



Vote for our local finalists in the National Landcare Awards!

Congratulations to Advanced Nutrient Solutions (ANS) who are Queensland finalists in the National Landcare Awards 'Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices' category. John Ross will travel to Canberra to make a presentation on behalf of the group and attend the awards ceremony on June 24. This innovative group of four cane-farming families has a deep passion for improving soil health through on-farm composting. They have raised the profile of composting in our region through workshops and training courses, and together with Hodges Engineering have developed the world's first subsurface compost applicator. ANS is trialling the effect of compost application on their cane crops.



You can support the group by voting in the 'People's Choice Award'. Visit the Landcare Online website, select the National Landcare Awards, choose Queensland on the map, and then click on 'Advanced Nutrient Solutions', in the Aust. Govt Sustainable Farm Practices category to vote. Whilst you're there, why not investigate other innovative Landcarers who have been nominated for the Awards. We will report back from the National Landcare Awards in our next newsletter.



The Sub-surface compost applicator (above); ANS members with Johannes Biala & Paul Tippett

Pioneer Valley & Cape Hillsborough tourism operators involved in Australia's first state-wide Sustainable Regions Project

The Pioneer Valley & Cape Hillsborough was one of five Queensland regions involved in Tourism Queensland's pilot Sustainable Regions Project. The project is focused on reducing the carbon footprint of tourism operations by providing information on ways to operate businesses more environmentally sustainably.

The project has been working with regional tourism organisations, local councils, consultants and tourism operators from five regions - namely Winton, North Stradbroke Island, Airlie Beach, Magnetic Island and Pioneer Valley/Cape Hillsborough.

Mackay Tourism General Manager David Phillips, says the project was very well received by local businesses. David says the demand for environmentally sustainable businesses is largely being driven by consumers, who are asking tourist operators to show their 'green' credentials prior to doing business with them. Mackay Tourism will now work closely with Mackay Regional Council to encourage and support more tourist operators to become more environmentally sustainable and reduce their carbon footprint.

Cape Hillsborough Nature Resort, Sarina Sugar Shed, Broken River Mountain Resort, the Criterion Hotel and Forest Flying participated in the project. Broken River Mountain Resort owner Chris Ayre is a PCL member, and undertook revegetation at the Resort as part of the Sustainable Landscapes project. Chris is passionate about improving the environmental credentials of his business, which is also 'Eco certified advanced ecotourism' accredited. Robyn Shulkins from the family-owned Cape Hillsborough Nature Resort says the program made her seriously think about the environmental impact the Resort was having on a day to day basis. Through participating in the project, the Resort has changed to power-efficient light bulbs, installed motion and timer lights, set air-conditioners to 25°C and changed over from six gas-fired hot water systems to four heat pump systems. The Resort is also looking at ways to recycle grey water and create a recycling system on site (currently they are transporting recycling waste to Seaforth). Forest Flying owners Donna & Dave Lowe, who also participated in the project, strive to live sustainably in their personal lives which flowed seamlessly into the operation of their business. Donna says that sustainable living is possible by everyday people and is not just about making substantial financial investments, such as buying a hybrid car.

The project highlights businesses who are implementing sustainability initiatives within their daily operations, making choosing sustainable options for holidaying easier. Why not choose a sustainable tourism operator for your next holiday, or recommend one of these local businesses to visitors?



Local tourism operators receiving recognition as part of Tourism Queensland's Sustainable Regions Project

Plant of the Month

Lolly Bush / *Clerodendrum floribundum*

Lolly Bush is currently in flower around our catchment. To see examples, enter Slade Point Reserve via the entrance at the southern end of Pacific Esplanade at Lambert's Beach; it is found on the right hand side as you walk up to the Reserve lookout. Lolly Bush is an attractive small ornamental tree which attracts birds to the colourful fruits.

FAMILY: *Verbenaceae*

HABIT: An open shrub to small tree with a fairly dense rounded canopy with a slim, mid-grey, furrowed trunk.

LEAVES: Leaves are thin, textured and dark green. They are opposite leaves and broadly elliptic to ovate, 6-20cm long. They may be hairless or sparsely hairy along the veins. The leaf stalks, from 1-6cm in length, and branchlets are often purplish in colour.

