

### A LOCAL STORY OF CREEK BANK REHABILITATION— Pioneer Landcare Group member, Daryl Barnes

My little project behind our house on the banks of Bakers Creek in Walkerston is progressing along well. With a Flying Fox colony in the trees directly opposite the site and a Brush Turkey mound on the site, there is never a dull moment (see photo below of colony and revegetation).

Three years ago there was a thick cover of Singapore Daisy for about fifty metres along the waters-edge of the main stream and in places it was five to ten metres wide. Now, as soon as I see a familiar leaf of the daisy it gets removed there and then.

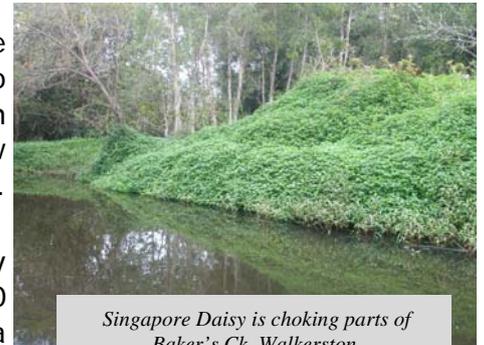
With Margaret Lane's plant selections, my first official plantings went in during October/November 2013. The weak wet season this year has meant that the plants were only submerged on two brief occasions, so they got off lightly this time. In early May 2014 another 20 plants joined the 80 already planted with the majority of the species being *Lomandra longifolia*.



Whilst about 60% of the area already has some canopy cover, I have introduced Leichhardt tree (*Nauclea orientalis*), Pink Evodia (*Melicope elleryana*) and Damson (*Terminalia sericocarpa*) trees for extra cover.

Each plant goes in the centre of a 300mm square piece of chicken wire staked flat on the ground to protect it from the unstoppable male Brush Turkey. He delights in scratching in any new diggings and will clear the area of any leaves etc. leading up to nesting time.

Before the soil moisture disappears completely from the ground, I plan to plant a further 40 or 50 Lomandras that should then cover the entire area where the Singapore Daisy once thrived.



Singapore Daisy is choking parts of Baker's Ck, Walkerston

### Latest Update from Eco-Barge on turtles in their care –Jacki Smith

'**DELILAH**' is a beautiful adult female green turtle, weighing in at 100kg and thought to be as old as 80! Delilah was rescued from Pioneer Bay on 27th April and although she suffered a nasty boat strike, this looks like an old injury that has already started to heal. She is suffering from float though, and while not malnourished she is definitely lacking in energy. Delilah is being given antibiotics and it is hoped that her appetite remains and we will be able to have a success story for this important breeder.



BEFORE

'**CLAYTON**' is a young green turtle rescued from the Port of Airlie boat ramp on 27th March. He was covered in barnacles and suffering from float, but within a few days in care developed a great appetite and soon was able to dive and swim normally in the tank. Clayton was kept for another couple of weeks to ensure full-strength and was bursting to be released when he was taken out to Trammel Bay, opposite Long Island on the 11th April.



AFTER

'**LINCOLN**' was rescued from Mackay on 28th February 2014 and after initially doing quite well, unfortunately died in care on 9th

March. Four other post-hatchlings were also rescued and provided care at the Centre. Sadly though, each of them died within a few days in care. They were all transported to JCU in Townsville to undergo analysis and necropsy, and while cause of death is still undetermined, preliminary findings show that all turtles had *digested a large amount of pumice stone and pieces of plastic*. Such an unprecedented number of post-hatchlings being found on beaches in the Whitsunday and Mackay regions is quite worrying, but not much is known about turtles at this age so it is difficult to know what might be happening.



## Plant of the month

*Meliococe elleryana*

### Pink Evodia

This local beauty is moderately fast growing, has a very attractive inflorescence that attracts a large range of birds. Its seeds are eaten by pigeons and it is also a larval food plant of the Ulysses Butterfly.

**FAMILY:** Rutaceae

**HABIT:** Medium tree with distinctive white corky bark in older trees.

**LEAVES:** Opposite, compound with three leaflets 60-130mm, ovate to elliptic, glossy lime green with numerous oil dots visible with hand lens. Petiole 30-80mm.

