

# SLCMA Catchment News 2021



## Sep/October

**Office:** 101 Sarina Beach Rd

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*Office opening  
hours:  
9am-3.30pm weekdays.*

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

### Staff

#### Administration Officer

Kristy Thomsett

#### Coordinator

Saskia von Fahland

#### Nursery Officer

Susie Tomlinson

#### Project Officer

Susan Whiteley

#### 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 21/22

**Chair:** Lachlan McBride

**Vice-chair:** Karen May

**Treasurer:** Kevin Plumb

**Secretary:** Shirley Sidey

**Executive members:**  
Rod McFadzen

## SLCMA News and events!

Thank you to our members who attended the **SLCMA Annual General Meeting** held on Wednesday 27 October. Thank you to our outgoing Management Committee members: Mark Evans (Chair), Lachlan McBride (Vic-chair), Kevin Plumb (Treasurer), Shirley Sidey (Secretary), Karen May (Executive member) and Sandra Evans (Executive member) for their support throughout the last 12 months.

Also, a special thank you to Mark and Sandra Evans who stood down after 3 years being on the SLCMA Management Committee.

We would like to welcome our incoming volunteer Management Committee members for 21/22:

- Chair – Lachlan McBride
- Vice-chair – Karen May
- Treasurer – Kevin Plumb
- Secretary – Shirley Sidey
- Executive member – Rod McFadzen

We have one position available as 'Executive member', if you are interested in being involved please contact the SLCMA Office for more details.

## Great Northern Clean Up—thank you!

Thank you to the 16 enthusiastic helpers who came along to Half Tide Beach on the 29th August and joined SLCMA for the *Great Northern Clean Up*.

SLCMA partnered with Mackay Regional Council for the event—which included a goodie bag and prizes for those who helped out.

On the day, volunteers collected 4 bags of rubbish and a timber pallet. The majority of debris was collected along the high tide line and consisted of a variety of micro plastics.



Photos: S von Fahland

## Artist feature

As you have seen in previous newsletters, we have a range of art pieces on display in the SLCMA Office. These lovely creations were made from marine debris collected from our local beaches, by local artist Vynka von.

Inspired by her care for our natural environment and created through her artistic talent, Vynka has used a range of marine debris including buttons, shoe horns,

combs, micro plastics and lures (*just to name a few*) ....combine and up-cycled into a paper weight and mobile!



Marine debris creations by artist Vynka von

## Welcome new Project Officer, Susan Whiteley

Hello, my name is Susan Whiteley and I have just taken up the role of Project Officer for Sarina Landcare. I have moved here from across the country (Western Australia) to help promote land conservation and sustainability. If you happen to see an odd WA number plate, it is probably me; I suspect there may not be many others.

I studied botany and biochemistry in my undergraduate degree at university and then moved on to specialising in rare species conservation through postgraduate study, based at the WA botanic gardens, known as Kings Park. I started in the biotechnology field, preserving plants in liquid nitrogen (an alternative method to a seed bank), unfortunately while it works for plants, it does not yet work for humans. I then extended my research into plant growth characteristics, floral morphology, pollination biology, seed production and seed germination. This was in the aim of building a conservation plan for a rare and threatened species.

Since completing my studies I have worked as a research scientist for a range of projects, including establishing translocations and monitoring a rare species that grows on the top of a ridge currently being mined, assessing plant occurrence in a prescribed burning trial, seed collection and seed assessment.

My studies and work have allowed me to travel across WA to explore unique flora, fauna and environments with a focus on conservation; and I look forward working towards promoting conservation and land care in a whole new way, while exploring a whole new (to me) area of the natural environment.

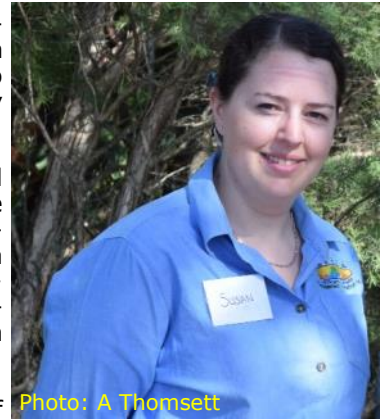


Photo: A Thomsett

## The wellbeing benefits of participating in Landcare

For decades, those involved in Landcare have testified to a greater sense of self, both physically and mentally, resulting from an enhanced link with their local community and environment. This, in turn, has boosted community wellbeing and it has long been the desire of the Landcare movement to quantify the significance of these benefits.

