

SLCMA Catchment News 2021



June

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*Office opening
hours:
9am-4pm weekdays.*

*Other times by
appointment, please
call 4956 1388 :)*

Staff

Administration Officer
Kristy Thomsett

Coordinator
Saskia von Fahland

Nursery Officer
Susie Tomlinson

Project Officer
Morgan Thomas

Call us for information:

- ◇ Weed management
- ◇ Plant identification
- ◇ Land management
- ◇ FREE property visits
- ◇ Land for Wildlife

Volunteer opportunities:

- * SLCMA Community Volunteer Program, Wednesday, 9-12 noon.
- * Friends of the Sarina Community Native Gardens, Monday, 9-12noon.

Native plants available for purchase \$3.30 each.

SLCMA Executive 20/21

Chair: Mark Evans

Vice-chair: Lachlan McBride

Treasurer: Kevin Plumb

Secretary: Shirley Sidey

Executive members:

Sandy Evans
Karen May

SLCMA News and events!

SLCMA Memberships Renewal due at the end of each financial year! We value your membership and support and, look forward to your continued involvement in Landcare during 21/22 financial year.

COVID-safety — To ensure that all visitors, volunteers and staff stay as safe as possible. Please be aware of the following procedures when visiting the SLCMA Office and SLCMA Community Nursery.

- ◆ Please do NOT visit/attend if you are feeling unwell, have recently travelled to known hotspots or have been in contact with someone who has the COVID-19 virus.
- ◆ All visitors must:
 - ◆ Check-in using the QLD government check-in app, if you are unable to check in, please advise and we will check you in as a guest.
 - ◆ Maintain social distancing (minimum 1.5m spacing)
 - ◆ Utilise hand sanitiser supplied upon entry to the office or nursery

Land for Wildlife program

As the financial year approaches, we want to let you know that we have spots available in our Land for Wildlife Program! So, why would you want to join?!



The Land for Wildlife (LFW) program is a free, voluntary program that aims to support, encourage, and recognise landholders who integrate wildlife conservation with their land management activities. By protecting the natural biodiversity of your land, you can provide a wide variety of habitats for native wildlife. The retention of habitat for native wildlife can play a major role in sustainable land management. It can provide a natural means of pest control, help with erosion and salinity management, and provide shade and shelter for livestock. Whilst National Parks and other reserves protect natural areas, they only cover four percent of Queensland. Hence, why private properties have an important role in the landscape.

The program has no legislative requirements/does not change the legal status of your property (and is voluntary so you can opt out whenever you like), and will not change how you manage your property. It is purely to help landholders learn about native plants, animals and ecosystems on their own property, and receive advice on managing threats such as weeds and pest animals.

The only requirements of Land for Wildlife Program is that the property is located in the Mackay Regional Council area, is larger than 1 hectare and has some remnant vegetation (native, non-cleared) present.

The Land for Wildlife Program, offers landholders a variety of **FREE** benefits including:

- A property visit from our Project Officer, including habitat assessment and discussion of property goals.
- Plant identification and advice (both native and exotic plants), threatened species, ecosystems, and their management.
- Personalised Land Management Plan to provide further information targeted at your specific property goals.
- **20 free native plants annually**
- Opportunity for property re-visit, if wanted. This is handy if you would like follow-up advice or to discuss changes to your property overtime.
- Receive quarterly newsletter and invitations to workshops, field days and opportunities to meet other like-minded landholders.
- A Land for Wildlife sign for your property to acknowledge your efforts in wildlife conservation.

There are only a few spaces available each year, so please get in quick!

If you are interested, please complete and return the [Expression of Interest Form](#) on our website (www.sarinalandcare.org.au). Please email form to: admin@sarinalandcare.org.au, or call the office on 4956 1388.



Weed Feature: Mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum delagoense*)

A weed species to keep an eye out for in our catchment is mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum delagoense*). Mother-of-millions (MOM) is native to Africa, and another example of an ornamental plant which has escaped and causing serious problems in our natural areas. Two species of MOM commonly occur in our catchment: the common *Bryophyllum delagoense*, and a hybridisation of *B. delagoense* and *Bryophyllum daigremontianum*, commonly known as *Bryophyllum x houghtonii*.

Both of these MOM species grow as an erect, smooth, fleshy succulent plant reaching up to 1m in height. They form tall flower spikes in winter with clusters of drooping, orange-red, bell-shaped flowers. Although the plant shape varies between species, they all produce small plantlets along the edges of the leaves. The plantlets drop and develop roots readily, quickly forming a new colony.

