

Palm Vine Forest Walk

A guided walk through the Reliance Creek Palm Vine Forest was held on Thursday November 12. Participants heard about past and present work conducted in the area to combat weeds such as Ruellia (*Ruellia tweediana*), Hymenachne (*Hyymenachne amplexicaulis*) and Cats Claw Creeper (*Macfadyena unguis-cati*). Parks and Wildlife Ranger John Atkins discussed the significance of the endangered palm-dominated lowland rainforest Regional Ecosystem to the Mackay Region. The walk gave participants an opportunity to inspect an area that is usually inaccessible and view the natural beauty of the area. It also served to raise awareness of the ongoing works required to protect this area from Cats Claw Creeper. Current work conducted by Pioneer Catchment & Landcare to map and treat Cats Claw Creeper in the Reliance Creek National Park has been conducted using funding obtained from Reef Catchments. The funding has enabled mapping and treatment of Cats Claw Creeper on four private properties in the Habana area as well as the National Park.



Office Closure

The PCL office will be closed from Monday December 21 reopening Monday January 4 2016.

Did You Know?

Image source: Algalita Marine Research and Education Instagram



Equine Public Forum.

THURSDAY
17 TH
DECEMBER
10am – 12pm

A public forum will be held at the Gargett County Women's Association on the 17th of December, to gauge public interest in the formation of an Equine Landcare Committee in the Pioneer Catchment.

To register your interest or request further information, please contact Project Officer Laura.

Location: Gargett County Women's Association at Jim Moule Street, Gargett

Time: 10.00am to 12.00pm (approx.)

Christmas in the Gardens.

Come along and bring all the family to this very popular Christmas event from 5.30 to 8.30pm, Sunday December 13. Featuring well known local entertainers for an evening of family enjoyment. The 'Friends of the Gardens' will have their ever-popular raffles, glow candles, bracelets, and Christmas songbooks for sale.



Native Olive**Family:** Oleaceae

This large bushy shrub to medium sized tree is currently in flower in the region, and is an ideal plant for revegetation. The dark grey and somewhat mottled trunk protects close grained timber, which is easily worked but hard and tough. This is a fast growing tree that flowers when young. The fruit are eaten and seeds spread by Koels, Figbirds, Pied Imperial Pigeons and Cassowaries (should we be so lucky).

Leaves: Opposite, dark green on top and paler underneath with a prominent raised, lemon-coloured mid-vein. (5–22 X2–9cm). Shape is elliptical to broadly oblong. Numerous oil dots are visible with a lens.

Flower/Fruit: The white or cream flowers are fragrant with four petals, on a green calyx. Flowers are borne in axillary sprays about 8cm long. The fruit is a purple drupe containing one hard seed and resembling an olive in shape and size.

Distribution: Rainforest, monsoon forest, littoral rainforest and woodland from the Torres Strait Islands to the Brisbane area at altitude of 0–800m in tropical Queensland. Also native to the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, Malaysia and Asia.

Sources: Cooper W., 2004, Fruit of the Australian Tropical Rainforest.

One hundred and One Trees of Mackay

Image B. Gray

**Weed Spotting***Annona glabra***Pond Apple—What was once a rootstock is now a weed****Family:** Annonaceae**Origin:** Central & South America

This is a semi-deciduous tree usually 3-6m, but up to 15m. Soft-wooded stems have a thin grey bark bearing conspicuous lens-shaped spots on the stem. It invades fresh, brackish and saltwater areas, drainage lines, as well as coastal dunes and islands. It has the potential to form dense stands in swamp areas, capable of replacing Melaleuca wetlands, mangroves and creek bank communities.

Leaves: Alternate, simple, light to dark green, 70-120mm long, prominent mid vein, distinct smell like green apples when crushed.

Flowers: Pale yellow to cream, red inner base; 3 leathery outer petals, 3 smaller inner petals, 20-30mm in diameter.

Fruits/Seeds: Round fleshy 'berries', 50-150mm in diameter, green ripening orange-yellow then black after falling; containing 100-200 brown seeds, similar in size and shape to pumpkin seeds.

Spread by: Fruits and seeds dispersed by water, including sea currents; also animals, including pigs and birds.

Pond Apple was introduced to Australia as grafting stock for commercially grown custard apples. It has been found in creek bank and mangrove communities in the Reliance Creek catchment and Melaleuca wetlands at Andergrove. Landholders should consider expanding the riparian vegetation along creek banks to help exclude the pest. It is a Class 2 declared plant in QLD, and a Weed Of National Significance.

