

### Queensland Landcare Awards

Nominations for Qld Landcare Awards closed early July and there are four nominations from our region. The nominees will all be profiled in our newsletters, starting this month. Winners will be announced at the Qld Landcare Conference in September. State winners will be eligible for the Australian Landcare Awards next year.

**Mackay Regional Council is nominated for the Partnerships with Landcare Award.** The nomination highlights Mackay's Natural Environment Program which is delivered with funds from the Natural Environment Levy. It describes the extensive range of partnerships Council has developed – with Landcare groups such as ours, other key stakeholders and the community - in order to deliver outstanding natural resource management outcomes.

The nomination emphasises the innovative Communities and Coastal Program in which Coastal Management Guidelines were adopted that set a strategic intent and individual beach management plans. This comprehensive approach allows for a four stage process: 1. Setting strategic guidelines and plans; 2. Implementation; 3. Monitoring; and 4. Community engagement and education.

Council has also invested in the development of a Natural Environment Plan, which uses an innovative conservation prioritisation framework to provide the overall framework for the delivery of Landcare outcomes across the region. Since the adoption of the Plan in 2012, Council has committed nearly \$1 million to on-ground projects across the range, plains, waterways and coastal landscapes.

PCL works closely with Council, receives significant funding and in-kind support and was very pleased to nominate Council for this award.



Image: K. Woodcock

### All the Weeds you can handle...

#### News from the 12<sup>th</sup> Queensland Weed Symposium, report and images by Iona Flett Reef Catchments

Last week 160 delegates from all over Queensland (and beyond) attended a really fantastic symposium in Hervey Bay organised by the Weed Society of Queensland. All sorts of fascinating papers were delivered, with lots of new NRM techniques discussed, a smattering of useful networking opportunities (aka social functions!) and a well-organised field trip.

There was a strong focus on new technology options for weed management, including several projects utilising Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for weed location, identification, aerial spraying, mapping and other novel pest management techniques (ever thought of putting tiny mirrors on locusts so they can be tracked remotely?!). This type of technology has been used for years in Japan for spraying weeds in rice fields, and the current batch of research and development means that for some applications, UAVs could be a serious cost-saving measure in the near future.

And from i-technology to bio-technology, there is a promising new biocontrol for cat's claw creeper. A terrible pest of riparian areas, cat's claw is on the move through Queensland, despite two other biocontrol agents having already been released. The latest is a tiny leaf mining jewel beetle that Liz Snow from Biosecurity Queensland says is easy to breed, fast to reproduce, and quite effective at munching on the invasive vine. She is encouraging Landcare and other community groups to get in touch if they would like to try breeding the little beetle for release in cat's claw infestations.



Tiny Jewel Beetles

The theme of the conference was "Weeds – Everyone's Business" but a key question was how to persuade *everyone* that this is the case. How do we keep people engaged and reach those that can help with weed management in a political climate where funding for environmental projects is harder and harder to access? It seems that social media and smart phones are the way forward. An app is being developed that could really change community weed management. Imagine if everyone using the land, from farmers to bushwalkers, had the ability to identify weeds in the field, GPS their location, take photographs and instantly receive management advice. This is a current project championed by Kym Johnson from QDAFF, predicted to add fun and accessibility to a serious problem, and to be a seriously useful management strategy.

Fraser Coast Council's aquatic weed slasher



Over the next few weeks we'll be posting weed management highlights from the conference to the PCL Facebook page and the email list. Stay tuned for all the weed news that you can handle!



## Plant of the month

A medium native tree noted for its widely spreading crown, bears white flowers in spring followed by yellow/orange seed capsules in winter.

*Harpullia pendula* SAPINDACEAE

### Tulipwood

**FORM:** A small to medium tree with a dense, shady crown when crown in the open. The trunks of older trees may be buttressed at the base and the grey bark may shed in round or irregular long flakes.

**LEAVES:** Pinnate, 4-8 bluntly pointed, elliptic to obovate leaflets, 5-10 x 2.4cm, which are thin textured and glossy green, underside slightly hairy.

**FLOWER/FRUITS:** Five petalled, greenish yellow flowers, up to 2cm in diameter, are borne in axillary sprays to 28cm long.

Fruits two lobed, thin walled capsules; orange-red at maturity opening to display shiny black seeds in each inflated lobe.

**PROPAGATION:** From seed.

**LOCAL HABITAT:** Rainforest, littoral forest.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Coastal eastern Australia from Cooktown to Bellinger River, New South Wales.

**GENERAL:** Timber is valued for cabinetmaking. An attractive ornamental which makes a good shade tree.

Sources: Alcock & Champion, 1989 One Hundred and One Trees of Mackay. Images: S.Robins



## Weed spotting this month

*A creeping nasty, expanding in a creek near you!*

*Ruellia tweediana*

### Wild Petunia

This is a highly invasive erect herb growing to about 1m tall. Stems take root where they touch the ground. It comes from Mexico.

This plant is invading creek banks, flood reaches and environmentally sensitive areas where it actively displaces native species and vegetation communities.

It is a garden escapee that spreads aggressively from garden waste. The seeds and plant fragments are spread by water.

Large infestations are known from known in Bakers and Reliance Creeks in the Pioneer catchment.

It will grow in shade and thrive in damp conditions; produces copious quantities of seed which create a large seed bank in the soil making it difficult to control once established in creek banks or rainforest areas.

**LEAVES:** Opposite, simple, linear to linear-ovate, 100-300 x 10mm or less, dull dark green.

**FLOWERS:** Violet to purple, trumpet-shaped, 25-40mm long, with five spreading petals; borne in axillary clusters.

**FRUITS/SEEDS:** Elongated capsules to 25mm containing about 20 brown flattened seeds, 2mm wide that are explosively expelled at maturity.