Now, newly published findings by KPMG Australia in partnership with Landcare Australia, indicate Landcare volunteers enjoy substantial improvements to their mental and physical wellbeing – and a significant decrease to their healthcare costs. 46% of survey respondents reported an improvement in their mental resilience and 90% reported experiencing a stronger connection to the community.

Surveying more than 1,000 Landcare volunteers and coordinators from Landcare groups, the findings in the report, titled **Building resilience in local communities: The wellbeing benefits of participating in Landcare** suggest substantial improvements in wellbeing owing to involvement in Landcare lead to approximate savings from avoided healthcare costs of \$403 per individual per year. For the Landcare movement which exceeds 140,000 individuals, that number equates to \$57 million nationally.

The report also goes on to address additional savings to the Landcare volunteer community relating to productivity, and benefits owing to natural disaster resilience and recovery, with the combined value amounting to \$191 million annually.

Impacts identified by Landcare participants included:



- ◆ Improved health and wellbeing
- ◆ Sharing knowledge and support
- ◆ Connection to community
- ◆ Hands-on experience
- ◆ Connection to people
- ◆ Connection to nature and country
- ◆ Community collaboration
- ◆ Economic benefits
- ◆ Community resilience to natural disaster

To read the whole report go to: <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/>



Photo: contributed

National Tree Day with SLCMA, DBCTM & MRC staff

## Farewell Reef Assist Leading Hand, Alana Campbell



We farewell Reef Assist Leading Hand, Alana Campbell on the 8th October. We would like to thank Alana for her time and efforts spent on the Reef Assist projects including keeping in weeds in check, revegetating and lots of mulching and watering at Louisa Creek Reserve, Plane Creek Revegetation Site, Sarina Inlet Trail, Carmila Beach and the Sarina Community Native Gardens.

Prior to joining the Reef Assist team, Alana was the Leading Hand for our Casual Revegetation Team since October 2019. We would like to wish Alana all the best for her future endeavours.





## Sarina Community Nursery Volunteer Program *by Susie Tomlinson*

The nursery volunteers are doing a fantastic job to assist the Nursery Officer Susie with propagating, potting on and keeping the plants lush and healthy. Neil our very own handyman lent a hand to remove a gate and fence panel between the Treatment Train and the nursery. This will make the space larger and more interactive. During the month we were assisted by a couple of work experience students from Sarina State High School. Caleb and Katie, both year 10 students, joined us on a seed collecting trip to Grasstree Headland. This turned out to be a very successful seed collection with young fresh eyes spotting a large cluster of *Helichrysum lanuginosum* (White everlasting daisy). It was a pleasure having them both as they were very keen to participate in the activities.

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



## School Activity Day—Sarina Rural Skills Centre

On 9th September, 84 students from St Annes Catholic School and Homebush State School joined in our School Activity Day held at the Sarina Rural Skills Centre.

The activity day themed 'Healthy soil, healthy water and the critters in between' saw students participate in hands-on educational the following three activities:

- ♦ Dung beetles— searching for and learning about the importance of dung beetles for soil health, facilitated by Bob North from the Sarina Rural Skills Centre.
- ♦ Making seed bombs— a unique way to rehabilitate natural areas, students utilized a variety of seed mixes to make seed bombs that will be used on rehabilitation sites around the catchment. This activity was facilitated by Caroline Hood, Conservation Volunteers.
- ♦ Macro-invertebrates— aka water bugs, were looked at and discussed to indicate the type and health of the two different water samples (nearby sediment basin and local creek). This activity was facilitated by Saskia von Fahland, SLCMA.

A big thank you to our project partners for providing a diverse range of activities for the participating students. And, to Sarina Rural Skills Centre for hosting us. We received positive feedback from the teachers and students who participated in the day. This event was proudly supported by Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Levy.



## Friends of the Sarina Community Native Gardens *by Susie Tomlinson*

Its that hot, dry time of year when the struggle to keep plants watered occupies gardeners' activities. Luckily, we have a couple of regular volunteers on hand to assist with this task, of watering our recently planted inhabitants. Our established plants are kicking along just fine, even sprouting some new green growth after that one big downpour we enjoyed recently.

We took advantage of the ground being a little softer after that rain and dug some neat edges around the gardens. Caleb and Katie, two year 10 students on work experience from Sarina State High school also gave us a hand with this task, as well as planting some *Xerochrysum bracteatum* (Yellow everlasting daisy) and *Helichrysum lanuginosum* (White everlasting daisy). Thanks for your help, we enjoyed having you.

