

# SLCMA Catchment News 2021



## July

**Office:** 101 Sarina Beach Rd

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**Phone:** (07) 4956 1388

**Website:**  
[www.sarinalandcare.org.au](http://www.sarinalandcare.org.au)

**Email:**  
admin@sarinalandcare.org.au

*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!

**Friendly reminder that membership renewals** are now due. The membership fee remains at \$10 per person annually, with all of the great benefits. You are welcome to pay by internet banking, credit card or cash. Contact us, to workout the best option for you.



We are seeking **Expressions of Interest** for SLCMA Members who are interested in volunteering to be on the **SLCMA Management Committee**. There will be some vacancies at this year's Annual General Meeting, scheduled for October. The SLCMA Management Committee helps to guide the direction of SLCMA and are well supported by our paid staff. If you are interested in nominating to be on the SLCMA Management Committee, please contact us for more information.

## Farewell to the late Jack Langdon

It is with sadness that we share the news of the recent passing of Jack Langdon—a supporter, motivator and avid Landcarer in the Sarina Catchment for more than 20 years.

We would like to acknowledge Jack's involvement and support for Sarina Landcare over the years, which consisted of various roles including volunteer, Management Committee member, Revegetation Project Officer and Landcare member.

Jack was involved in many of Sarina Landcare's milestones and achievements including:

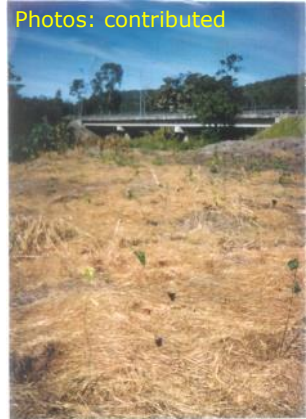
- the rehabilitation and transformation of the Plane Creek Revegetation Site, since its inception in 1995;
- the development & launch of the SICMA Strategy in 2002;
- construction of SLCMA Community Nursery in 2003

In later years, we enjoyed working alongside Jack on a range of projects, while he was part of the Council Beach Revegetation Team.

We would like to extend our sincere condolences to Jack's family and friends.

*Top: Plane Ck Reveg Site (1995), SLCMA Nursery (2003), Launch of SICMA Strategy (2002) & some fun at the Sarina Festival.*

Photos: contributed



## Thank you Mackay Regional Council!

A huge thank you to Mackay Regional Council who organised DH Slashing to remove a couple dead trees that were posing a safety risk in the Sarina Community Native Gardens, recently.

The trees were removed and mulched with great care, and some logs were the gardens to help provide additional habitat for smaller species as most contained hollow centres. The smaller logs have also been used as garden edging.

With roughly 400 species in Australia that rely on hollows for habitat who face continual pressure, why not try and recycle some of your old timber or logs to help them out! It can even encourage new wildlife to your garden for you to enjoy.

Photo: M. Thomas



Hollow in log for wildlife



## Artist feature

Our SLCMA Office is lucky to be dazzled with a variety of artworks from local artists. Recently, we were kindly given a lovely line drawing of the Sarina Inlet Trail, from and drawn by Roni Boyle. Thank you Roni, 'it has gone straight to the pool room' :)

## Sarina Community Nursery Volunteer Program

Our amazing volunteers have helped us to achieve a lot of tasks in and around the nursery again this month. They were busy with the usual weeding, seeding, potting and chin wagging along with a little maintenance to the nursery gate and building up a pathway in preparation for the summer floodway that emerges soon after rain. Hopefully, we will be keeping our feet dry on our way to and from morning tea!

We had a very fruitful seed collecting outing to Hay Point which was well attended. We have lots of seed to be cleaned, stored or sown in the coming weeks. It has been awesome to see some new volunteers this month too. Welcome to Kain and Margaret. We hope you enjoy your time with us.

**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 Fahland  
*Our volunteers enjoying some time out in the sun collecting seeds of local native species at Hay Point Beach.*

## SLCMA Community Nursery 'Plant of the Month'

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is the **Alexandra Palm (*Archontophoenix alexandrae*)** Family: **Arecaceae**

**What is in a name?** *Archontophoenix* from the Greek *archontos* meaning ruler or chieftain. *Phoenix* from the Phoenix date palm—that is this genus is superior in appearance to the common date palm; *alexandrae* is named after Princess Alexandra of Denmark (1844-1925)

**Form:** Tall, slender, single-stemmed, feather palm

**Leaves:** Up to 4.5m long; pinnately divided with 60-80 pinnae per side. Dark green upper surface while lower surface is covered in minute silver or grey scales.

