

## Thank You to PCL Volunteers

On December 18th, Mackay Regional Council (MRC) staff and Pioneer Catchment's (PCL) nursery volunteers, management committee and members attended the PCL Christmas Breakup at the North Mackay Bowls Club as a thank you to volunteers.



## Lantana Control Workshop



*Shelley Molloy demonstrates the splatter gun*

On Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December, Pioneer Catchment & Landcare held a Lantana Control Workshop at Devereux Creek Road. The purpose of the event was to provide information to small landholders about the different treatment options for Lantana control.

Mackay Regional Council's Pest Management Officer

Shelley Molloy demonstrated three different control methods: foliage spray, cut/stump and splatter gun, and included information on benefits of each treatment option.

Lantana is considered one of the worst weeds in Australia due to its invasiveness, potential to spread, and economic and environmental impacts. Lantana aggressively colonises disturbed areas almost totally excluding regeneration of native species, smothers native vegetation, degrades pastures, and forms impenetrable thickets for animals, people and vehicles. Lantana is also poisonous to stock and is highly flammable in dry conditions.

If you need advice on controlling Lantana on your property do not hesitate to contact one of our Project Officers.

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

## Dispersal of Large Fruiting Trees

The importance of animals in rainforests was highlighted in the ABC news article titled "Big-fruited Australian rainforest trees may need help to spread and survive." Researchers from the NSW National Herbarium have found that rainforest trees bearing fleshy fruits rely on animals to disperse their seeds and establish networks of interconnected populations. Areas that lack biodiversity and animals capable of seed dispersal have been found to be recolonised by small-fruited species. See the full article at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-09/big-fruited-australian-rainforest-trees-may-need-help-to-survive/7011352>

## The Nursery Needs Seed Collectors

The Mackay Natural Environment Centre (MNEC) are currently seeking seeds from a number of local native plants. If you are interested please contact the office for more information.



*Paraserianthes toona*

### On that note...

The nursery has Mackay Cedar (*Paraserianthes toona*) seeds and seedlings. For anyone interested in acquiring Cedar seedlings please contact Carla.

## Did You Know?

Roughly a quarter of all household rubbish is made up of food waste.

With almost \$6 billion worth of food waste thrown out every year, Researcher Jeremy Farr-Wharton has come up with a few suggestions for keeping in the know of what is in your fridge.

For these suggestions on how to avoid wasting food go to: <https://theconversation.com/how-colour-coding-your-fridge-can-stop-your-greens-going-to-waste-45703>



**Brush Mistletoe**

**Family:** Loranthaceae

More than 90 species of mistletoe exist in Australia. Mistletoe is a canopy-dwelling parasitic plant, with a positive effect on biodiversity –providing food and shelter for a number of native birds– as well as nutrient-rich leaf litter. Generally easy to propagate, and they will do little to harm the host.

**Leaves:** Simple, opposite, entire, lanceolate to elliptic, 6-12x2-6cm, glabrous, often glossy above and dull below.

**Flower:** Flowers grouped in threes or flowers solitary, erect; petals usually red with green and yellow towards the tips.

**Fruit:** Fruit are berries, ellipsoid to globose, 8-12mm long. When flowering or fruiting, plants, and especially large ones, can be spectacular.

**Distribution:** Occurs in Cape York Peninsula, North East Queensland and southwards as far as coastal central NSW. This species can be found in areas near the coast and extending to areas of fairly high elevation in coastal and sub-coastal ranges. It is mostly associated with rainforest or mixed forests which tend to have some rainforest species occurring in the complex.

*Source: Melzer, R and Plumb, J., 2007, Plants of Capricornia. Williams, K., 1987, Native Plants of Queensland. Watson, D., 2015, Mistletoe: the kiss of life for healthy forests: The Conversation. Retrieved from: <http://theconversation.com/mistletoe-the-kiss-of-life-for-healthy-forests-52137>. Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants, 2016.*



**Weed Spotting**

*Aristolochia elegans*

**Dutchman's Pipe**

**Family:** Aristolochiaceae

**Origin:** South America

Introduced as a garden ornamental. Naturalised populations recorded on many rainforest sites, primarily on creek banks throughout this region. Resembles natural food plants of Birdwing Butterflies but it is fatal to the larvae.

**Leaves:** Alternate simple, glossy-green thin-textured, broadly heart shaped, 30-80mm long; thickened and twisted stalks, 15-50mm long. Crushed leaves have a very unpleasant smell.

**Flower:** Reddish-purple flowers with white and yellow markings, flared pipe shaped, around 80mm in diameter, borne singly in leaf axils.

**Fruit:** Fruits are oblong to avoid ribbed capsules, 50-80mm long, opening from the base to release numerous flat brown seeds, 6mm long.