The difference between the two species can be found in the leaves. *B. delagoense* has grey-brown, fleshy, tubular-like leaves with up to seven projections at the tip of each leaf. While, *Bryophyllum x houghtonii* leaves are boat-shaped with thick stalks and notches along the edges of the leaves.

So why is MOM a problem? MOM is able to rapidly disperse via multiple ways and is known to infest local natural areas such as bushland and coastal dunes. They can also be found spreading in disturbed areas along roadsides, fence lines, old rubbish dumps and illegal dumping sites. MOM is spread into the environment by:

- Incorrect disposal of garden waste
- Wind and water dispersal of the fine, large quantities of seed that they produce.
- Leaves and plantlets are easily dislodged from the parent plant and spread by animals, vehicles, machinery or in contaminated soil and water.

MOM are also toxic, especially their flowers which have been known to cause cattle deaths. Signs of MOM poisoning in cattle include dullness, loss of appetite, diarrhoea and heart failure. Some cattle will slowly recover if only a small amount of the plant material is eaten. If you suspect cattle have consumed the plant, treatment by a veterinarian is recommended within 24 hours of consumption.

The best means of control is always **prevention**, this could mean choosing a native alternative plant instead of MOM. If you choose to have MOM, keep them contained in pots away from the natural environment and ensure all garden prunings are bagged and dumped in the general waste bin (not green waste).

Otherwise, **treat infestations** when they are small and manageable. Controlling early will reduce the risk of plants self propagating and setting seed and, will save you money and time in the long term. As always, establishing local native plants (*through revegetation or encouraging natural regeneration of native plants*) will help to reduce the opportunity for MOM infestations and other weeds, to take hold.

Mechanical and manual control is possible, although great care must be taken to ensure all seeds and plantlets are removed. Plants can be burned or placed into general waste bin— general waste will ensure they are buried deep at council refuse tips, rather than recycled into mulch and spread further.

Herbicide control can also be effective, if applied in accordance with the directions on the label. Specific herbicides recommended for MOM control can be found on the [DAF pest fact sheet](#) or search the following link: https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/61461/mother-millions.pdf

Mother-of-millions (both species listed above) are **category 3** restricted invasive plants under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. They must not be given away, sold, or released into the environment.

Information sourced from: *Brisbane city council. (n.d.). Weed Identification Tool. Retrieved from: <https://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/mother-millions>*

Friends of the Sarina Community Native Gardens

So, we have recommenced the *Friends of the Gardens* volunteer mornings in the Sarina Community Native Gardens. We are getting together every Monday from 9am to 12pm with morning tea provided between 10:30 and 11:00am. We have had a couple of eager helpers so far who have planted out about 150 plants alongside our the SLCMA revegetation team.

We mass planted *Mackinlaya macrosciadia* (Blue umbrella), *Oplismenus compositus* (Running Mountain Grass) and *Alpinea caerulea* (Native Ginger) into the rainforest garden. These should make a nice display as they grow and are great specimens for a backyard garden. We have more planting, weeding and mulching to do in the coming weeks and look forward to seeing you in the garden. This volunteer program was initiated through support by the Communities Environment Program.



Mick and Susie ready for planting in the gardens :)



Photos: S & A Pear-

Sarina Community Nursery Volunteer Program

The cooler weather has not seemed to bother the germination of seed, yet. Most likely because we are still having enough rain and humidity to encourage them to pop their heads out to see the sun. Thankfully, the volunteers continue to pop into the nursery despite the cooler weather. Busy they have been, cleaning and propagating seed collected from a recent visit to Louisa Creek and the Sarina Community Native Gardens.

Pleigynium timorens (Burdekin Plum), *Alphitonia excelsa* (Red Ash), *Terminalia mulleri* (Coastal Damson) and *Morinda citrifolia* (Stinking Cheese Tree) are some of the recently cleaned and propagated seed. Fleshy seed of some species such as the Coastal damson require fermentation prior to cleaning and planting, and this can produce a lingering odour quite like that of a brewery. Consequently, some volunteers were told when they returned home that day that they did indeed smell like a brewery! We promise, they were at Landcare and any brew served was of the hot, non-alcoholic kind.

If you would like to volunteer in your local community and meet new people while learning about local native plants and their propagation, come along to the SLCMA Community Volunteer morning, every Wednesday, 9am to 12noon.