Source: 2011, Weeds of Mackay Whitsunday Region



Ruellia infesting palm vine forest at Reliance Ck. Image: P Alden



Image: S&A Pearson

*The Pioneer Catchment and Landcare group, with assistance from Mackay Regional Council, is currently trialing different control methods for Ruellia at a site along Reliance Ck*

## Do you have a Native Garden worth showing off?

If you, your friend or neighbour has a 'mostly' native garden that they are proud of, this is your opportunity to nominate your (or your friend's) garden creation into the Sarina Native Gardens Competition!

### Entries are welcome from Sarina and surrounding areas from Mackay to Claireview

Entry is free and all entrants will receive 5 free native plants from the Sarina Landcare Community Nursery.

Entry forms and competition details are available from SLCMA by calling 4956 1388 or email: [slcma@mcs.net.au](mailto:slcma@mcs.net.au). Nominations close on 9 August 2013

Image: S.VonFahland

## New Weed Alert—Red Witchweed confirmed near Mackay

Red Witchweed (*Striga asiatica*), is a root parasite that is exotic to Australia and affects the production of sugarcane and cereal crops by depriving them of water and nutrients.

Biosecurity Queensland has confirmed that Red Witchweed has been found near Mackay. This is the first confirmed detection of the species in Australia.

While the weed has been confirmed on one property, information to date suggests that the infestation may be on a small number of other properties in the immediate area.

The affected property is being placed under movement restrictions which means no equipment, soil or plant material is allowed to be moved on or off the property without approval.



Biosecurity Queensland has established a response program including a local control centre in Mackay. Potentially affected plant industries have been notified and Biosecurity Queensland is working with industry representatives to provide information to producers. Cane producers are urged to check their crops and report anything they suspect could be red witchweed.

Producers are urged to report any suspect weeds to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Further information on Red Witchweed is available from [www.daff.qld.gov.au](http://www.daff.qld.gov.au) (Image: DAFF)

## Come along and meet Costa Georgiadis host of ABC's Greening Australia at the launch of the Sarina Community Native Gardens

When: 7 September, 10am – 1pm

Where: Cnr of Beach and Cemetery Rds, Sarina

What is on?:

- o Announce the winners of the Sarina Native Garden Competition
- o Tours of the Sarina Community Native Garden
- o Information talk by Costa
- o Stalls and displays

For more information contact SLCMA on 4956 1388.



Image: ABC online

## Out and About with Landcare in July ...

On Saturday 6 July Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group, Conservation Volunteers Australia and Mackay Regional Council hosted a variety of activities at the Far Beach Community Day. More than 25 people joined us during the morning to plant trees, remove weeds and rubbish and take in the fantastic information from Birdlife Mackay, Turtle Watch, Reef Catchments and Mackay Conservation Group about shorebirds, turtles and coastal habitat.

*Special mention must go to Iona Flett for providing a really yummy barbecue with home made cooking. What a treat!*



Kellie Galletly and daughter Ruby Galletly-Hope planting a tree at Far Beach



Chris Stevenson watching over young Alexander Smith carrying some much needed mulch for the young trees

Images B Molineux

## Upcoming Events

### AUGUST

**Thursday 1, 7.30pm** - SGAP General Meeting including a talk called *Some Plants of the Ayre Peninsula* by Bev Watson. Mackay Gem and Craft Society Hall, Leisure Court.

**Saturday 3, 8.00am** - Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee. Contact: Joyce on 4955 0153

**Sunday 4, 6.30am** — Birdlife Mackay outing to Lyn Kane's property. Meet at the Tourist Information Centre on Nebo Rd. Contact 4952 2964

**Saturday 24, 9-11 am**—Coastcare working bee at Bucasia Beach removing garden escapees from the coastal dunes. Meet at the access track near the northern end of Bucasia Beachfront Caravan Resort.

**Saturday 24, 2-4pm**—Coastcare continues at Blacks Beach, help clean up the Spit, meet at end of Pacific Drive

### SEPTEMBER—IS BIODIVERSITY MONTH!

**Sunday 1** - Birdlife Mackay outing to Padaminka. Contact 4952 2964

**Saturday 7, 8am-10am**— Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee. Contact: Joyce on 4955 0153

**Sunday 8** - Bushcare's Major Day Out—a national day designed to encourage us all to take part in the restoration and maintenance of our remaining bushland. <http://www.bushcaresmajordayout.org>

**September 2 to 8**—Australian Landcare Week

**Sunday 22, 8am**—Great Northern Clean-Up. Join Pioneer Catchment Landcare Group in cleaning up Riverside Dv. Contact us if you would like to volunteer.

**September 27 to 29** — Queensland Landcare Conference - Warwick.



An exciting project is happening on Owen's Creek and we need your help. The project managers are trying to source logs for a river improvement project. Logs should be 5-8m long, and 400-650mm diameter. If they still have the root ball, that is even better.

*Please contact the office if you can help or if you would like more information.*

## Junior Landcare Grants

Through the Junior Landcare Grants Program, any school or organisation (including youth groups, scouts, day care centres etc.) that would like to involve their students in Landcare projects, in partnership with local Landcare groups, can apply for grants to assist them with the cost of their projects.

For more information on Junior Landcare Grants visit:  
[www.juniorlandcare.com.au](http://www.juniorlandcare.com.au)

Join Wildlife Warrior Bob Irwin at the Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre, Alfred St, Mackay on Wednesday 7 August, 6.30pm, for an evening of inspiring talks and images about the Great Barrier Reef and to hear what you can do to ensure its protection.

**Reminder**  
**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE**  
please contact the office on  
[admin@pioneercatchment.org.au](mailto:admin@pioneercatchment.org.au)

Thanks to those who have  
Renewed memberships to-date.

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