



BluebottleWatch

Understanding Bluebottles Along Australia's Coast

BluebottleWatch is a collaboration between UNSW Sydney, Surf Life Saving Australia, DCCEEW, and other collaborators to shed insights into the biology, dynamics, pathways, and distribution of bluebottles, and develop a daily likelihood tool predicting bluebottle occurrence at Australian beaches.

The multidisciplinary project uses an innovative combination of laboratory work, ocean surveys, statistical, AI, and hydrodynamic modelling to fill knowledge gaps on bluebottle behaviour, ecology, source, and movements.

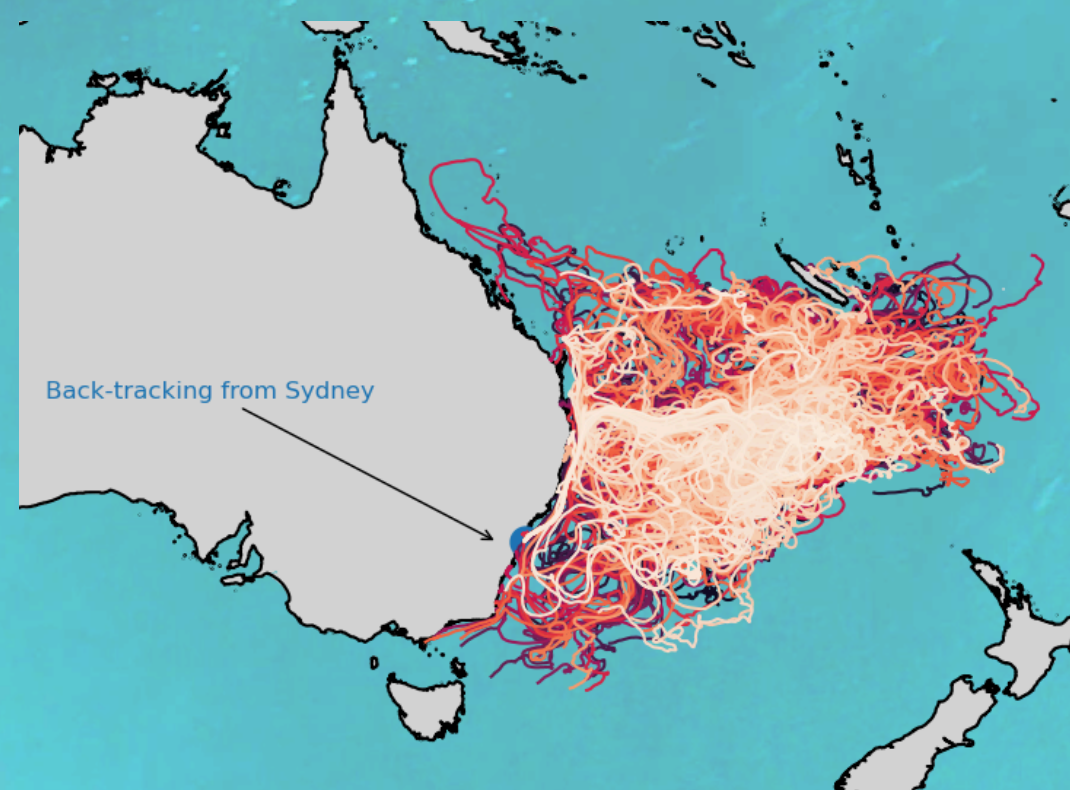
KEY INSIGHTS

Not all bluebottles are the same! Recent genetic research revealed two main species found along the coast of Australia: *Physalia megalista* and *Physalia utriculus* (Church et al. 2024).

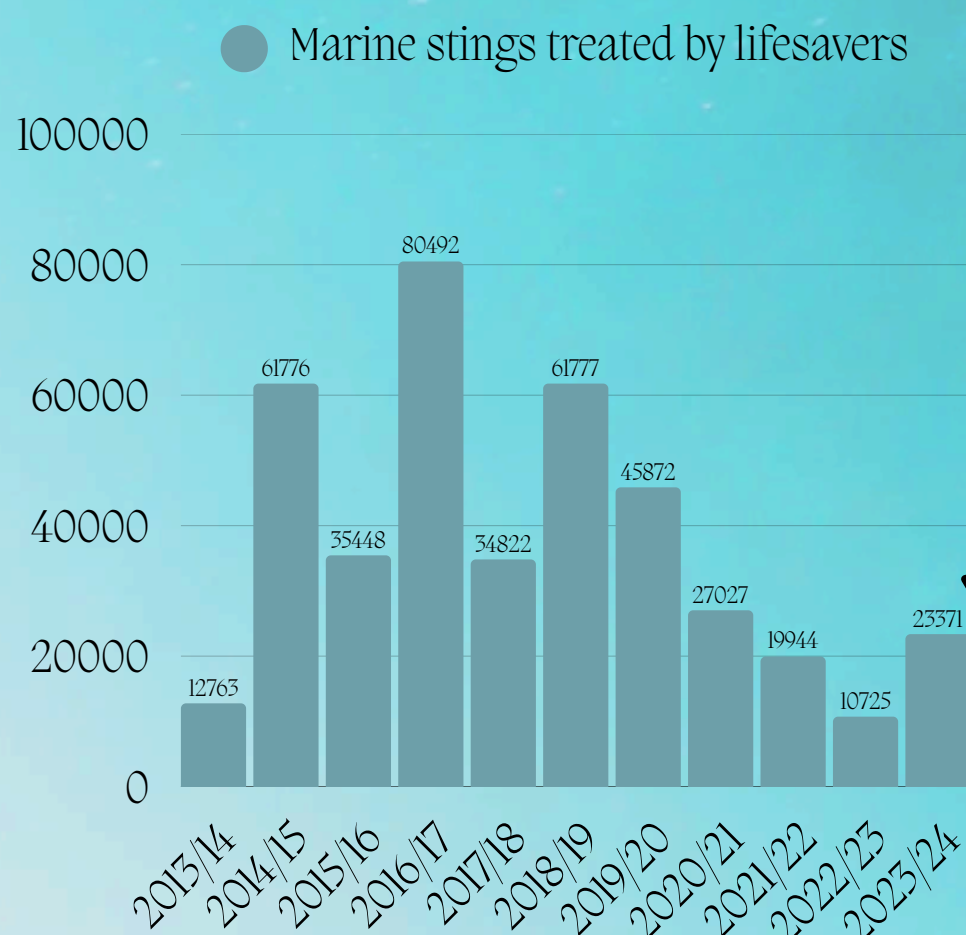
Bluebottles are primarily moved by currents in the open ocean but pushed by winds to the coast. In NSW, northeasterly and southerly winds usually precede strandings.



In NSW, there are two seasonal peaks in averaged bluebottle presence: in spring (October) and late summer (February).



Sydney bluebottles most likely come from the Tasman and Coral Sea, travelling around 150 km per month.



WHY THIS MATTERS

- Thousands of stings treated every year! The new knowledge and prediction will
- help swimmers better understand beach conditions,
 - and supports lifesaving services to plan for high-risk days.



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