FLOWER/FRUIT: The showy, white tubular flowers with long, protruding stamens are borne in terminal clusters. At maturity, shiny black succulent fruit, about 1cm in diameter, are seated on bright red, five lobed, enlarged and persistent calyxes. Both flowers and fruits are attractive. Aborigines rubbed together dried sticks from this plant to make fire.

LOCAL HABITAT: A widespread species which occurs on rainforest margins and in dry rainforests. In this region, it is common in littoral vegetation on sandy soils.

DISTRIBUTION: From Qld to south eastern NSW. Also northern NT and in New Guinea. Coastal eastern Queensland north of Nambour, the Northern Territory and overseas.

SOURCE: Alcock & Champion (1989) *One Hundred and One Trees of Mackay*



(Top) Flowers and (Bottom) fruits of the Lolly Bush
Images: S&A Pearson

Weed update

Cat's Claw Creeper Project at Reliance Creek National Park

Saturday 29th May saw 12 enthusiastic landcarers from the Mackay region come together to reduce the Cat's Claw Creeper infestation in Reliance Creek National Park at Habana. This was a very successful working bee, with volunteers working in pairs to cut vines and paste with herbicide to prevent plants re-shooting from tubers. The results are striking, as large masses of the Creeper have now wilted, showing where vines have been cut.

Lawrence Bonaventura, whose family has managed the section of Reliance Creek to the north of the National Park for decades, introduced volunteers to his family's connection with the block. Lawrence also recounted the work of a volunteer group in the late 1990s, whose work in the park managed to save the overstorey from smothering by Cat's Claw Creeper. We noted that the areas in which this group had worked were markedly freer from Cat's Claw Creeper, more than a decade later, showing the value and effectiveness of community care for bush areas. A warm thankyou is extended to working bee participants, the wonderful CVA team who spent 5 days in total at the site as part of this project, the Habana Progress Association and Lawrence Bonaventura. PCL gratefully acknowledges support from the Reef Catchments Public Fund in delivering this project.



(Above) Jan & Gordon Sampson work as a team to 'cut and paste', (Below) an Alexander Palm trunk showing cuts on the bark from Cat's Claw Creeper control Images: T McDonald



Enjoying a social BBQ after the working bee Image: HK Glover

Locals envision a Lower Carbon Mackay

A diverse group discussed lowering our region's carbon footprint at a workshop coordinated by Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group on Wednesday 26 May. Twenty-five participants heard about the 'Transition' sustainability movement taking off around the world, networked, and outlined collective visions for lowering Mackay's carbon footprint.

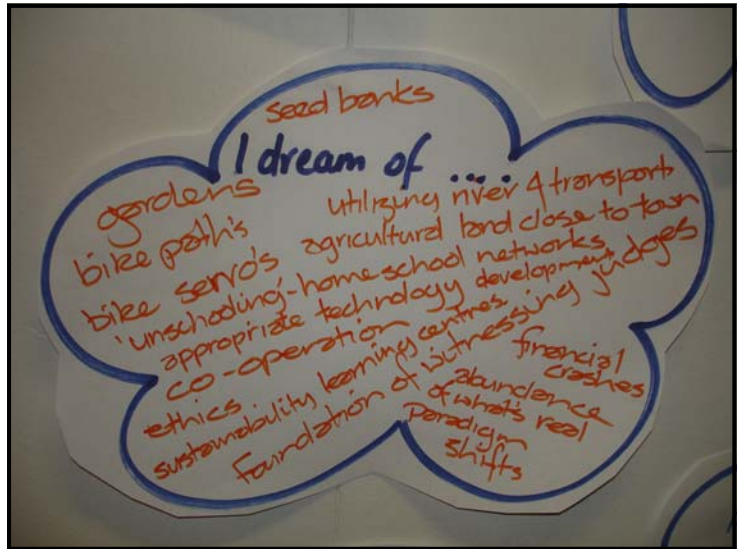
The workshop, facilitated by Samantha Morris of Wombat Creative, was packed with information, discussions and exercises. Local food emerged as the main theme of interest, underpinned by the idea that healthy soil grows healthy food, creating a healthier society. Participants also discussed resources and waste, population and urban sprawl, transport and our community. Many great ideas were shared and debated, as well as the steps required to make them reality.

One standout idea was to create "people sheds" as neighbourhood hubs for sharing skills and resources, and holding regular events. Workshop participants also shared their ideas for individual and collective actions to help create the transition. A step that many of us present wanted to take included growing more food around their houses, in particular growing plants suited to our climate. Suggestions for steps we can take together included sharing more (resources, equipment, knowledge and skills), taking time to listen to each other, and celebrating and enjoying life together.

