

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATED !!

If you have not receive your renewal contact PCL by Ph 49441979 or email admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Gardens for Wildlife: a walk in the gardens

PCL hosted two educational walks at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens on the 27th of April and the 11th of May, to promote our Gardens for Wildlife Program.

Both walks guided by Margaret Lane and Maya Harrison people around the gardens and showed off some of the wonderful native plants that we have in our region that are perfect for gardens, and also the insects and other animals that inhabit them.

The walks were successful with our guests taking home some free native plants for their gardens, and having an increased appreciation for native gardening. For more information about Gardens for Wildlife please contact PCL, our contact details are on the last page of the newsletter.



Image first guided walk on April 27

Image sourced from Kade Slater

*Image (left) before the volunteer day planting took place; image (middle) during the planting; image (right) after the planting.
Images sourced from Kade Slater.*



National Volunteer Week

Every day around Australia, thousands of people volunteer their time to helping the community and making a difference. Without volunteers, many of the amazing projects and works that are done in our natural areas around Mackay simply would not happen. PCL is lucky to have an amazing, hard working, and dedicated volunteer team that show up every Tuesday morning to lend a hand.

It is because of this great work by our volunteers that many awesome projects happen around the region, including the efforts at Far Beach, Reliance Creek and the Gooseponds. Our volunteers also spend many hours every week propagating plants at the nursery. To celebrate PCL's volunteers and other volunteers around the region, we hosted a National Volunteer Week event on the 22nd of May. The event took place near John Breen Park, and it was attended by over 20 people! Including volunteers and staff from Reef Catchments, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Wetland Working Group and the Mackay Regional Council (MRC).

Despite the hard ground and abnormally cold weather, the combined effort allowed us to get around 600 plants in the ground that day. Well done everyone! After the planting was finished, everyone tucked into a delicious well earned lunch that was prepared by Carla, and a BBQ cooked by Ren from the MRC.

The combined efforts at the Gooseponds has allowed us to plant around 2000 plants to date.

Memecylon or Poor-flower Tree

Family: Memecylaceae

Shrub to small tree. Plants in wetter, sheltered sites grow to a small tree of around 5m, while those in rocky headlands typically are small shrubs of less than 1m.

Leaves: Simple, opposite, entire, ovate to obovate; midvein distinct but lateral venation obscure; green both surfaces; petioles short.

Flower: Cymes of small, white and occasionally bluish, flowers; 4-petalled, borne in clusters along the stems; October to March.

Fruit: Globose or depressed globose berry with a persistent calyx at the apex, about 8mm in diameter; dark green to bluish black at maturity containing 1 or 2 brown seeds; June to October.

Distribution: WA, NT, NE Qld south to about Bundaberg, also overseas. Grows in Rainforests, riparian communities, open forests and woodlands, common in littoral forests in this region.

Image (top) Memecylon fruit; image (bottom) flowers
 Images sourced from Steve Pearson

Information sourced from 'Plants of Capricornia' by Rhonda Melzer & Joel Plumb



Weed Spotting

Anredera cordifolia

Madeira Vine

Family: Basellaceae

An invasive South American vine that blankets and smothers trees, shrubs and understory species. It grows prolifically at rates of up to 1m per week, and the weight of the vine can cause canopy collapse.

The impacts of the Madeira Vine can be so severe that it causes irreversible damage to the invaded ecosystem, leading to its categorisation as a transformer species. It is considered one of Australia's worst environmental weeds and has been listed as a Weed of National Significance.

It has a limited distribution in Mackay, but major potential to spread. Populations have been found at Eungella, Finch Hatton, Glenella where it was being actively controlled, and more recently at Plane Creek in Sarina. If you own a property in Mackay and suspect you have this vine you should report it to the Mackay Regional Councils Pest Management team immediately.

Leaves: Alternate simple, heart-shaped, 70x45mm fleshy, light green.

Flowers: Small white on long drooping axillary spikes resembling a lambs tail. 100mm long; fragrant.

Tubers: Clusters of 5-250mm light brown or green aerial tubers produced along the length of the stem, 'warty' in appearance. May also produce 'potato-like' subterranean tubers, 200mm in diameter.

Distribution: Invades riparian vegetation and rainforest edges. Found in SE Qld, Central Qld, and Far North Qld.

Control: Refer to the DAF 'Madeira Vine' Factsheet for control options.

