



One Tree Art Prize

Artist: Katie Barlow

Title: The Sheoak and the Sand

GPS: -23.4432209, 151.9182631

On Heron Island, I met this Sheoak not as a backdrop, but as a living presence within a fragile system. Beneath its fine, wind-brushed foliage lies a quiet influence on the sand below, where small shifts in temperature shape entire futures.

At the research station, I learnt that sea turtle sex is determined by the warmth of the sand in which their eggs are incubated. As the climate warms, the balance begins to tilt, with consequences still unfolding. Scientists have tested many interventions, including shade structures, relocating nests, and irrigation, all aimed at cooling nesting beaches and restoring balance. In this context, the Sheoak offers more than shade. Its canopy helps cool nesting



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beaches, softening extremes - where, again and again, nature still seems to do it best.

This portrait of the Sheoak celebrates its form, presence, and even its shade, as well as the role it plays within this coastal ecology.