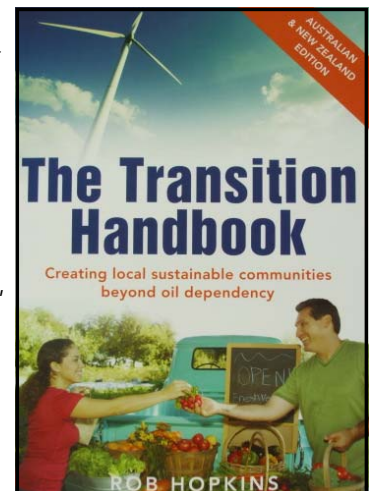
It was wonderful to hear the successes and ideas of individuals, families and organisations in reducing their carbon footprints, to discuss our collective visions for the future of our region, and to outline some steps we can take to get there. In our region we are fortunate to have many community members interested in the transition to a more sustainable, more resilient, healthier community and economy; these events have aimed to connect and inspire people interested in sustainability, health and making a positive difference in our region.

The Transition movement is a rapidly-growing network of sustainability initiatives around the world. Transition Initiatives deal with the twin issues of peak oil and climate change by empowering and inspiring individuals to work collectively to reduce the energy dependence of local economies, whilst improving quality of life. Socialising and fun are emphasised in Transition initiatives and true to this, workshop participants enjoyed a delicious meal prepared with locally-sourced ingredients by Shine Mietzel, of Shine's Fun Key Food.

The workshop followed on from two film screenings held earlier in the month, and led into a display at the EcoExpo on Sunday 6 June. Events were supported by a Natural Resources Awareness Grant from the Department of Environment and Resource Management. A group will continue to meet to discuss how we can work towards making our visions reality—please call PCL on 4944 1979 for more information on how to get involved, or to borrow the Transition Handbook (pictured at right) for inspiration.



One participant's vision for a lower carbon region
Image: S Morris



Display at the EcoExpo Image: T McDonald



Participants discussed issues and opportunities for our region Image: S Morris

Who's who in Pioneer Catchment & Landcare?

Management Committee

Chair Margaret Lane

Deputy Chair Dave Hunter

Treasurer Joan Fitzsimmons

Secretary (Non voting) Tessa McDonald

Committee Members

Irene Champion

Cr. Wendy Cameron

Wendy Eiteneuer

Cr. George Christensen

Dianne Williams

Coordinator Tessa McDonald
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Project Officer Hayley Glover
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Newsletter Tessa McDonald, Hayley Glover

Supported by:



Upcoming Events June

Thursday 17, 9am-3pm—Fire Management Workshop for native forests and plantations, Eton Range. Call Jodi Newton (Central QLD Forest Association) to register on 0458 691 520.

Saturday 19, 3-5pm—Slade Point Reserve community working bee. Meet end of Teal St. Contact PCL on 4944 1979 for details.

Sunday 20—Pioneer Valley Agricultural Show (Finch Hatton Show). Come see PCL display and plant give away.

Tuesday 22—Thursday 24—Mackay Show, Mackay Showgrounds.

Friday 25-Saturday 26— Show Whitsunday, Proserpine Show Grounds, Jupp Street, Proserpine.

July

Saturday 3, 8am—Morag McNichol Reserve working bee. Contact Jim McNichol on 4942 8802 for details.

Sunday 4, 7am— MACBOCA trip to Padaminka Nature Reserve, meeting at the Tourist Information Centre. Contact Marj Andrews for details (4952 2964).

Friday 16, 10am-12 noon—General Meeting. Presentation on Council Sustainability Initiatives by Cr. Karen May.

Saturday 17, 3-5pm—Slade Point Reserve community working bee. Meet end of Teal St. Contact PCL on 4944 1979 for details.

August

Sunday 29—Landcare Day in the Gardens 2010. Save this date, and keep an eye out for further information!

Volunteer Opportunity:

Australian Wildlife Carers seek volunteers to help dismantle the old SPCA at Mount Bassett. This SPCA site is being redeveloped, and the group have received permission to recycle materials for use in wildlife caring and rehabilitation. Any help is appreciated. Work will start from the first week in July. For information, contact Mrs Spooner on 4954 3268



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