Information sourced from the 'Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region' book and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries: 'Madeira Vine' Factsheet' <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au>

Images sourced from Steve Pearson (top & middle) and the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries (bottom)



Freckle Farm

On Friday 25th PCL ran a stall at the Freckle Farm open day, alongside Sarina Landcare (SLCMA) and Whitsunday Landcare. This event was an educational opportunity to exhibit how Freckle Farm implements various principles of ethical and sustainable farming. This included a farm tour and discussions on weed management, as well as a drone demonstration to share how drones can be used as a tool for surveying large areas.

It is important for us as a society to start taking an interest in where our food comes from, and how the animals are treated before they are on shopping centre shelves. We have the power as a consumer to make a change, and to support those who are doing the right thing, all we have to do is put our money in the right places.



Pond Apple in the Habana Region

Pond Apple (*Annona glabra*) is a 'Restricted Invasive Plant' under the QLD *Biosecurity Act 2014*. It poses a significant environmental threat to Northern Australia and is capable of replacing entire ecosystems.

In 2009, a fruit was brought to the attention of local Biosecurity Officers in Mackay by a concerned landholder. The fruit was collected from a tributary creek within the Reliance Creek catchment, just north of Mackay, QLD and was identified as Pond Apple. Upon identification, an extensive search was carried out to ascertain the degree of infestation. Surveys found that the infestation spanned across approximately 21.6 hectares of the Reliance Creek Catchment. Knowing how invasive Pond Apple could be, members of the Mackay Regional Pest Management Group (MRPMG) were keen to work together to eradicate this pest from the Mackay region.



Since 2011, PCL have been involved in the monitoring and control of Pond Apple in the Reliance Creek catchment. Mackay Regional Council's Pest Management Officer and PCL's Project Officer have continued to survey, monitor and treat any identified Pond Apple species each year, with funding provided by Reef Catchments. These ongoing efforts have seen Pond Apple numbers decline drastically and the infestation zone reduced from 21.6 Ha to 3.6 Ha. Surveys carried out in the December 2017 and April 2018 did not locate any Pond Apple trees or seedlings, which is a fantastic outcome for the project and one that could only be achieved through collaborative partnerships and community involvement.

Funding opportunities, including the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country program and now the NRM Investment program through the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines, have enabled the ongoing eradication strategies and efforts, which has ultimately lead to the success of this project. Mackay Regional Council will continue surveying in a reduced area for the next couple of years to ensure that the eradication of Pond Apple from the Mackay region is complete.

Image (top) pond apple fruit; image (bottom left) close up of leaves & fruit; image (bottom right) pond apple tree.

Images sourced from the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries 'Pond Apple Factsheet'

Upcoming Events

June

Friday 8

- Wetland Working Group Field Day, for more information contact Carla on 0438 425 990
- Central Queensland Soil Health Systems Field Walk at Mt Martin Orchards. RSVP to Worren Thomson at w.jthomson@activ8.net.au

Sunday 10

- Mackay Volunteer Expo, at the MECC 10am
- World Oceans Day

Wednesday 13 - Regional Forest Working Bee SGAP

Sunday 17 - Pioneer Valley Show

July

Sunday 1 - Birdlife Mackay outing to Sandringham Bay Conservation Reserve. Meet at Tourist Information Centre at 6.30am. More info contact 0438 134 738 or 07 4959 3382.

Thursday 5 - Native Plants QLD-SGAP General Meeting

Saturday 7

- Using electronic plant identification keys, a workshop by Adjunct Professor Betsy Jackes from James Cook University. Native Plants QLD-SGAP.

- General Meeting and Working Bee of the Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve.

Wednesday 11 - Regional Forest Working Bee

Saturday 14 - Native Plants QLD-SGAP 40th Birthday Celebration at Sarina Beach Motel.

Monday 30 - National Tree Day

Plant Allocations

A friendly reminder to contact PCL if you would like to make an appointment to collect your plant allocations. Appointments will be available through the end of June. Each year members are entitled to twenty native tubestock. Contact Kade Slater for more information or to make an appointment (contact details below).

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. Management Committee

Executive

Chair | Dave Hunter

Deputy Chair | Dianne Williams

Treasurer | Mark Radke

Committee Members

Irene Champion

Kate Finch

Di Salau

Laura Whitbread

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. Office contacts:

Phone | 07 4944 1979

Email | admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Website | www.pioneercatchment.org.au

Wendy Eiteneuer | **Office Administrator**
weiteneuer@pioneercatchment.org.au

Carla Lambropoulos | **Project Coordinator** | 0438 425 990
carla.lambropoulos@pioneercatchment.org.au

Kade Slater | **Project Officer** | 0477 656 751
kade.slater@pioneercatchment.org.au

Membership Renewals

Renewals are due NOW. Please return your completed renewal as soon as possible to admin@pioneercatchment.org.au.

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