

Welcome to our Region, Johnelle Stevens

Johnelle Stevens is Reef Catchments' new Regional Landcare Facilitator. Johnelle will be working closely with the Pioneer, Sarina and Whitsundays Landcare groups, as well as the Mackay Regional Pest Management Group. Her role also includes coordinating with Reef Catchment staff and regional stakeholders to develop and deliver Natural Resource Management projects within the region.

Johnelle has worked in Qld, NSW and the NT in developing and delivering projects varying from rangeland rehabilitation and monitoring to pest management, sustainable agriculture, water quality improvement and biodiversity conservation. Her first task in the Mackay Region is to deliver the "Reef Rescue Grazing, Sustainable Agriculture on the Tropical Queensland Coast" Forum, which is a free forum for graziers in the Mackay, Whitsunday and Isaac region. The

Forum will be held at the Mackay Entertainment Centre on Wednesday 9th April from 8:30am, with Lunch provided. Topics for discussion will be:

- ☆ The latest in beef production in Northern Australia
- ☆ Soil health on the Central Queensland Coast
- ☆ Giant Rats Tail Grass Control, and much more

If you are interested in attending the forum please Contact Johnelle to register on 0457 306152 or by email: johnelle.stevens@reefcatchments.com by the 2nd April 2014.



A Ticklish Turtle Rescue

In late February, a medium sized Hawksbill turtle was found washed up on Bucasia beach. Nicknamed "Henrietta", the turtle was very weak, breathing with a shallow wheezing sound, and barely able to lift her head.

A volunteer from the Australian Wildlife Rescue Service, Danielle Overall from Conservation volunteers, assessed Henrietta's health saying "You can see the barnacles and algae on her carapace which show that she's been floating for awhile." Turtles found like this are commonly called 'floaters' because they can't dive. Causes include ingesting

plastics that block the intestines and build up gases, or infections that throw the 'inner workings' out of balance." And did you know Henrietta can feel tickles through her carapace?, moving her flippers when gently scratched showing that she is still receptive and alive.

Hawksbill turtles feed on Sea sponges, as well as seagrasses, algae, soft corals and shellfish. The hawksbill turtle has a distinctive parrot-like beak and a high-dome carapace. Henrietta is probably around 10-15 years old, just a youngster. Henrietta was transferred to the Airlie Beach Turtle Hospital where she can get some much needed TLC - Good Luck Henrietta!

Seven species of sea turtles are found around the world, and six of them live and nest in Queensland. All turtles are considered to be endangered or vulnerable to extinction and this situation is significantly due to human impacts. The saddest thing is the increase in PLASTIC INGESTION by turtles in the oceans. We can make a difference if we care enough to REDUCE OUR PLASTIC CONSUMPTION and responsibly dispose of plastic waste.

If you find stranded turtles (or other marine life) in our region you can report it to the **Marine Stranding Hotline** on **1300ANIMAL**, and hopefully they will get the love they need to survive our otherwise stupid human behaviours.

To find out more about turtles go to: <http://www.environment.gov.au/topics/marine/marine-species/marine-turtles>



Photo: D. Overall



Plant of the month

Cordyline manners-suttoniae

Giant Palm Lily

The majority of plants we produce in the Natural Environment Centre Nursery are fast growing, pioneer species aimed at getting foliage cover and canopy as quickly as possible for revegetation. However, there are some understory plants that are great for introducing early in the revegetation process, including the stunning Giant Palm Lily.

In town gardens, Palm Lilies are elegant, versatile plants and can be used in native bush gardens, open eucalypt forest, rainforest gardens, stylish architectural gardens, mixed in with exotics, as temporary indoor plants, or just about any part-shaded to well-lit area of the garden to provide interest using foliage form and very showy cascades of berries.

HABIT: Shrub to 5m usually with a single slender trunk.

LEAVES: Dark green, simple, entire, crowded at ends of branches and top of stem, 35-65 x 6-12cm. Leaf stalks can be 12-30cm long, grooved on the upper side.

FLOWER/FRUITS: Attractive pendulous sprays up to 35cm long. The flowers are white or cream, bisexual, and usually appear in late summer, February to July. The fruit are berries, 1-1.5cm in diameter, starting yellow and turning bright red. Fruit from December to May.

PROPAGATION: From seed and cuttings.

LOCAL HABITAT: Usually in rainforests and swampy situations. You can find specimens of this plant in the Tropical Shade Garden of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. Its display of flowers and colourful berries is a glorious sight. It can be used in very wet spots but is also tolerant of dry spells.

Source: Melzer and Plumb (2007), *Plants of Capricornia*; *Census of the Queensland Flora* (2010)



Photo: Maya Harrison

Weed spotting this month

Haematoxylum campechianum

Log Wood

Article by Iona Flett, Reef Catchments

The Mackay Regional Pest Management Group are working together with Reef Catchments and the North Queensland Bulk Ports Authority on a project to eradicate a weed called *Haematoxylum campechianum*, or Logwood.

Logwood was introduced to Australia from Central America, probably as a garden plant. It forms thickets, and because of the dense, spiny habit of the plant, its control can be difficult. In the Mackay region, there are several thickets on grazing land near Palmyra, and until recently, one thicket on North Queensland Bulk Ports land near Slade Point.

Logwood has 2-4 pairs of small heart-shaped leaflets on compound, alternately arranged leaves, and spines where the leaves join the branch. Its attractive flowers are arranged in showy spikes. They are maroon in the bud and pale yellow and orchid-like when open. The papery brown pods to 50mm long containing 1-2 seeds persist on the trees for several months

Recommended treatment is to spray young seedlings with a chemical such as Graze-On. Larger infestations, where plants can be up to 5m high, a bulldozer is required to push the trees over and allow them to dry and be burnt.

