



## Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

June 2011

### Preparing for Myrtle Rust

The Central Coast region is bracing for the possible arrival of a potentially devastating disease known as Myrtle Rust. Its name is derived from the family of plants which it commonly infects, the *Myrtaceae* family. For bioregions along Queensland's coast, this is a potentially serious situation with around 600 species found in the family and on average 75% of species found in rainforests.

**What is it?** It is a disease from the guava rust group, that is rapidly spread through human and animal movement, infected matter and wind.

**What does it look like?** Symptoms appear as spots or lesions that are brown to grey, often with red to purple haloes, that go the whole way through the leaf. Maturity of the disease comes with the development of bright yellow pustules on the lesion surface. These lesions can be present on the upper or lower surface.

**What will it do?** Myrtle rust damages the leaves, stems and fruit of infected plants and is particularly damaging to new growth. The result is stunted growth, dieback and possible plant death. Young revegetation sites are particularly vulnerable. The disease has the potential to infect large areas and remain viable in wind columns for extended periods.

**What do I do if I see it?** Do not touch or remove any part of the possible infection. If it touches your clothing cover them and wash immediately once home. If possible take photos, flag tape the area and record any coordinates. Notify Biosecurity Queensland **13 25 23**, or the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on **1800 084 881**.

**What else can I do?** Help to spread the word. Raising awareness amongst your neighbours will be crucial in early identification and isolation of infected sites, and hopefully limit



**Myrtle rust lesions.**  
Image: *Nambucca Valley Landcare*



**Pustules forming on the leaf of *Eugenia reinwardtiana*.**  
Image: *DEEDI*

### Keep an ear out..

**Applications for the 2011–2012 Community Action Grants is expected to be announced very soon.**

CAG's are the small grants component of the Australian Governments Caring for our Country initiative. Investment proposals are sought from environmental, Indigenous, Landcare, Coastcare and sustainable agriculture community groups of between \$5000–\$20 000 (GST exclusive).

Information can be found at [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au)

### PCL— come and find us at...

**Join Conservation Volunteers Australia and PCL at Slade Point Reserve  
Wednesday June 1st—  
Saturday 4th**

Learn about this unique coastal reserve while helping its inhabitants by removing weeds and meeting other like-minded locals. Contact CVA for details on 4951 0933.

*This project is supported by Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group through funding from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country.*



Image: *Landcare Australia*

**Queens Park  
Sunday June  
5th**

**ECOEXPO**  
Free Admission

**10am–4pm**

Celebrate World Environment Day with the Mackay community. See ecofriendly displays, local speakers on sustainable agriculture and housing design, Transition Towns update, edible gardens and get sustainable gardening advice from Jerry Colby-Williams from Gardening Australia.

**Pioneer Valley Show Sunday June 19th  
Gates open 6am**

Join one of the largest one day agricultural shows in Queensland in scenic Finch Hatton.

**Recycle old  
mobile  
phones to  
help our  
coasts**



19 million old and broken mobile phones lay unused around Australian homes. If you have an unused phone, recycling it with the MobileMuster "Old phones, more trees" program before Sept 30<sup>th</sup> 2011 will give Landcare, Coastcare or 'Friends of' groups the chance to receive a \$2000 grant for coastal projects.

Go to [www.mobilemuster.com.au](http://www.mobilemuster.com.au) to find out more about the campaign and locate your nearest drop off point.

---

## Plant of the Month

### Coastal Banksia *Banksia integrifolia* subs. *compar*

The genus *Banksia* was named after Sir Joseph Banks, botanist on Captain James Cook's first voyage. The *Banksia* genus was identified on the east coast of Australia in 1770, with *B. integrifolia* sub. *compar* first described in 1802.

*Integrifolia* has a Latin reference to the leaf margins being entire, and the sub species *compar*, meaning 'similar', in reference to the close relationship with *B. integrifolia* subs. *integrifolia*. It can be distinguished by larger, glossier leaves with undulate margins. Seeds and nectar are well sought after by a large range of birds and the cones are good for flavouring when smoking meat.

**Leaves:** Narrowly elliptic leaves are around 10-20cm long, dark and shiny green above, and whitish beneath. Leaves are borne in whorls towards the end of the branchlets. Margins are generally entire, although younger leaves may exhibit a toothed appearance.

**Flowers:** Upright cones around 20cm in length are densely packed with yellow-golden cylindrical flowers. Main flowering period is around autumn to early winter.

**Propagation:** Woody fruiting cones have prominent individual capsules that gradually open to disperse 2 papery black seeds. This seed can be sown directly.

**Habitat:** Wide range of habitats from coastal dunes to montane forests.

**Distribution:** From Proserpine south to the Blue Mountains in NSW. Coastal Banksia can be found commonly in the Mackay region, in particular the Slade Point Reserve.