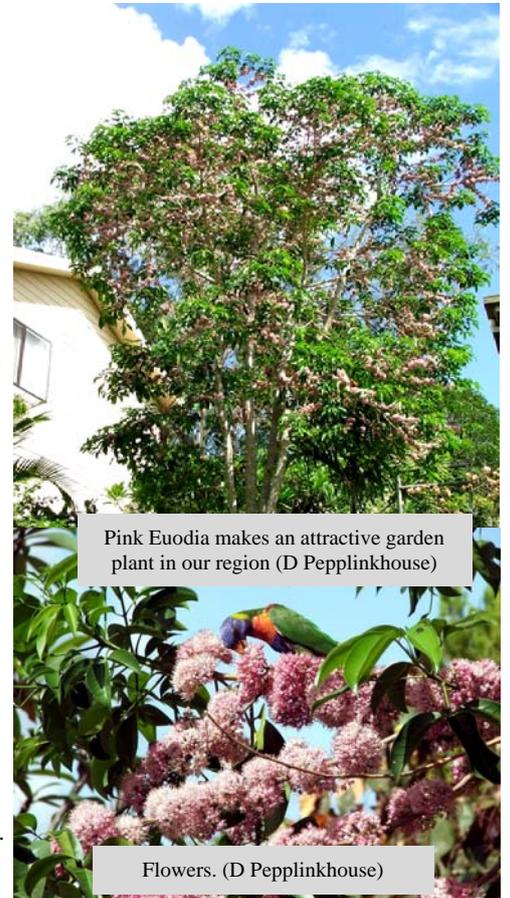
**FLOWER/FRUIT:** Dense lateral panicles of pink flowers arising from old leaf axils, summer and autumn. Fruit are capsulated, small, dry, brown, with 2-4 separate segments each containing a single black seed.

**PROPAGATION:** Use fresh seed, germination can be erratic. Soak seed for a few days for best results.

**LOCAL HABITAT:** Melaleuca swamps, on river banks and in rain forests. Fast growing, adaptable, suitable for larger gardens, tolerates poorly drained soils, flowers while young, may produce large surface roots.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Qld, NSW, NT, WA, and South-east Asia.

*References: Melzer and Plumb, 2007. Plants of Capricornia.*



Pink Evodia makes an attractive garden plant in our region (D Peplinkhouse)

Flowers. (D Peplinkhouse)

## Weed spotting this month

*Tithonia diversifolia*

### Lovely Yellow Hillside... It's Japanese Sunflower!

**FAMILY:** Asteraceae **ORIGIN:** Central America

A robust perennial many branched sub-shrub to 3m with course pithy-centred green stems.

**LEAVES:** Alternate, simple deeply 3-5 lobed and ovate in outline, 60-150 x 50-120mm, margins bluntly toothed, dull green above, paler below and softly hairy on both surfaces; stalks to 100mm long.

**FLOWERS:** Large bright golden-yellow, sunflower-like heads to about 100mm across, borne in terminal and axillary sprays on long stout stems.

**FRUITS/SEEDS:** 'Seeds' brown silky-hairy, oblong slightly flattened and 4-angled, 5-8mm long with a crown of short scales and 2 awns about 5mm long.

Japanese Sunflower has invaded open forests, roadsides, waterways, embankments, unmanaged lands and fire degraded hillsides. It was introduced as a garden ornamental, now widely naturalised in this region, especially on hills with remnant open forest and roadside between North Mackay and Farleigh. The seeds are spread by wind, water & animals. It will also re-sprouts from rootstock after disturbance. You can see it in flower now, forming extensive, dense thickets and out-competing native vegetation.

*References: MRPMG, 2013. Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region .*



## RED WITCHWEED - SITUATION UPDATE

Because of successful surveillance efforts, Biosecurity Queensland has identified another case of Red Witchweed in the Mackay area.

The weed has been discovered on a property which has previously been identified as 'at risk' by Biosecurity Queensland.

The finding has been located in an area that neighbours another property already known to Biosecurity Queensland for exhibiting Red Witchweed.

The latest property found to host the weed previously grew cane, but is now only used to farm cattle.

It is suspected Red Witchweed on this property is growing on a form of tropical grass, not cane.