SLCMA Community Volunteer Program is proudly supported by Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Levy. For more details contact SLCMA on 4956 1388.



Photo: S von Fahand

Seed collecting at Louisa Ck

SLCMA Community Nursery 'Plant of the Month'

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is the **Damson** (*Terminalia sericocarpa*).

Family: **Combretaceae**

What is in a name? *Terminalia* from the Latin *terminalis* meaning terminal, referring to the leaves which are clustered at the ends of branches in many species.

Form: A large spreading tree 20-30m high with layered branches.

Leaves: Oval, tapering to the base, tip usually rounded, smooth, shiny green above and paler beneath. Turning red before falling.

Flower: Cream, strongly scented borne on hair spikes in the leaf axils.

Fruit: Egg-shaped, blue to purplish with woody-shelled seed.

Habitat: Typically grows in well developed rainforest but also found in drier rainforest, monsoon forest and gallery forest and riparian zones.

Distribution: Coastal areas of northern Australia from the Kimberleys to Rockhampton.

Notes: Propagate from fresh seed. Suitable for most well drained soils, an ideal large shade tree for parks and larger gardens.

The "**Plant of the Month**" is currently available from the SLCMA Community Nursery. Landcare members are eligible to receive 1 free "Plant of the Month", throughout that month. This and other native plant species are also available for purchase at \$3.30 each. All plants are grown from locally sourced seed in the SLCMA Community Nursery by SLCMA staff and the SLCMA Volunteer team.

Information sourced from: Townsend, K. (1994) *Across the Top*.

Photos: Form, leaves & flowers of Damson

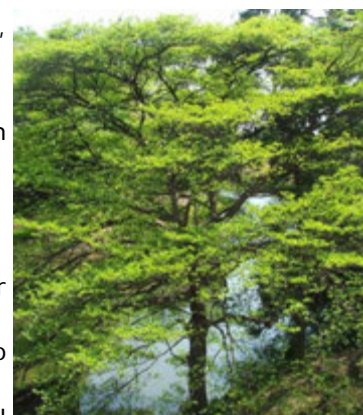


Photo: M Meng



Photo: P Alden

Sarina Inlet Trail — Guided tour & rubbish collection

Seven community members joined SLCMA at Sarina Beach recently, to lend a hand as well as enjoy a guided tour along the Sarina Inlet Trail.

Photos: S von Fahand

The morning event began with a rubbish collection along the roadside and mangrove edge at the Sarina boat ramp. Over 4 bags of rubbish were collected within the hour...hauling in a variety of rubbish items including food wrappers and cans, which were saved from being washed into the marine environment. *Good job!*



Attendees then enjoyed a guided tour of the Sarina Inlet trail where they viewed the new entrance sign (*thank you Sarina Signs!*), gained an insight into the history of the trail and saw first hand the results of recent weed control and revegetation undertaken over the last 12 months by the SLCMA revegetation teams.

The SLCMA revegetation teams then joined the community members for a well earned break over morning tea, marking the completion of the 12 month project, funded through the Communities Environment Program.



The project was a great opportunity to reinvigorate Landcare's involvement in the Sarina Inlet Trail and to enhance the surrounding coastal bushland. We look forward to continuing work along the Sarina Inlet Trail in the coming months in partnership with Mackay Regional Council and through the Reef Assist Program.

Top: Combing the tidal edge for rubbish; Middle: new entrance sign; Bottom: revegetation works along the trail

Community Fishway Tour

On the 19th of May, SLCMA had the pleasure of hosting a community fishway tour with special guests from Catchment Solutions, Trent Power and Jakob Fries.

The purpose of the community tour was aimed at showcasing some of our local fishways and wetlands to help promote the benefits to the biodiversity and fisheries resources which fishways and associated wetlands provide. The tour also provided the community an opportunity to see some local areas which they might not have seen before, and experience how the fishways are monitored to determine their effectiveness.

The tour began at the SLCMA office, before heading by bus to the Sandy Creek Fishway (Palm Tree Road) to learn about its design, and see monitoring in action. Unfortunately we did not catch any fish in the trap, but did see two blue catfish (*Neoarius graeffei*), one inside the monitoring trap and the other in one of the fishway pools next to the trap. We did managed to catch plenty of freshwater shrimp (*Paratya australiensis*) in the trap. Participants learnt about our native fish species and their use of fishways to assist with migration along waterways, where barriers exist.