If you are interested in learning about native plants and would like to lend a hand in the Sarina Community Native Gardens, feel free to join our *Friends of the gardens* on Mondays between 9am-12noon. Morning tea provided.



Volunteer Mick, removing stumps from the gardens



## Weed feature: Siam weed

Siam weed (*Chromolaena odorata*) is a category 3 restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. While it is currently not found in the Sarina Catchment, it is a weed to watch for, as it is found in far northern Queensland and the Northern Territory. Siam weed is native to Central and South America, but elsewhere is considered one of the world's most invasive plants. It is thought that it entered Australia as a pasture seed contaminant.

Young Siam weed looks similar to blue top or Billy goat weed (*Ageratum spp.*), but mature plants have a growth habit similar to lantana (*Lantana camara*). Some graziers have referred to Siam weed as 'white lantana'.

The species forms a 2-3 m tall dense, tangling bush, scrambling up to 20m high in vegetation. The stems are slender, smooth, round and brittle, with a woody base, produced from a long-lived root stock, in the form of a basal/root ball.

The leaves are arrowhead-shaped, soft, green and hairy, with a 3-vein pitch-fork pattern; growing in opposite pairs along the stems and branches. When crushed, leaves will emit a pungent odour, hence the name '*odorata*'. New leaves may have a purple colouration. Side branches are commonly produced in pairs.

The flower heads do not have traditional petals, rather are in dense clusters of 10-35 tiny, pink-mauve tubular flowers at the end of the branches. The flowers can appear white from a distance and turn a darker lilac when mature.

The seeds of Siam weed are a dry, narrow and oblong fruit. It is 4-5 mm in length with white hairs which turn brown as the seeds dry. They are produced in numerous quantities, dispersed by the wind, attached to animals, washed along waterways or moved by people. The seed will germinate after rain and may remain dormant in the soil for several years.

Siam weed grows easily along watercourses, foreshores and swamps and is suited to highly productive land types. It can grow up to 20mm per day, and 5m per year. It will die back in the dry and reshoot following rain.

The species quickly invades and smothers native vegetation and will increase the frequency and severity of bushfires. In a farm setting, it will out compete pasture and crops and there have been reports that it has poisoned stock. In addition, it may cause skin problems and asthma in allergy-prone people.

It may be controlled through removal of the basal/root ball in smaller infestations. As the plant may reshoot, ensure the removed plant material is not left in contact with the ground as it will grow back quickly. Regular herbicide application prior to flowering will provide effective control provided it is applied correctly. See the [Siam weed DAF Fact Sheet](#) for recommended control methods including permitted herbicides.

If you find this weed it should be reported to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

### Information sourced from:

[Atlas of Living Australia 2021, \*Chromolaena odorata\*](#) , [Business Queensland 2021, \*Siam weed\*](#)



Photos: QLD Government

## SLCMA Community Nursery 'Plant of the Month'

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is the **Yellow wattle** (*Acacia flavescens*) Family: **Fabaceae**

**What is in a name?** *Acacia* from the Latin meaning a point or thorn; *flavescens* from the Latin *flavus* meaning yellow or becoming yellow.

**Form:** A slender tree 4-20m tall with angular branchlets. Bark: Orange-brown, rough and fibrous, furrowed.

**Leaves:** Broad, sickle-shaped, thick, smooth with some hairs at leaf base, dark green with three prominent veins and a network of secondary veins.

**Flower:** Creamy yellow ball flowers on golden stalks, flowering late spring to winter.

**Fruit:** Flat light brown pods, with scattered hairs when young, August to November.

**Habitat:** Common in eucalypt communities on sandy soils near the sea. Occasionally found on other well-drained soils in the hinterland.

**Distribution:** Coastal areas of Queensland as far south as Coolumb.

**Notes:** Propagate from treated seed. A hardy, fast growing plant good for screening.



Photo: MFagg, Australian National Botanic 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 the month. This and other native plant species are also available for purchase at \$3.30 each. All plants are grown in the SLCMA Community Nursery from locally sourced seed collected by SLCMA staff and the SLCMA Volunteer team.

**Information sourced from:** Melzer R. and Plumb J., (2007) *Plants of Capricornia*, Stanley T.D. and Ross E.M., (1995) *Flora of south-eastern Queensland*, vol. 1, Department of Primary Industries, Townsend K., (1994) *Across the Top: Gardening with Australian Plants in the tropics*, Society for Growing Plants.



