

From the Management Committee

Those of you who attended the Annual General Meeting last year will remember that I agreed to take on the position of Chair for one more year only – in fact until 29 August 2014. So, at the August Management Committee meeting I resigned as Chair. I will continue my involvement with Pioneer Catchment Landcare but am feeling a bit burnt out the last two months have been particularly demanding, so I definitely need to wind back my responsibilities in the future. And now Kate has resigned after 18 months in the position of Project Manager. Kate's experience in natural resource management has been a valuable asset for PCL and we will miss her. I wish her the best for the future.

We now have positions that need to be filled, both in the office and on the Management Committee. Please contact Wendy if you think you would like to be part of moving into the future with Landcare.

Regards

Margaret Lane

Farewell From The Project Manager

It is with some sadness that I say farewell to everyone involved in Landcare in the Pioneer Valley. I especially want to say *Good Luck* to the many landholders who will continue to do their good practices — busting weeds, planting local native revegetation, helping wildlife, improving soils, protecting beaches and wetlands, and showing the next generations a way forward amongst many other wonderful things. I thank you for showing me some very special places in the Pioneer Valley.

I am also joyful as I am leaving to pursue some of my personal inspirations on my own property down in Northern New South Wales. I hope to establish a conservation covenant on my 100 acres of bush, get stuck into a few weeds, rebuild my chook-shed, and go surfing more often.

Keep up the great work!

Kate Steel



Landcare activities in August 2014...

Since it is the dry season, there has been less revegetation work for the last few months, the nursery volunteers are quietly sowing seeds and growing up the next season of plants, but our weed control work is a feature of this time of year.

Top - Ray Greaves inspecting thick areas of Ruellia weed at the Reliance Ck Palm Vine Forest, in preparation for control work.

Bottom-Reef Catchments sponsored the Landcare group to help Mackay Kindy students and parents in a beach clean up and fun activities at Far Beach.





Plant of the month *Eucalyptus tereticornis*

BLUE GUM is a useful tree for timber, honey production, shade and Koala food. The flowers attract honeyeaters, bats and lorikeets.

Queensland Blue Gum

Family: Myrtaceae

If you come from below the border, you may know this as Red Gum. Red or Blue, this is a most stately tree, typifying of the Australian Gum Tree. It is a tall tree with a straight trunk up to half tree height and a moderately dense crown. The large branches are typically steeply ascending. Bark is smooth, white, grey or bluish and sheds in irregular plates. Frequently there is a short stocking of dark grey, rough bark at the base of the tree.



Images: S Pearson

LEAVES: Long narrow up to 20 x 2.5cm, mid-green on both sides.

FLOWER/FRUITS: The buds, which have an elongated, conical or horn-shaped bud cap, are borne in groups amongst the foliage. White or sometimes pink flowers occur between April and October and are followed by almost globular fruit up to 6 x 8mm, with 4 or 5 strongly protruding valves.



PROPAGATION: From January to March collect fruit and place in paper bags in a warm position. Capsules will open releasing seed, then place into a shaker for easy coverage of soil medium.

LOCAL HABITAT: Common in central Queensland, mainly on lower hillslopes and alluvial flats.

DISTRIBUTION: Widespread from eastern Vic. to north of Cooktown and in Papua New Guinea.

Sources: Alcock and Champion, 1989 *One Hundred and One Trees of Mackay*.

Weed spotting this month *Thunbergia fragrans*

THUNBERGIA: BEAUTIFUL FLOWER BUT DEADLY VINE

Thunbergia are vigorous, perennial climbing vines native to India and Malaysia. The species are commonly grown as garden ornamentals in tropical regions of South East Asia and Australia and have escaped into native vegetation. A number of Thunbergia species were introduced to Australia in the 1950s and are popular due to their attractive flowers and climbing habit.

Thunbergia fragrans, commonly known within the nursery trade as "White Lady" or "White Clock Vine", was first detected around the Whitsundays in **2005** and around Mackay in **2007**. In Queensland, it is a declared Class 1 plant under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. Declarations under the Act require landholders to control the plants on land and water under their control, therefore Thunbergia is not to be planted in Queensland.

Despite successive attempts at control by Biosecurity Queensland, many of the original sites detected in 2007 still contain a population of *T. fragrans* that has either regrown from the underground tuber, or from seed.

Surveillance is being carried out by Biosecurity Queensland's Invasive Plants and Animals Biosecurity Officer Lalith Gunasekera, who is based in Mackay. Lalith has detected approximately 30 garden infestations around Mackay during the last three months. Major infestations have been located at West Mackay, Bucasia, Shoal Point, Mount Pleasant and Andergrove. All owners have been provided with information on the species and control options to eradicate the plant from their gardens. The Thunbergia survey is being continued in the Mackay district, and Biosecurity Queensland can be contacted on 13 25 23 for more information or to report infestations.



Thunbergia fragrans growing in a front garden in West Mackay.

White Thunbergia (*Thunbergia fragrans*) flowers and leaves (note the egg shaped leaves).

Source: Biosecurity Qld

WHAT'S A SQID DOING IN MACKAY?

Article and Images provided by Richard Brown, Mackay Regional Council

Since late 2012 to the present, Mackay Regional Council has installed, and continues to install, primary treatment stormwater quality improvement devices (SQIDs), including Trash Racks and end-of-line Net Tech devices, as part of an overall program to improve stormwater quality runoff from all types of catchments in the Mackay region, including residential and commercial catchments.