Logwood has been used to produce the dyes hematoxylin and hematein, which were very valuable in the 17th and 18th centuries. Over the next year, logwood trees will be cleared in the Mackay area. Get in touch if you'd like to have a go at making some all-natural plant dye!



Image: Wikipedia

Close-up of heart-shaped leaflets (Photo: I. Flett)



Logwood being cleared on NQBP land at Slade Point (Photo: NQBP).

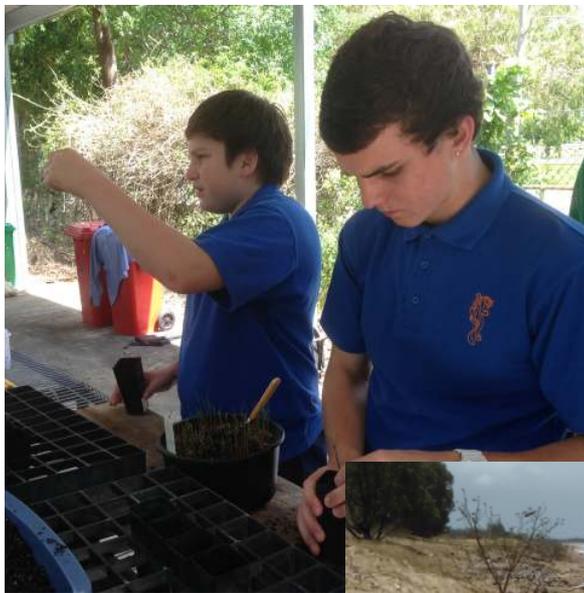
Landcare Projects and Volunteer Opportunities

March through to May is a busy time for revegetation projects at Pioneer Catchment & Landcare. We have a number project work in the coming months that are open to volunteers. You are invited to join us to volunteer at the following events. Please contact the Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Office if you are interested: Ph. 0447749769 | Email. admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

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| <p>Saturday 29th March Riverine Revegetation at Melba House Marian and Owen's Ck</p> | <p>Help with the tree planting along the Pioneer River. Meet at 8am Melba House Stay on to join us for a trip out to Gargett to see the Engineered Log Jam and revegetation on Owen's Ck. Bus to Gargett and Lunch provided. Children with parents welcome. <i>IMPORTANT:</i> Please RSVP for this one.</p> |
| <p>Monday 31st March Tuesday 1st April Riverine Revegetation at Melba House, Marian</p> | <p>Join Conservation Volunteers on site at Melba House to plant a further 400 trees along the riverbank. Please RSVP, sorry no children.</p> |
| <p>Wednesday 2nd Thursday 3rd April Coastal revegetation at Far Beach, East Mackay.</p> | <p>Enjoy the Mackay Coast and Join the Conservation Volunteers to expand the tree planting project at Far Beach, with over 300 more plants. Please RSVP, sorry no children.</p> |

- ☆ For catering purposes, please RSVP to all activities.
- ☆ All activities are supervised, however, children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- ☆ Please bring your own hat, closed in shoes, water bottle, sunscreen and insect repellent. All tree planting gear is provided, but please bring personal tools and gloves if you have them.

Landcare activities in February 2014...



Below—One of the fifty native seedlings planted at Far Beach before Christmas. Planted on the fore dune, these plants were heavily impacted by Cyclone Dylan.

Above—Lewis Thompson, Luke Matsen, Samuel Conroy and Liam Meng - Some of the 14 Year 9/10 Science Students from Mercy College, Mackay beginning a series of activities learning about Coastal ecosystems and management. They visited the Natural Environment Centre Nursery to experience sowing seeds and potting up seedlings for revegetation on the beach.



Upcoming Events

March

- Saturday 1** — Clean Up & Revegetation at Melba House. Contact 4944 1979
- Sunday 2** — Clean Up Australia Day
- Sunday 2** — Birdlife Mackay outing to Orphanage Swamp Bucasia. Contact 4959 3382
- Thursday 6** - SGAP meeting, Ken Gillman—the *Aristolochia* Story.
- Saturday 8** — Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee. Contact 4955 0153
- Monday 17** — “Wildlife in the Gardens” stories, walks and activities for toddlers and children to 5yo. Bookings on 49527300
- Tuesday 25** — Business’ Clean-Up day
- Wednesday 28** — Schools’ Clean-Up day
- Saturday 29** — Riverine Revegetation at Melba House. Contact 4944 1979
- Saturday 29** — Earth Hour 8.30pm
- Monday 31** — Riverine Revegetation at Melba House. Contact 4944 1979

April

- Tuesday 1** — Riverine Revegetation at Melba House. Contact 4944 1979
- Saturday 5** — Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee. Contact 4955 0153
- Sunday 6** — Birdlife Mackay outing to Armstrong’s Property Strathdickie. Contact 49593382

Land for Wildlife landholders are reminded to contact us with their Expressions of Interest for plants for the 2014 planting season.



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Over a one-day ‘Start the Switch’ summit, secondary school students select projects to create change in their schools and local communities and are provided skills training and project planning support to maximize their effectiveness.

Mackay Youth Leadership & Sustainability Summit 2014

Wednesday 28th May 2014
8:30am-4:00pm

CQUniversity Mackay
Campus, Building 1
Boundary St, Pionlands, Mackay



[To register follow this link and complete the details about your school. Registrations close Friday 23rd May 2014.](#)

For more information call 0423 044 431 or email

gemma@mackayconservationgroup.org.au

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