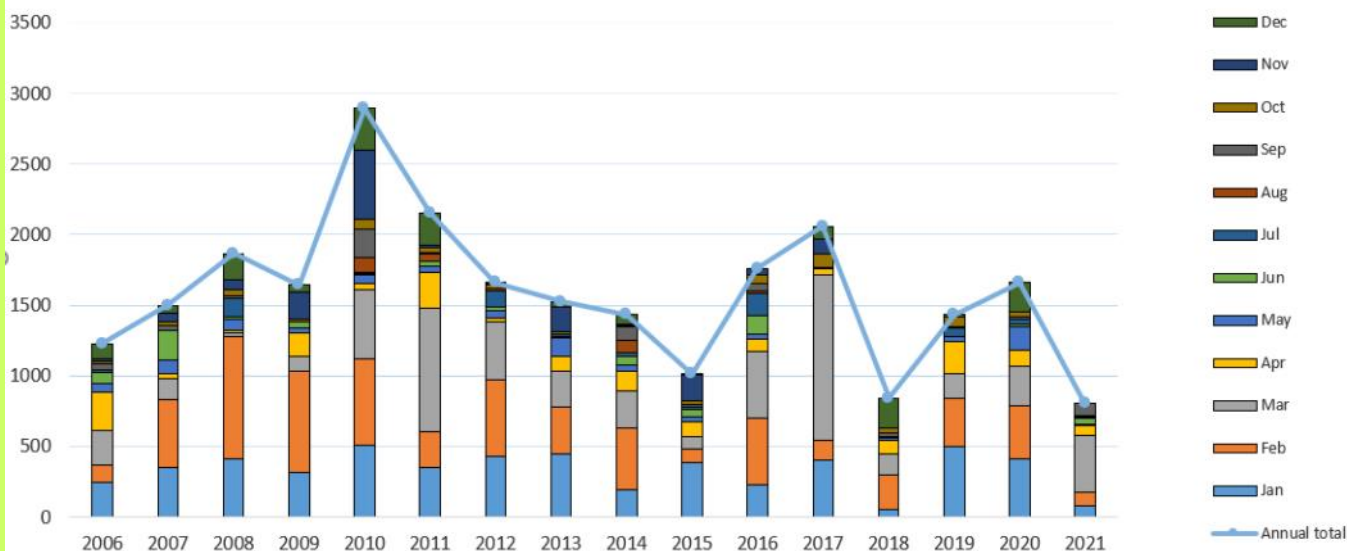
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## What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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!

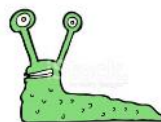
A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows.

Gardening requires lots of water—most of it in the form of perspiration ;)

What do you get if you cross a dog with a daisy?  
A colli-flower

What sort of animal is a slug?  
A snail with a housing problem

What does the letter "A" have in common with a flower?  
They both have bees coming after them



Central QLD Coast  
**Landcare**  
Network

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

## SLCMA Calendar 2022

We are in the process of compiling the SLCMA Calendar for 2022. If you have taken photos throughout the year that showcase some of Sarina Catchment's natural values and, you are happy for them to be considered for use in next years' calendar, please email them to [admin@sarinalandcare.org.au](mailto:admin@sarinalandcare.org.au) as soon as possible. Examples of images could be native wildlife, plants, natural environment, farming, revegetation projects and landcare-type activities.



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facebook**

**SLCMA is proudly supported by:**



A big thankyou to those who have donated their container refunds to SLCMA, so far we have raised **\$274.20**. Your donation will help us to continue helping the local community and carryout various landcare projects and community education programs.

When you are returning your containers, write our identifier '**C10002138**' on a piece of paper and place it IN the bag with your eligible returned containers. See below for a page of coupons with our ID number— to get you started :)



Please [Containers for Change website](http://ContainersforChange.com.au) to find a drop off point that is close to you!

Alternatively, you can drop them into the Landcare Office at 101 Beach Road, Sarina.



- ⇒ Eligible containers and the ID number should be placed in an opaque bag and put inside the drop bins.
- ⇒ Containers must be empty and the caps removed.
- ⇒ Most aluminium, glass, plastic, steel and liquid paper-board beverage containers between 150ml and 3 litres are eligible for a refund (such as soft drinks, water bottles and small flavoured milk)
- ⇒ Containers must also have held a beverage included in the scheme and display the refund mark.

We appreciate your donation through the Container refund scheme, our identification code is:



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