**Distribution:** Naturalised in north east Queensland and southwards as far as north-eastern NSW. Invades creek banks and rainforest.

**Spread by:** Wind, garden waste.

*Source: MRPMG, 2013. Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region. Dutchman's Pipe. Retrieved from: <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/agriculture/species/declared-pests/weeds/dutchmans-pipe>. Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants, 2016.*



## Identification System for Central Queensland Rainforest Plants

Raelee Kerrigan and Frank Zich at the Australian Tropical Herbarium in Cairns have started a new project to extend the online 'Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants Interactive Identification System' (or RFK) to Central Queensland, from Townsville to Rockhampton.

This project will hopefully take about 18 months and will develop an interactive, online identification system for rainforest seed plant species in the Central Queensland Coast Bioregion. The Australian mainland rainforest flora is currently treated in two interactive keys (Harden et al. 2014; Hyland et al. 2010) together representing more than 3320 species. This project will complete the coverage of the Australian mainland rainforest flora by addressing the remaining geographical and taxonomic gap in Central Queensland and adding an additional 200 species to the existing coding.

The work will involve creating a data matrix of coded observations of the plant features (leaves, flowers and fruit) used to create the interactive key. Works will also include writing species descriptions and collating images of all the plants in the identification system. Images are crucial for identification and we are seeking help from people within the region that would like to contribute their images.

Initial plans are for the system to be available for use free online but in the future the plan is to produce a USB version for portable use, but this will require a full update of the RFK for existing species names and profiles. The key aims to be useful to novice users, knowledgeable amateurs and professionals alike. Statistics on the use of the existing online product show that the website is receiving over 1000 visits /month providing a valuable resource to the community.

This project is supported with a grant from the Bush Blitz project (<http://www.bushblitz.org.au/>).

Image contributions can be sent to: [Raelee.Kerrigan@csiro.au](mailto:Raelee.Kerrigan@csiro.au) or [frank.zich@csiro.au](mailto:frank.zich@csiro.au)

References:

Harden et al (2014) <http://rainforests.net.au/product/rainforest-plants-of-australia/>

Hyland et al (2010) <http://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/rfk/>

The RFK website: <https://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/rfk/>



### Land for Wildlife & Peri-urban Participants

***Plant allocations will be ready for pick up after Easter.***

Please contact Project Officer Laura to schedule an appointment for plant selection and pick-up times.

### Goodbye... and Welcome!

Over the Christmas holiday Lara Mathewson said her final goodbye to PCL. As the coordinator Lara contributed her knowledge and enthusiasm for PCL projects and will be greatly missed. Lara will continue her work in Landcare as coordinator at Sarina Landcare (SLCMA).

### Welcome Melissa Spalding

Melissa joined PCL in January as a Project Officer. She has been a PCL volunteer since April 2015. Originally from California, she has been a Mackay resident since July 2013.



## Upcoming Events

### February

**Saturday 6** - Birdlife Mackay, Monthly Count Programme at Shellgrit Creek ph: 048815757

**Saturday 6** - Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve general orientation working bee ph: 49550153

**Sunday 7** - Birdlife Mackay Outing, meet at Service Station Coningsby at 0600 ph: 49593382

**Saturday 13** - Friends of MacKillop Working Bee ph: 0419756357

**Saturday 13** - "Sowing the Seeds of Love" 9am ph: 49684226

**Wednesday 24** - Central Queensland Soil Health Systems meeting 8am. RSVP to Simon Mattsson ph: 0417862979

**Wednesday 24** - Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve First General Meeting ph: 49550153

**Friday 26** - Birdlife Mackay monthly survey at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens ph: 49420675

**Saturday 27** - Friends of MacKillop Working Bee ph: 0419756357

### March

**Saturday 5** - Birdlife Mackay, Monthly Count Programme at Shellgrit Creek ph: 048815757

**Sunday 6** - Birdlife Mackay Outing, meet at Tourist Info Centre at 0600 ph: 49593382

**Friday 25** - Birdlife Mackay monthly survey at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens ph: 4942 0675

## "Sowing the Seeds of Love"



*Learn about coastal vegetation from the experts at the Mackay nursery and try your hand at plant propagation.*

**When: 9am - 11am Saturday 13 February**

**Where: MNEC, 6 Swayne St, North Mackay**

From 11am onwards volunteers will enjoy a complementary continental brunch.

Please bring a water bottle / hat, and wear enclosed shoes. All equipment will be provided.

**Free Gift: all volunteers will receive a free native sapling.**

RSVP: Jessica Berryman 07 4968 4226

Jessica.berryman@reefcatchments.com

## Thank you

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

**Russell Blucher** - for donating a digital camera



## Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc.

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