

Rubber Vine Treatment

This year Pioneer Catchment & Landcare (PCL) has continued working with Reef Catchments on the Rubber Vine (*Cryptostegia grandiflora*) eradication project. Rubber Vine poses a significant environmental threat to our region and is considered to be one of the highest priority pests under the Mackay Regional Pest Management Strategy and State Legislation. This project aims to eradicate outbreaks of Rubber Vine in the Pioneer Valley, which could potentially impact on high quality agricultural land and environmental assets within our Region.

Image: Contractor treating Rubber Vine



The first survey for this financial year was completed towards the end of August and focused on properties around the Kinchant Dam area. A number of Rubber Vine plants, both mature with seed and juvenile, were discovered, GPS recorded and treated. Further outbreaks of Rubber Vine in the Eton-Brightly areas of the Pioneer Valley are suspected and property owners are encouraged to contact PCL's Project Officer, Carla Lambropoulos if they do come across any Rubber Vine on their properties. PCL will be holding an awareness raising event focusing on Rubber Vine in the near future. If you would like to register your interest in attending this event or would like more information about Rubber Vine, contact Carla.

Image: Cut and painted Rubber Vine, treated with Vigilant Gel



Member promotes CRAZY!

PCL member and Birdlife Mackay President Daryl Barnes has recently launched his children's book Crazy Bird Stories. The book launch was held at the Mackay Botanical Gardens on Friday September 25. At the launch Daryl spoke of the aim behind the book, that being; introducing children to birds through entertainment and education. Children gathered around Daryl at the launch to hear him read the story. The book features 12 bird species observed in the local area

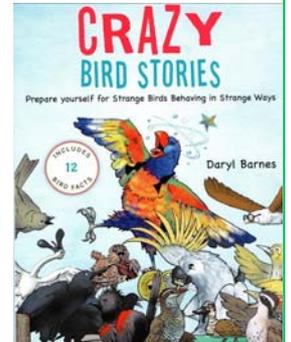


Image: Daryl Barnes at the book Launch



from a diverse range of habitats including bushland, wetland, rainforest and beaches, all within an 80 kilometre radius of Mackay. Funding to assist with development of the book was obtained through the Mackay Regional Arts Development Fund. In addition to his book Daryl has prepared a presentation that he is delivering to local schools to raise awareness of threats to natives birds.

Did You Know?
Image source: <https://www.fix.com/>

PROPER FOOD

For Your Worms

<p>ALWAYS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fruit & veggies * Coffee grounds, filters, tea bags 	<p>SOMETIMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Grass & garden clippings * Rinsed egg shells 	<p>NEVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Meat, bones, & dairy products * Heavily coated paper
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PESTICIDE FREE COMPOST! You can include grass clippings & leaves but not with pesticides.

Red-Fruit Saw-Sedge (Sword Grass)

Family: Cyperaceae

Form: Attractive, erect perennial sedge with woody rhizomes, stems to 80cm and long scabrous leaves.

Leaves: Long, linear up to 1000 x 5-7mm, inrolled, margins minutely toothed. The leaves of Saw Sedge cut due to the silica granules that occur on their surface and edges.

Seed Heads: Erect, rigid, dense, oblong to subcylindrical, 100-250 x 35mm, somewhat interrupted at base. Nuts, smooth, globular to ovoid, 5-6mm long, with a distinct needle-like point at the apex, reddish brown to dark brown and persistent over a long period.

Habitat: Common and widespread in a range of Eucalypt communities, also in rainforest, shrubland and grassland communities in this district.

Conservation Status: Not considered to be at risk in the wild.

Notes: Difficult to propagate. Seeds may take up to two years to germinate. Take great care if handling plants as the leaves of Sawsedge are extremely sharp. Aborigines pounded the very hard seed to make flour. Seed eaten by the Red-winged Parrot. Laval food plant for a number of the Sedge-skipper Butterfly species, Green Darter and the varied Sword-grass Brown Butterflies. A taller species with smaller nuts, *Gahnia sieberiana*, occurs at Eungella.

Source: Plants of Capricornia Rhonda Melzer and Joel Plumb 2007
Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest. Cooper and Cooper 2004
SGAP Mackay Branch records.



Weed Spotting

Bryophyllum pinnatum

Green Mother of Millions, Live Leaf, Resurrection Plant, Air Plant

Family: Crassulaceae

Form: A long-lived, fleshy upright succulent plant usually growing 600-1200mm tall. A serious weed of this district, especially in sandy coastal habitats.

Leaves: Opposite, lower leaves simple, upper leaves pinnate with 3 to 5 leaflets, 50-250mm long, narrowly oval with scalloped margins.

Flowers: Bell shaped (tubular) pendulous flowers, 3-8cm long are greenish-yellow to pinkish-red, arranged in branched clusters at the tips of the stems (i.e. in terminal inflorescences). Each flower is borne on a pedicel 10-25mm long. Flowers are produced mainly during winter and spring.

Fruit / Seeds: Papery and membranous (approximately 15mm long) with four slender compartments. They remain enclosed within the old flower parts and contain numerous minute slender brownish coloured seeds less than 1mm long.

Spread by: Dumped garden waste, contaminated soil, flood water. Reproduces vegetatively from plantlets produced along the margins of leaves and the leaves themselves, particularly if detached, also reproduces from seed.