As well as installing the devices, Mackay Regional Council has prioritised cleaning and maintaining these assets to ensure their constant performance. In addition, they want to find out *what kind* of pollutants are captured by the SQIDs. The *Mackay Trash Rack Cleaning and Maintenance Project* is a marine debris prevention initiative lead by Eco Barge Clean Seas Inc. on behalf of the Mackay Regional Council. The purpose of the project is to:

- Clean out the three Trash Racks (27 litter nets) and one Net Tech located in Ooralea and Paget, Mackay;
- This has since been expanded to capture sample data from another two Trash Racks in the region;
- Identify common pollutant loads;
- Compare pollutant loads with surrounding land uses; and
- Identify point sources of pollution for future reductions.

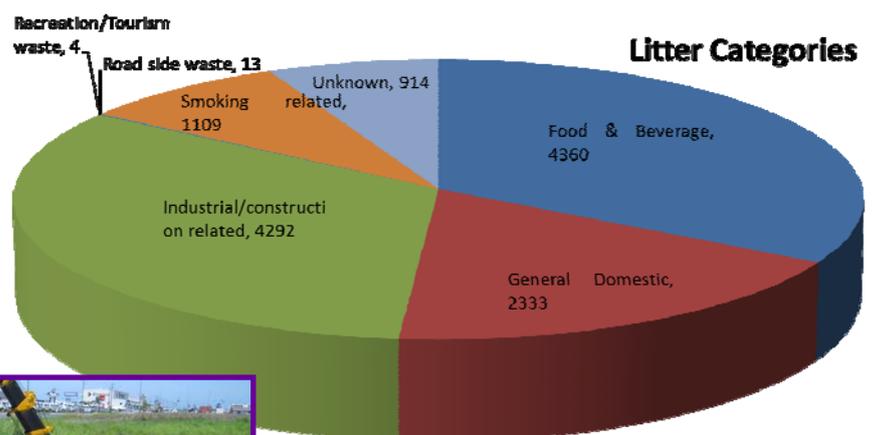
Once the contents are analysed the data will help to provide information to help understand the types and quantities of rubbish that are washing down these storm water systems, and ultimately aid intensified prevention and removal strategies in the future.

More than 2.37 Tonnes of pollutants have been removed from three cleans undertaken during the period from March 2013 to October 2013 alone. This equals over 13,000 individual pieces of rubbish (see Litter Categories chart below), including over 4,000 pieces of plastic food packaging, plastic bags, and bits of hard and soft plastic. It was shocking to find out that all the litter made up only 4% of what was removed from the racks. 96% of the trapped material is organic matter (leaves, grass clippings, garden waste, etc).

More work is yet to be done to complete the project. The Council's intention is to expand the monitoring program to measure how similar primary treatment devices located in other areas of the Mackay Region have helped reduce the discharge of pollutants. This includes an investigation into how these simple, yet effective devices, may contribute to reducing total nutrient loadings from the catchments flowing into the marine environment.

Marine debris is listed as a key threatening process under the Australian Government's Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 due to the injury and fatality to vertebrate marine life caused by ingestion of, or entanglement in, harmful marine debris.

Preventing land-based litter from becoming marine debris by being washed or blown into the aquatic environment is therefore of upmost importance, especially as it has been suggested that up to 80% of marine debris originates from land-based sources (UNEP 2009 'Marine Litter: A global challenge').



A more comprehensive report on the Debris collected in the Mackay Trash Rack Cleaning and Maintenance Project is available from Mackay Regional Council.



Upcoming Events

September

BIODIVERSITY MONTH !!

1-7 — Landcare Week, celebrating 25 years of Landcare

1-7 — Weedbusters Week

Sunday 14—Great Northern Clean-Up, Riverside Drive site

Saturday 6 — Illawong Beach 3-4 p.m. Learn free self defence and help Butterfly Warriors remove litter from this popular beach.

Also **Saturday 13** — Lamberts Beach, 3-4 pm

Saturday 20 — North Wall Beach, 3-4 pm

Saturday 27 — Blacks Beach, 3-4 pm

E-mail freestylersdojo@live.com.au

14-19—Eungella Biodiversity Monitoring Study

17-19 — National Landcare Conference in Melbourne, Vic.

20-21—Orchid extravaganza sale. Queens Park 9am to 1pm

October

Sunday 5—Bird Life Mackay excursion. Contact 4952 2964 for details

Saturday 11—Morag McNichol Reserve, Andergrove, community working bee. 8-10am. Contact 4942 8802. *"Should you wish to join us you would be most welcome"*

Come and celebrate 25 years of Landcare with us.

Come check out our Display at Gordon White Library on Phillip St, Mt Pleasant. We are celebrating 25 years of Landcare during Landcare Week , 1-7 September.



2014-15 PCL Memberships are overdue

Call or email us if you haven't yet renewed, or if you didn't get a notice from us.

Please contact the office on 4944 1979

Or email admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Feature Event

Saturday and Sunday 18-19 October

The 2014 Eco-Barge Mackay Coastal Clean Up. 8am-12pm, with a BBQ lunch provided.

Find a Beach near you to help in this massive community event, or join PCL at Far Beach.

To register go to www.ecobargecleanseas.org.au
Or call 0417 642 815

Email info@ecobargecleanseas.org.au

TOGETHER WE CAN ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

Pioneer Catchment Office contacts:

Ph: 4944 1979, www.pioneercatchment.org.au

Office Manager: Wendy Eiteneuer, 0427 543 509
admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Project Manager: 0447 749 769
projectmanager@pioneercatchment.org.au

Project Officer: Carla Lambropoulos, 0497 441 979
projectofficer@pioneercatchment.org.au

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group
Proudly supported by:



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



September 2014

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

If unable to be delivered please return to

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare
Group Inc.
PO Box 1076
MACKAY Qld 4740