*Reference: One Hundred & One Trees of Mackay, 1989. SGAP Mackay Branch 1989; Dictionary of Botanical Names, 1990. D Perrin*

---



Coastal Banksia in flower

Image: Qwiki Images

---

## Weed of the Month

### Broad-leaved Pepper Tree *Schinus terebinthifolius*

The Broad-leaved Pepper Tree is a highly invasive species that has become a serious threat in the Melaleuca wetlands around Mackay. It is a native of South America, originally introduced and promoted in Australia as an ornamental shrub. Overseas it is a recognised weed from South Africa to USA, and has become particularly problematic on Hawaiian islands. In Mackay, there have been ongoing efforts to control the plant in wetlands around Slade Point and Andergrove.

**Description:** It is a spreading tree to around 10m or more. Leaves are alternate pinnate, with 5-9 opposite dark green leaflets and one terminal leaflet. Leaflet margins are entire or finely toothed. Crushed leaves are strongly aromatic with small green turning to red berries. Male and female flowers are usually on separate plants. Plants begin producing flowers at 3 years of age and seedlings have a high survival rate. Trees can live for up to 35 years.

**The problem:** The plant is highly invasive and extremely adaptable in a range of environments. It quickly colonises disturbed ground and is capable of forming dense stands by out competing native grasses, ground covers and other shrubs. It is shade tolerant and spreads rapidly in moist areas, particularly wetlands. The plant poses a risk to human and animal health as it contains toxic resins and also harbours a disease known to be fatal to mangroves.

**Dealing with the problem:** The wetlands on Mackay Port lands have been seriously invaded by Broad-leaved Pepper Tree, and the Port has been undertaking eradication works in hectares of forest since about 2000. Work has also been done by Mackay Regional Council at Keeley's Road and Mark Gallate has done extensive work on the Melaleuca forest at Wetland Walkabout. There are still more dense infestations to be treated. These areas all require ongoing management to treat regrowth.

As this species is a garden escapee if you do have a tree in your garden or know of one in another garden please contact PCL and we will advise on treatment and suitable replacement species.

*References: Are Your Garden Plants Going Bush; Department of Employment, Economic Development & Innovation.*

#### Class 3 declared weed.

Broad-leaved Pepper Tree is a class 3 declared weed in Queensland. As a result it is prohibited to supply or sell the plant, and it should be removed from all environmentally sensitive regions.



Image: DEEDI



Broad-leaved Pepper Trees can produce large amounts of fruit.  
Image: Jeffery Pippin

---

## ...and 2 more make a critical 140!

The birth of two joeys for one of the worlds top 10 most endangered mammals and the second most endangered mammal in Australia is cause for celebration!

The Northern Hairy-nosed wombat, *Lasiorhinus krefftii*, is the largest of the three wombat species in Australia and can weigh up to 40 kg and measure more than 1 metre in length. Australia has 3 species of wombat, the common wombat, *Vombatus ursinus*, ranges from southern South Australia, across Victoria and up to South-east Queensland while the Southern Hairy-nosed wombat, *Lasiorhinus latifrons*, ranges across the Nullarbor plains from Western Australia to eastern SA. The Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat (NHnW) once existed from QLD to Victoria and was likely the least common of the 3 species. However since European settlement, competition for food from introduced grazing animals combined with predation from native species, reduced their numbers significantly. At one point there were as few as 30-40 individuals known to exist anywhere in the world.

This critical population, located within 7,800 acres of Epping Forest National Park (scientific) in Central Queensland was in serious need of conservation measures if the species were to avoid extinction. A predator proof-fence was erected at Epping and Swamp Wallabies and Eastern Grey Kangaroos, the main competitors for food, were removed. At the last population census in 2007, the estimated population of NHnW was 138 wombats.

However, the population was still at serious risk of extinction from a catastrophic event such as a flood or a disease. After several years of investigation, a second site was chosen and a second NHnW population is being established at St George in southern Queensland. Fortunately, flooding in SEQ this year did not effect the Reserve in St George. Flood waters did enter Epping Forest, but it did not reach any of the habitat being used by the wombats.

In March and April 2011 it was confirmed that two female wombats were carrying joeys in their pouches at the second population in St. George. You can watch YouTube footage of one female with her bulging pouch and the joey moving in the pouch ([www.youtube.com/user/QldDERM](http://www.youtube.com/user/QldDERM)).

More information on the NHnW can be found on the DERM website ([www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)) including wombat games and puzzles, a poster, the wombat diary (details of the reintroduction program) and even videos including the wombat grazing and a wombat chasing another wombat!

Source: Department of Environment & Resource Management; IUCN RedList [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)



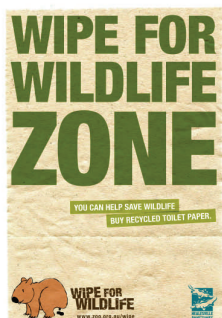
**The Northern Hairy-nosed wombat.**  
Photos: Warren Clarke/ WPM for Time (top) DERM (below).