From Sandy Creek we ventured to Koumala for a short lunch break before heading to the Landing Road fishway. Participants learned more about fishway design, given the differences between the two fishways and why factors like stream size, shape and position in the landscape must be considered. We were lucky enough to see some native fish species within the trap, such as the empire gudgeon (*hypseleotris compressa*) and plenty more freshwater shrimp. The bus then returned all participants back to the SLCMA office.

Why are fishways important?

Native Australian fish require a variety of habitats to complete their life cycles. Fish move between habitats for a variety of reasons such as food availability, seasonal access, shelter, breeding sites and nursery areas. For instance, barramundi (*Lates calcarifer*) will migrate upstream as juveniles to utilise the safe habitat and plentiful food away from predators, before they grow big enough to swim back downstream and prosper in the major estuaries opening into the sea, and spawn. Without this ability to move upstream, they are less likely to reach adulthood given the additional pressures, such as large predators.

Barriers come in a variety of forms for our native fish species from dams which completely block migration, to pipes, culverts and even small vertical drops downstream of road crossings and culvert aprons. Young fish generally have weak swimming abilities and these barriers can create water velocities which exceed their swimming ability, meaning they are not able to migrate upstream. By constructing fishways, we can help to remove barriers and open up these extensive areas of fish habitat for our migratory fish species.

Fishways come in a variety of forms, those seen during the fishway tour were rock-ramp fishways. Rock ramp fishways are commonly used for low-height barriers up to about 2m. Rocks are strategically placed immediately below a barrier to create a low slope which simulates a rocky stream bed. Large boulders are placed periodically along the rock ramp which help to create pools of low flow and low turbulence, allowing the fish to move from pool to pool easily, as well as provide an opportunity to rest and recover, before moving to the next pool.

The Community Fishway Tour was supported by the *Australian Government Communities Environment Program* and the *Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Wetland Working Group*. For similar upcoming events, keep an eye out on our Facebook page and website.

Information sourced from: Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (n.d.). Instream structure and fish passage. Retrieved from: <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/fisheries/habitats/instream-structures-fish-passage>



Photos: M Thomas

Participants listening to Trent Power discuss the Sandy Creek Fishway.



Sandy Creek fishway.



Landing Road fishway.

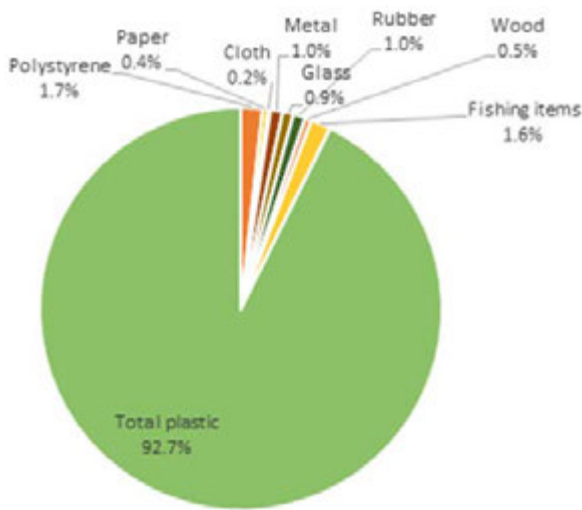


Empire gudgeon caught in trap

Marine Debris Clean-Up at Grasstree Beach

On the 1st of June, SLCMA and Conservation Volunteers Australia hosted a community marine debris cleanup event at Grasstree beach. It was a wonderful turnout, with plenty of new faces (*including Yoda the dog*), who were eager to get involved and help clean up their local beach.

All up, we collected approximately 24kgs of marine debris, and collected a total of 888 items! See below the chart for the break down of items. As usual, the majority of the debris collected was comprised of plastic items (92%) with the majority of the plastic being hard, broken bits of plastic (81%), followed by – you guessed it... bottle-tops! (10%). Other notable contributions to the large amount of plastics found were toothbrushes, straws, bait packets, rope, cigarette butts and lighters and even film remnants.



This community event was supported by Mackay Regional Council Natural Environment Levy.



Photo: contributed

Community volunteers at Grasstree Beach

Louisa Creek Reserve—Seed Collection and awareness event

Photos: S von Fahand



It was great to see some familiar and new faces at our *Seed Collection and awareness* event at Louisa Creek Reserve, recently. Participants learned about the principles of seed collecting from native plants including permits and permission, safety, plant identification, ripeness of seed, health of plants and collection techniques.