**Flower:** Large panicle with many long, more or less pendulous branchlets bearing both male and female flowers. Flowers small, white to cream, any month.

**Fruit:** Turn from green to red when ripe: contain one seed surrounded by a layer of thick interlocking fibres.

**Habitat:** Gullies, moist hillslopes and stream lines in rainforest, and areas which are seasonally waterlogged.

**Distribution:** Qld

**Notes:** Some Indigenous Australian communities cooked the fruits and also ate the growing tip of the plant. Leaf sheaths were used to hold water and leaves to wrap food for cooking. Fruit eaten by many mammal and bird species. Nectar eaten by the Eungella honey-eater. Larval food plant for some butterflies and moths.

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 each. All plants are grown from locally sourced seed in the SLCMA Community Nursery by SLCMA staff and the SLCMA Volunteer team.



Photo: S. von Fahland  
*Flowers and seed of the Alexandra palm.*

## Friends of the Sarina Community Native Gardens

The Sarina Community Native Gardens are really looking great!

Lovely to have some enthusiastic volunteers lending a hand with planting, mulching, watering and weeding.

It's a great way to warm up on cool morning with the sun shining on you while you enjoy the outdoors with the added benefit of some exercise.

If you would like to be involved, head down to our office on Monday's between 9 and 12noon.

This volunteer program was initiated through support by the Communities Environment Program.



Photo: S. von Fahland  
*Our legendary volunteers helping out this month for Friends of the Garden.*

## Weed feature: Balsam Pear

Balsam pear (*Momordica charantia*), sometimes referred to as bitter melon is a widespread weed in northern Queensland which has the potential to vigorously compete with crops and native vegetation.

Originating in Asia, this plant has been widely grown for food and medicinal purposes which has not escaped and begin to degrade our natural ecosystems.

Balsam pear is a slender-stemmed, twining-climbing annual vine with tendrils. All parts of the plant produce a strong, unpleasant smell. It has mid-green and soft textured leaves which are deeply divided into 5-7 pointed lobes with scalloped margins.

Flowers are yellow with five petals about 2cm across, develop in leaf axils and all have a small green leaf-like bract on the flower stalk. Fruit is fleshy, reddish-orange which hang and are covered in ridges and warty. The fruits burst open at maturity and, peeling back to reveal small black seeds covered by a scarlet-red fleshy aril.

The plant can be spread by animals, birds and humans. It has the potential to invade sugarcane crops, rainforest margins, creek bank and coastal communities, unmanaged land, roadside and gardens. It is particularly bad within the Pioneer Valley in our area, smothering entire trees.

Small populations can be manually controlled, ensuring the roots and any stem fragments are removed from the ground. Plant pieces should be bagged and put into the rubbish bin (not green waste), or hung in the sun off the ground to prevent re-shooting. There is only currently one herbicide registered for the control and balsam pear. Consult the [DAF pest fact sheet](https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/69491/balsam-pear.pdf) for application rates depending on situation of infestations: [https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/69491/balsam-pear.pdf](https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/69491/balsam-pear.pdf)



Photo: A. Pearson  
*Balsam pear habit, showing entire fruit, split fruit and exposed seeds covered in scarlet-red fleshy aril.*

## Frog Hotel Workshop

SLCMA had the pleasure of hosting a community Frog Hotel Workshop on the 8th of July. Those who attended, let their imaginations run free and had lots of fun creating their frog hotels.... But why frog hotels?

**Frogs** play a significant role in the healthy functioning of our ecosystems. They are what is called an *indicator species*, which means if frog populations are decreasing, then an imbalance has occurred within the ecosystem.

Some common reasons as to why frog species are declining are due to disease, invasive fish predation, competition from toad tadpoles, UV light, habitat disturbance, and herbicides. Water quality due to human activities is also another cause to a decline in frog populations, as detergents, chemicals, and heavy metals are washed into waterways when it rains, polluting them and impacting the wildlife that reside there.

Frogs also play a significant role in the food chain, as they are eaten by birds, snakes and lizards. In return, frogs eat insects, other frogs, mice and even small birds! If frog populations continue to decline, a serious imbalance in the food chain will occur.