## Calling teachers & parents

### Did you know PCL offers educational programs free of charge to schools in the region?

PCL can help schools design and deliver environmental education programs including designing a native revegetation area, understanding local biodiversity, water quality testing and interpretation, assistance funding your project and even resources to loan out to your school. Contact PCL to discuss your ideas. This program is supported by Mackay Regional Council through its Natural Environment Levy.

## Do you WIPE FOR WILDLIFE?



It's estimated that Australians currently flush more than 6 million trees down the toilet each year. 2011 is the United Nations Year of the Forest, and we can all help by choosing recycled toilet paper for our homes, in our workplaces or at school.

What type of toilet paper is wildlife friendly?

- Use 100% post-consumer waste, use non toxic chemicals and made in Australia

Did you know?

- Recycled toilet paper is mostly made from clean, used office paper.
- The poo of Southern Ocean Sperm Whales helps to remove carbon emissions from the atmosphere, equivalent to 40,000 cars each year!
- Before the invention of toilet paper in around 1880, humans used everything from grass and leaves to animal fur and corn cobs to wipe their bums!

The Wipe for Wildlife campaign is an initiative of Zoos Victoria and you can find out more at [www.zoos.com.au/wipe](http://www.zoos.com.au/wipe)

## Who's who in Pioneer Catchment & Landcare?

### Management Committee

**Chair** Margaret Lane (Society for Growing Australian Plants—Mackay Branch)

**Deputy Chair** Dave Hunter

**Treasurer** Wendy Eiteneuer

**Secretary (Non voting)** Hayley Glover

**Committee Members**  
Cr. Wendy Cameron (Mackay Regional Council)

Irene Champion

Joan Fitzsimmons (Mackay Conservation Group)

Bruce Milles

Dianne Williams (Central Queensland Forestry Association)

Cr. Ross Walker (Mackay Regional Council)

### Pioneer Catchment office

4944 1979

[admin@pioneercatchment.org.au](mailto:admin@pioneercatchment.org.au)

[www.pioneercatchment.org.au](http://www.pioneercatchment.org.au)

### Pioneer Catchment Landcare

**Facilitator** Hayley Glover

0419 778 402

[hayley.glover@reefcatchments.com.au](mailto:hayley.glover@reefcatchments.com.au)

**Project Officer** Dallas Milburn

0447 749 769

[d.milburn@pioneercatchment.org.au](mailto:d.milburn@pioneercatchment.org.au)

**Newsletter** Hayley Glover, Dallas Milburn

## Upcoming Events June

**Thursday 2, from 8pm**—SGAP Monthly Meeting. Guest presentation "*The Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific*" by Dave Pratchett. Mackay Gem and Craft Society Hall, Leisure Court. Visitors welcome.

**Saturday 4, 8am**—Working Bee at Morag McNichol Reserve. Contact Jim McNichol on 4942 8802 for details.

**Sunday 5, 10am—4pm** —Eco Expo at Queens Park. Contact Mackay Conservation Group for more details 4953 0808.

**Sunday 5, 7am**—MACBOCA trip to Kane's Property, Owens Creek Rd. Meet at Tourist Information Centre, Nebo Rd. Contact 49522964 or 49540937 for further details.

**Sunday 19, from 6am**—Pioneer Valley Agricultural Show, Finch Hatton Showgrounds, Eungella Rd. Ph 4958 3162.

**Tuesday 21—Thursday 23rd**—Mackay Regional Show. Visit [www.mackayshow.com.au](http://www.mackayshow.com.au) for details.

## July

**Saturday 2, 8am**—Working Bee at Morag McNichol Reserve. Contact Jim McNichol on 4942 8802 for details.

**Sunday 3, 7am**—MACBOCA trip to Crediton State Forest. Meet at Tourist Information Centre, Nebo Rd. Contact 49522964 or 0403172455 for further details.

**Thursday 7, from 8pm**—SGAP Monthly Meeting. Guest presentation *Photos from Japan* by Peter Thompson. Mackay Gem and Craft Society Hall, Leisure Court. Visitors welcome.

**Friday 29**—National Schools Tree Day

**Sunday 31**—National Tree Day

Supported by:



CARING  
FOR  
OUR  
COUNTRY

## Thinking about travelling and want to learn about volunteer opportunities around Queensland?

Landcare Queensland has launched its *Do it in the Bush* website where you can find out about volunteering opportunities around the state depending on your spare time and location.

Check it out at [www.doitinthebush.org.au](http://www.doitinthebush.org.au)



Image: Landcare Australia



## Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News June 2011

POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA

If unable to be delivered please return to

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare  
Group Inc.

P0 Box 1076

MACKAY Qld 4740