

## Coastal Field Trip

On Wednesday March 4 2015 commencing at 9:30am PCL and Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association (SLCMA) will be hosting a coastal field trip as part of the Queensland Government "Everyones Environment Grant" funded projects.

The field trip will visit Far Beach, followed by a trip to Sandfly Creek. At Far Beach the focus will be on progress of the rehabilitation site, talking about flora and fauna of the coastal region and identifying invasive weeds—Morning Tea will be provided here. The field trip will conclude with a visit to Sandfly Creek where the history of the area and its significance to migratory birds will be discussed.

Come along and join in to discover what works are being conducted to enhance and conserve these important coastal habitats. For further information on the field trip, contact the PCL office—  
Ph 49441979 or Email  
admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

## 2015 International Year of Soils (IYS).

IYS aims to be a platform for raising awareness of the importance of soils for food security and essential eco-system functions. In support of the IYS, PCL will publish an article each month in the newsletter dedicated to soil health. PCL aims to increase knowledge of ways to improve soil health in our local region by adapting achievable techniques.



2015  
International  
Year of Soils

## Project Update—Far Beach

An assortment of local natives, comprising Casuarina, Acacia, Native Hibiscus and Spinifex have been planted in January by Green Solutions Mackay at the Far Beach project site. This is the last planting in this QLD Government funded project (Everyones Environment Grant). Planting at this time will allow the plants to obtain maximum benefit from this wet season. Casuarinas have proved very hardy at the site over the project duration surviving cyclones. Native Hibiscus is providing thick canopy in the area thus reducing weeds in the understory. Spinifex is being used in an attempt to stabilise the loose sand fore dune areas. Come along to the Coastal field trip to see the plantings and discover more about the project currently in its third year.



Image: J. Hansen

## Plants for Landholders

Thanks to the efforts of our Nursery Volunteers throughout 2014, the nursery is prospering. Those eligible for plants should contact the PCL office to make an appointment for collection. Plants are available from mid February to April. Please bring your land management plans so suitable plants for your area are selected.



## Plant of the Month

## *Hibiscus heterophyllus*

### Native Rosella, Native Hibiscus

Family: Malvaceae

An open shrub or small tree up to 6m, young stems often prickly. Native Rosella can be easily grown from seed or cuttings and will grow in most soil types in a sunny position. It can be seen on well-drained soils, usually in eucalypt woodlands but also on the fringes of rainforests and can be common in disturbed areas such as along roadsides. Aborigines ate the roots of young plants, young shoots and raw leaves. The petals are also edible. The very strong fibres from the bark were used for rope or twine for nets, fishing lines and dilly bags. Early settlers used the buds to make 'rosella' jam.

**Leaves:** Alternate, simple unlobed or three lobed; margins finely serrated; upper surface glabrous to sparsely hairy, lower surface generally sparsely hairy with mainly stellate hairs but some simple hairs present; a gland is present at the base of the midrib on the underside; prickles often present along mid and lateral veins and on petioles.

**Flowers:** Large, showy bright yellow with a maroon centre in this region, borne singly in the leaf axils; individual flowers last one day. May to December.

**Fruit/Seeds:** Ovate capsules, up to 2cm with a beak, covered in very irritant hairs; seeds dark brown, warty. September to December

The native hibiscus is a larval food plant of the moth *Pectinophora endema*

Source: Plants of Capricornia, R Melzer and J Plumb, 2007. Fruits of the Australia Tropical Rainforest. Cooper & Cooper 2004, local records.

NB (SGAP has some plants)

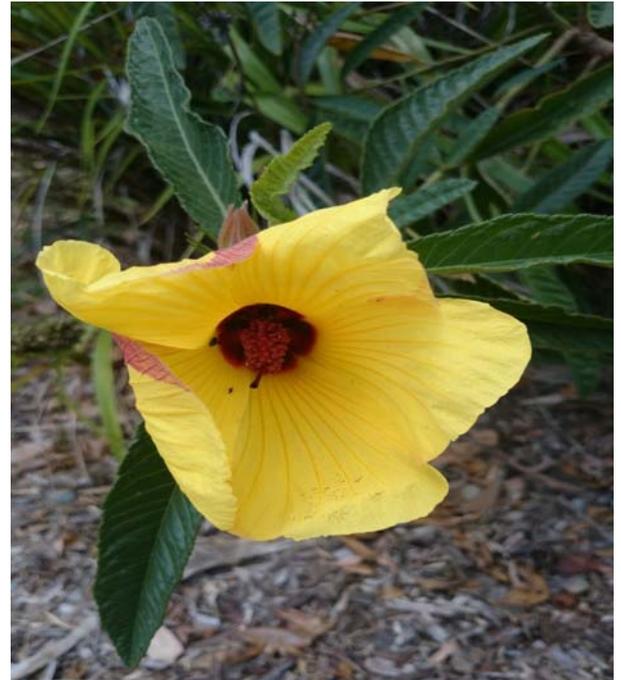


Image: L. Mathewson MRBG Oct

## Weed Spotting

## *Sphagneticola trilobata*

### Singapore Daisy

Family: Asteraceae

This weed originating from South America is a vigorous mat forming perennial herb that grows up to 70cm high. Rooting at nodes and capable of forming very large colonies. This is a class three weed capable of naturalising "everywhere" including mangrove margins. It spreads rapidly smothering native ground layer vegetation. This weed can be spread by garden waste, water and plant fragments. Introduced as a garden ornamental, Singapore Daisy survives and flourishes in wet conditions. Mowing will cause it to spread.