**What is a frog hotel?** While frogs are most commonly associated with water, it's important to realise that this is not where most of them live. While ponds and water sources are breeding sites, frog hotels are places for frogs to shelter, sleep and, in cooler weather, bunker down. In many areas of Australia, homeowners are regularly faced with green-tree frogs (and friends) hiding out and seeking shelter in laundries, fence posts, bathrooms, door jambs and, the classic croaker location in Queensland and Northern Territory - toilets. This is the perfect opportunity to provide your frog families some extra habitat, so they don't start making their way indoors.

**Will it work for all frogs?** Like an exclusive nightclub, Frog Hotels are only suitable for tree frogs (*Litoria* species). These arboreal amphibians have sticky toe pads that cling to the slippery surfaces which enable them to climb into the Frog Hotel. For example, the Motorbike Frog (*Litoria moorei*) is a tree frog and is one of many found around Australia.

### How you can help:

- **Build your own frog hotel** is a fun, easy way to re-use materials from around the home such as pots, pvc pipes & rocks. Check out our website for some simple instructions on how to build your own frog hotel.
- **Become a Citizen Scientist—join the [Australian Museum FrogID Project](https://www.frogid.net.au/).** A national project that is helping us learn more about what is happening to Australia's frogs, their diversity and distribution. Find out more at <https://www.frogid.net.au/>

*Thank you to Communities Environment Program for supporting the Frog Hotel Workshop. We are looking to hold more workshops in the future, please let us know if you are interested in attending.*



Photo: M. Thomas  
*Finished products of the Frog Hotel Workshop*

*Our first booking!*





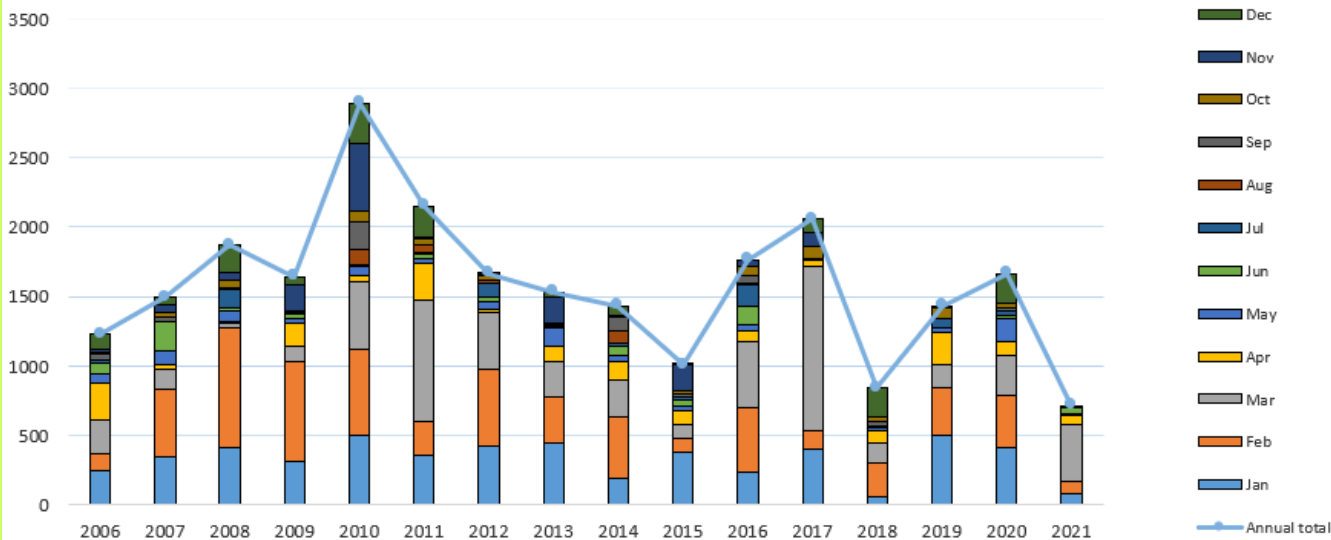
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## What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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

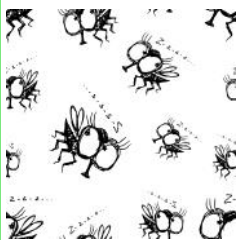
Monthly rainfall for SLCMA Office, 2006 -2021 (inc annual total)



### Just for fun!

What do you call a girl with a frog in her hair?  
 Lily!

What do you call an ecosystem where the animals talk about current events?  
 A topical rainforest!



Did you know I can cut down a tree by looking at it?  
 It's true, I saw it with my own eyes!

A man went to the doctor complaining that he kept seeing some insect buzzing around him.  
 The doctor just told him not to worry; it was just a bug that was going around.



*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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