generally, balloons are made from latex which may be biodegradable but takes many years to fully decompose—causing great harm in the process.


Mylar

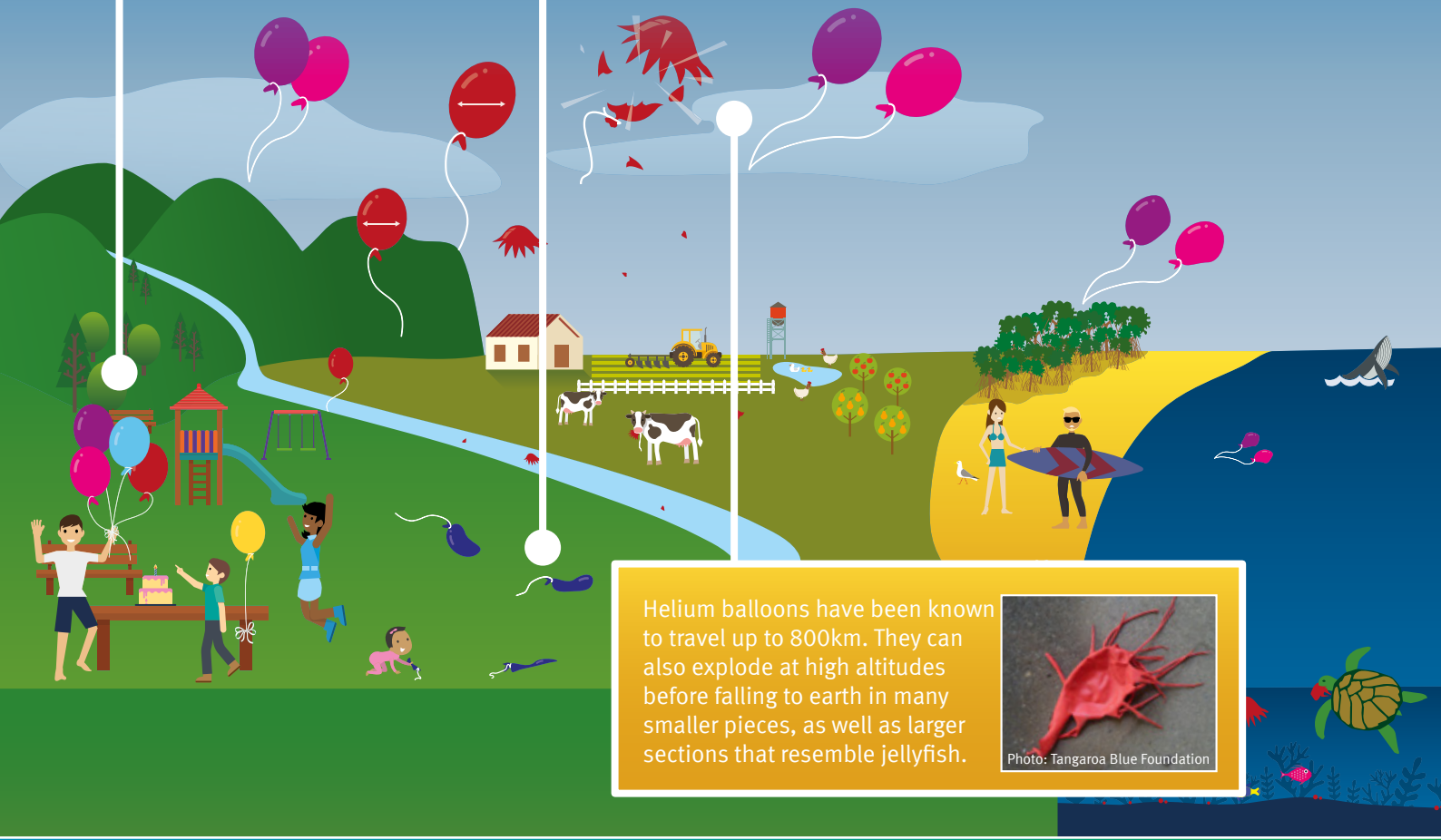

Latex

WHAT CAN I DO?

Look for alternatives for your celebrations like **pinwheels, bubbles,** or **paper tissue pom poms** that can be recycled at the end of your event.

If the use of balloons are unavoidable:

- try and keep balloons indoors
- make sure any outdoor balloons are strongly secured
- choose biodegradable latex (rubber) balloons and natural strings
- avoid using non-biodegradable mylar balloons (foil-coated)
- ensure all balloons and accessories end up in the bin.



Helium balloons have been known to travel up to 800km. They can also explode at high altitudes before falling to earth in many smaller pieces, as well as larger sections that resemble jellyfish.

Photo: Tangaroa Blue Foundation