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



Bridging The Gap

Stephen and Diane Gates joined Land For Wildlife in 2002. Since joining the program they have been removing weeds (predominately Lantana and Brazilian Nightshade) and bridging a gap in the native vegetation to establish a wildlife corridor. Native plants have been provided through the Land For Wildlife program and supplemented with trees grown on the property. Their property

located at Kuttabul is also used as a nature refuge. Native animals are cared for and rehabilitated native animals are released on the property.



Forestry Update

The Forestry Working Group project has continued to progress this year. The Working Group has completed the draft Forestry ABCD Frameworks for both planted and native forests and Verterra Ecological Engineering was engaged to develop the sustainability guides to support the frameworks. These documents have been distributed for stakeholder consultation and review and are expected to be finalised by the end of the year.

On September 4 the Working Group participated in a field day and visited local saw mill, Platypus Timbers, Max McFarlane's Farm Forestry Trial at Bloomsbury and Frank Miller's plantation also located at Bloomsbury. The visit to the local saw mill provided the group with an insight into preferred timber species, market challenges, and the problems associated with remaining viable as a small local sawmill.

Image: Max McFarlane's Farm Forestry Trial Site located at Bloomsbury



Max McFarlane's Farm Forestry Trial was established in April this year. The trial is performing extremely well with survival rates of approximately 98% despite the lack of rainfall in the area. Frank Miller's plantation is over three years old; however many species have started dying over the past 12-18 months. It is suspected there may be a sodic sub-surface layer that is contributing to poor performance of many species on this site. Fifty Rosewood (*Acacia rhodoxylon*) trees have been planted in April/ June 2015. Both trials are well-maintained (irrigation and weed control) by the owners.

Thankyou

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

Jon Atkins, Margaret Lane and Laurence Bonaventura—for their invaluable contribution to the Palm Vine Forest walk.

Gerard Masters—His monthly work in assisting with the distribution of the PCL newsletter.

Irene Champion—Ongoing provision of expert botanical advice in the field of plant identification.

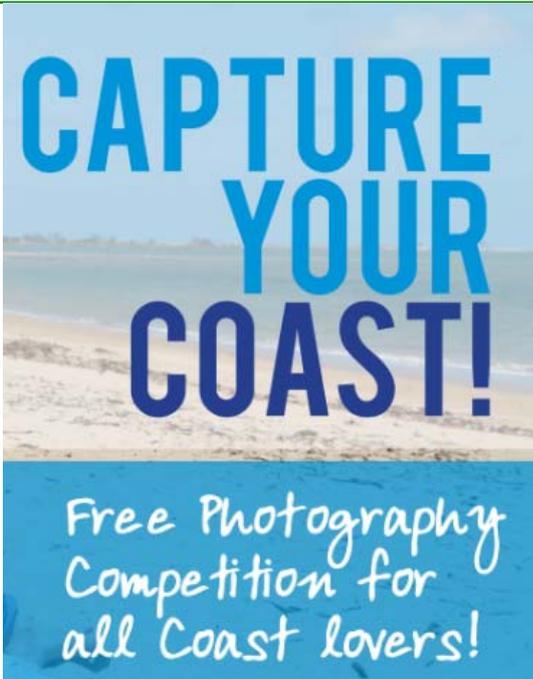
Lippia found at Goose Ponds.

Lippia (*Phyla canescens*) a serious environmental and pastoral weed in the Murray-Darling river system in QLD and NSW has been found recently at the Goose Ponds.

<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/agriculture/species/non-declared-pests/weeds/lippia>



Upcoming Events



Contact: Jessica Berryman,

email: Jessica.berryman@reefcatchments.com

<http://reefcatchments.com.au/events/photo-competition-capture->

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. Management Committee

Chair: Dave Hunter

Vice-Chair: Di Salau

Treasurer: Mark Radke

Committee Members:

Irene Champion Grant Howard Jock Hansen

Dianne Williams

December

Saturday 5 - Friends of MacKillop Working Bee ph: 49560346

Sunday 5, Sunday 6 - National Challenge Bird Count

Saturday 6 - SGAP / Birdlife Mackay Christmas breakup.

Thursday 17 - Equine Landcare Public Forum

Friday 18 - PCL Christmas breakup.

Saturday 19 - Friends of MacKillop Working Bee ph: 49560346

January 2016

Monday 4 - PCL office reopens

Thursday 21 - Central Queensland Soil Health Systems meeting 8am .



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