Impacts: This environmental weed is regarded to be among the top 50 most invasive species in south-eastern QLD. It can form dense populations in natural habitats replacing native species and preventing their regeneration. Large naturalised populations are known to occur in this district and it has been recently observed by PCL officer at Sandy Creek Homebush as a garden escapee and in abundance at Bakers Creek Walkerston.

Notes: Two other closely related Mother of Millions, *Bryophyllum* spp., that occur in this district are Class 2 weeds. See page 88 *Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region*. They are all thought to be poisonous to livestock and humans.

Source: Queensland Government Weeds of Australia Biosecurity Queensland Edition Fact sheet

Image: Sheldon Navie



Land For Wildlife Update



Joan and Dennis Fitzsimmons have been Land for Wildlife members since 2004. Their property, on a hill overlooking Habana and Reliance Creek provides linkages to a large remnant regional ecosystem. The property has numerous rocky outcrops that provide habitat for native animals. Additionally the property possesses *Atalaya rigida* – Veiny Whitewood, which is considered rare under the *Nature Conservation Act* (1992), along with many other local natives of which Mackay Cedar is one of those.

Significant work has been done on the property to control weeds that included predominately Lantana, Guinea Grass, Guava and Leucaena. This work has paid off and the property is now managed for natural regeneration.

Image: Bat's wing coral tree (Erythrina vespertilio)



Central Queensland Soil Health Systems.

Central Queensland Soil Health Systems (CQSHS), a new sub group of Pioneer Catchment & Landcare, was formed out of the recognition that soil is much more than just somewhere to stand your crop. The formation of this group is significant in 2015 given it is the International Year of Soils. The group is focussed on addressing major soil issues in the Mackay region, those most notably being; the lack of soil carbon and plant available calcium as well as compaction in the fields resulting in poor soil microbial activity.

The CQSHS group believes that addressing soil health must take a systemic approach. Addressing one issue at a time is a lengthy procedure with resultant improvements from each trial often being too miniscule for farmers to warrant adaptation of changed farming practices. Farmer driven research and trials can address multiple issues at any one time with multiple science disciplines working on the same project. Currently, trials and practices to improve soil biology being conducted include; the multi-species planting of alternate crops; annual applications of calcium and the incorporation of other soil ameliorants; the inclusion of micro-nutrients in fertilizing programs; and the use of composting and other forms of organic farming. The desired objectives of these trials being to increase microbial activity and improved soil biology in order to achieve healthier soils and increased yields, thus a benefit to farmers and the environment.



Image: Founding members of CQSHS at a recent meeting

Membership of CQSHS is open to all sectors of agriculture, farming, grazing, and the wider community. It is believed that practical and science based research trials, driven and owned by membership, will be able to achieve the CQSHS stated objective of restoring and building soil health through combining practical knowledge and science. To find out more about CQSHS activities contact Simon Mattsson 0417 862 979.

Thankyou



PCL would like to thank the following individuals for their valuable contributions:

Bob Gillespie- for the being our handyman.

Di Salau - for the hours she spent resolving recent IT issues.

Daryl Barnes - for presenting his local birds presentation at the recent PCL Annual General Meeting.

Launch of New Report Card

A new pilot report on the health of Mackay - Whitsunday waterways has highlighted data gaps and the need for more action to be taken to secure the long-term health of our basins, estuaries and the Great Barrier Reef. To view and download a full copy of the pilot report and for further details on the breakdown of results values and grades visit: www.healthyriverstoreef.org.au



Upcoming Events

Novemeber

- Thursday 5 -** SGAP General Meeting, Topic-vertical gardens
- Saturday 7 -** Friends of MacKillop Wetlands Working Bee
ph: 49560346
- Saturday 7 -** Morag Mc Nichol Reserve Working Bee
ph: 49550153
- Monday 9 -** National Recycling Week
<http://recyclingweek.planetark.org/>
- Thursday 12 -** Reliance Creek Forest Walk ph: 4944 1979
- Saturday 14 -** Weed Swap Bucasia Beach 8am to 10am
ph: 4968 4226
- Saturday 21 -** Friends of MacKillop Wetlands Working Bee
ph: 49560346
- Saturday 28 -** Morag Mc Nichol Reserve Working Bee
ph: 49550153

December

- Tuesday 1 -** Healthy Soil Symposium, West Leagues Club Walkerston, key note speaker Dr Maarten Strapper - Healthy Soils and Healthy Catchments for human health and nutrition.
ph: 49684200
- Thursday 3 -** SGAP General Meeting—Social Breakup
- Saturday 5 - 6** Birdlife Mackay National Challenge Bird Count
<http://www.birdlife.org.au/locations/birdlife-mackay>

Annual General Meeting Results

PCL welcome new committee members Jock Hansen and Mark Radke, as well as thank those returning management committee members.

Weed Swap Event



The public are invited to help remove weeds from Bucasisa Beach on Sat Nov 14, and swap every bag collected for native seedlings.
www.reefcatchments.com.au

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. Management Committee

Chair: Dave Hunter
Vice-Chair: Di Salau
Treasurer: Yet to be announced
Committee Members:
Irene Champion Mark Radke Grant Howard
Jock Hansen Dianne Williams

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