Both the owner of this property and Biosecurity Queensland are working together to manage the issue.

This latest case shows surveillance efforts of the weed in the Mackay area are proving to be successful. Red Witchweed is currently flowering, so it's visible and able to be identified during surveillance.

**Because the weed is flowering, Biosecurity Queensland is encouraging property owners to be on the lookout for Red Witchweed and to report any sightings to 13 25 23.**



Eco Barge has completed its *Everyone's Environment Grants* project 'Increasing the involvement of the Whitsunday community in removing marine debris'. This project was undertaken from March 2013 to March 2014. The Eco Barge team extend a **HUGE** thank you to all the volunteers that were involved in making this project such a success.

In total, 180 different volunteers were involved in the project activities, with many of you being involved more than once. The following amazing results were also achieved:

- 12 beach marine debris removal trips, removing 4,072kg and involving 87 volunteers
- 12 underwater marine debris removal trips, removing 734kg and 75 volunteer divers
- 12 count and sort days, involving 84 volunteers
- 82,915 pieces of marine debris removed from Whitsunday region
- An amazing partnership with O.U.C.H to undertake the underwater marine debris removal trips.



Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group help out with Eco-Barge on the Mackay Coastal Clean-Up in October. Call us if you want to get involved at your beach in 2014

## Landcare project activities in May 2014...

Below — Before the crowds descended—A sunny day followed much rain at the Farleigh Palm Fete on Sunday 18th May. Pioneer Landcare encouraged visitors to the Fete to consider the plants they were buying and what is growing in their gardens. We provided information on specific weed and pests with the Mackay Region Pest Management Group Trailer, and gave away many copies of the popular "Are your Garden Plants Going Bush?" brochure.



Above — Councillor Laurence Bonaventura and daughter Palmina joined 12 other volunteers to kick-off the revegetation program at the Reliance Creek Palm Vine Forest Biodiversity Fund site. 150 rainforest trees and palms were planted, followed by 50mm of rain to help water them in. Conservation Volunteers provided a BBQ lunch and PCL contractors will now continue the program with weed control and revegetation, providing the weather allows!

## Upcoming Events

### June

**Sunday 1** — Birdlife Mackay outing to Padaminka Reserve Contact 4959 3382

**Thursday 5** - SGAP meeting, Biodiversity and Special Plants of CQCB, Grant Paterson. Contact 4954 8176

**Sunday 8**— World Oceans Day

**Sunday 15**— Pioneer Valley Show, Finch Hatton

**Tuesday-Thursday 17-19**—Mackay Show

**Sunday 29– Friday 4 July**—SGAP Bryophyte Workshop. Contact 4954 8176

### July

**Saturday 5**— Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee, Wattle St. Contact 49550153

**Sunday 6** — Birdlife Mackay outing to Berri Werri, Gargett. contact 4959 3382



## Butterfly Warriors

Become a Butterfly Warrior!

An initiative of Freestylers Dojo, Butterfly Warriors are delivering free self-defence courses at various beaches, parks and reserves in the Mackay Region.

Taking place from 7-8am on Saturday mornings, the classes are an ideal way to start the weekend, learning self defence with the Pacific Ocean providing the backdrop. What do you do in return? Just clean the areas at which you train! A half-hour of self-defence in return for a half-hour of rubbish collection, bring along shoes, hat, gardening gloves and sunscreen.

To join e-mail [freestylersdojo@live.com.au](mailto:freestylersdojo@live.com.au) with the heading: *I want to be a Butterfly Warrior!* And get on the weekly mail-out list to be informed where the next Butterfly Warrior class is to be held.

Who can join? If you are under the age of 18 you will need a parent or guardian to accompany you. For adults, all levels of fitness and ability are welcome to come and have a go. Will you become a Butterfly Warrior?



Landcare Australia is celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2014, culminating in Landcare Week in September.

Pioneer Landcare Group are proud to be part of these celebrations. If there are members out there with ideas or time to help promote the Landcare Ethic this September, please get in contact with our office.

Keep up to date with what's going on in our region—Like us on [Facebook!](#)

facebook

If you want to get you involved in the work of Eco Barge future projects and initiatives contact Jacki Smith 0402 857 310

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