The Louisa Creek Reserve includes a good diversity of native coastal plant species which provided the opportunity to collect a variety of seed including Red ash (*Alphitonia excelsa*), White cedar (*Melia azedarach*) and Coastal damson (*Terminalia muelleri*).

The event also provided the opportunity for participants to learn about the rehabilitation journey of this Land for Wildlife registered site, spanning over more than 15 years. This has only been possible through the input of many volunteer and Green Corps teams, community members, organisations, businesses and Council, over the years.

In 2019, SLCMA was successful in receiving funds through the Australian Government Communities Environment Program to support onground works including revegetation, weed control and litter collection within the reserve. The project was completed on 30 June and was a great opportunity to work in partnership with Mackay Regional Council and the community to extend the rehabilitation of the reserve.



Entrance to Reserve 2013 (left) and 2020 (right)





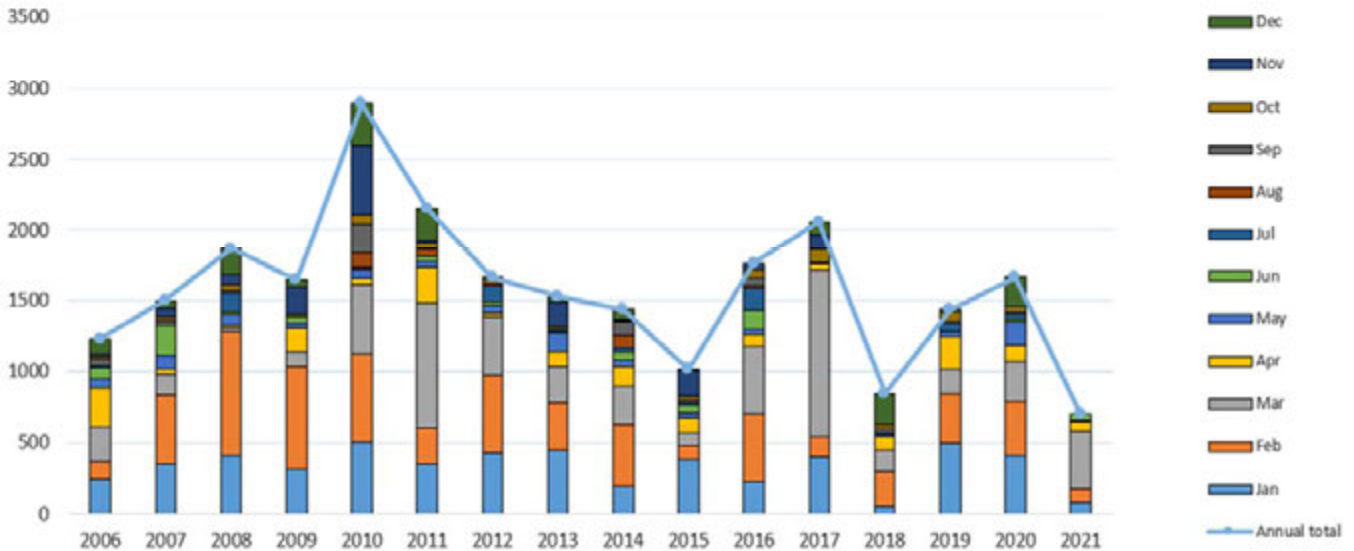
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What SLCMA Membership does for you !

A membership with SLCMA has many rewards:

- ◇ Easy access to Natural Resource Management information and extension
- ◇ Monthly newsletter, meeting minutes, progress and project reports
- ◇ A vote on issues in your catchment
- ◇ A say in the types of projects applied for
- ◇ Up to 10 free local native seedlings/year from the SLCMA Community Nursery
- ◇ Invitations to Natural Resource Management field days and workshops
- ◇ Copy of the SLCMA Annual Report

Monthly rainfall for SLCMA Office, 2006 -2021 (inc annual total)



Just for fun!

What did the big flower say to the little flower? What's up bud?!

How do succulents confess their feelings? "Aloe you vera much"

Why was the gardener so embarrassed? He wet his plants!

Why do trees have so many friends? They branch out.



A partnership for the natural resource management of catchments in the Central Queensland Coast Bioregion: Pioneer, Sarina & Whitsunday Catchments.

Containers for Change

SLCMA has registered with Containers for Change for virtual donations and we are hoping that you will consider using our identifier code — **C10002138**. We also welcome physical donations of eligible containers to our office, feel free to contact us on 4956 1388, to arrange drop-off. Thankyou to those who have donated your containers, so far we have raised **\$274.20** —Thankyou :)



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