Distinguishable by its flower heads of yellow to orange—yellow daisies, 15-30mm diameter, borne above the glossy green, toothed leaves in terminal or axillary clusters on short stems. Success in controlling Singapore Daisy has been observed by use of Associate Herbicide (active ingredient Metsulfuron-Methyl) on Land for Wildlife participants properties.

For more information consult Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region, available from PCL office or Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens.

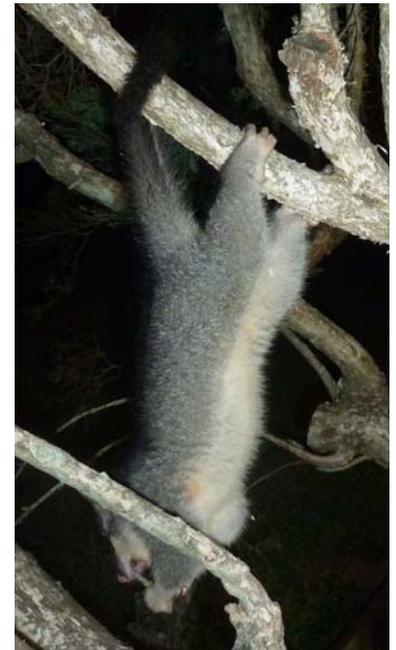
Image: L. Mathewson



## Land for Wildlife Update



Bill and Lesley Young joined land for wildlife after attending an onsite land erosion mitigation workshop. They have been LFW participants since 2013. Bill has been a long standing member of the Rural Fire Brigade and observed through that work that areas of native flora with dense canopy cover did not have weed infestation at ground story level and were less prone to ignition. Following this realisation Bill and Lesley have been working towards removal of weeds on their property and increasing the canopy cover through planting of native species both supplied by PCL and propagated by Bill on the property. This has allowed them to move away from traditional scheduled burns as a fire management practice. Lesley is an avid Wildlife Carer nursing sick, injured or orphaned native animals to strength enabling release into their natural habitat. They are currently caring for some baby possums. Brumble pictured far right, is gaining some tree climbing training on their property.



Images: B. Young

### Are you Grasscycling?

Grasscycling is a simple method for recycling yard waste and is a natural approach to lawn care. It is considered a source reduction activity. By leaving grass clippings where they fall rather than using a catcher on your mower you are fostering healthy grass and returning valuable nutrients back into the soil. Grass clippings are 75% to 85% water, they quickly decompose and release nutrients to fertilise lawn. Benefits of grasscycling include: saving time and money, reducing resources required to handle grass clippings for composting or landfilling. When conducted in conjunction with proper lawn management practices grasscycling can reduce water and fertiliser requirements along with mowing time and disposal costs. To successfully grasscycle mow more often but cut less (smaller grass clippings breakdown easier), always mow when grass is dry and sharpen mower blades at least twice a year.

### Recovery Programme, National Landcare Programme

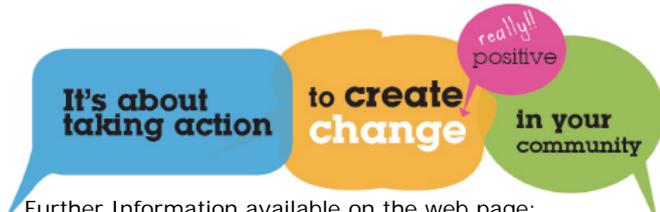
Reef Catchments is currently looking for participants for their Recovery Program. This program offers funding for participants to conduct activities such as vegetation management, riparian fencing, weed control, fire management and feral animal management. Unlike other funding opportunities, participants are **not** required to be a primary producer with registration for taxation purposes. There is no specified limit on minimum property size more a focus on conducting recovery works in priority biodiversity areas of the Mackay Whitsunday region. If you would like to find out more information contact PCL office for an information flyer or to obtain an expression of interest form.





**Mackay Youth Leadership & Sustainability Summit 2015**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>**  
 9am – 2:30pm  
**CQUniversity**, Building 1  
 Boundary Road, Ooralea, Mackay



Further Information available on the web page:  
[http://www.mackayconservationgroup.org.au/calendar\\_of\\_events](http://www.mackayconservationgroup.org.au/calendar_of_events)

**Wetlands Youth Photo Contest starts on 2 February 2015**

- Take a picture of your favourite wetlands location with your phone or digital camera between 2 February and 2 March 2015
- Upload it to the World Wetlands Day website for a chance to win a free flight to a famous wetland of your choice, courtesy of Star Alliance Biosphere Connections
- Open to anyone aged 15-24  
<http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/>



**February**

- Saturday 7, 21** Working Bee Friends of MacKillop Wetlands 6am. Contact 4956 0346
- Tuesday 24** Business Clean up Day  
<http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/>
- Wednesday 25** Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve meeting Contact 4955 0153
- Friday 27** Schools Clean up Day

**March**

- Sunday 1** Clean up Australia Day
- Sunday 1** Birdlife Mackay Outing, Dunrock 6am. Contact 49593382
- Wednesday 4** PCL's Coastal Field Trip
- Thursday 5** Society for Growing Australian Plants monthly meeting 7:30pm. MRBG meeting room
- Saturday 7** Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee
- Saturday 7, 21** Working Bee Friends of MacKillop Wetlands 6am. Contact 4956 0346
- Saturday 28** Earth Hour 8.30pm  
<https://www.earthhour.org/>

**Pioneer Catchment Office contacts**

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