

SLCMA Catchment News 2020



September 2020

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*Office opening
hours:
9am-2pm weekdays.*

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

Staff

Administration Officer

Kristy Thomsett

Coordinator

Saskia von Fahland

Nursery Officer

Davina Wain

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—**please register prior, to attend.**

Native plants available for purchase \$3 each.

SLCMA Executive 19/20

Chair: Mark Evans

Vice-chair: Karen May

Treasurer: Kevin Plumb

Secretary: Shirley Sidey

Executive members:

Sandy Evans

Lachlan McBride



SLCMA News!

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 work out the best option for you.

SLCMA Annual General Meeting coming soon—The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is a great opportunity to thank our volunteer management committee for their support throughout the year. At the meeting you will also receive a copy of the latest annual report, which highlights the projects and programs we have undertaken over the last 12 months. Come along and meet the SLCMA team :)

Photos, photos, photos—do you have some photos you would like to share for our 2021 SLCMA Calendar? We would love to see and share the sights of the Sarina Catchment—working on the farm, native plants or wildlife or some of our scenic areas. Please send your photos to admin@sarinalandcare.org.au or give us a call to discuss other options.

SLCMA Office — is now open for visitors. Please see below, for guidelines for all visitors (& volunteers). You are also welcome to contact us via phone or email and we will be happy to assist any Landcare enquiries.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS — 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 if you are feeling unwell, have recently travelled to known hotspots or have been in contact with someone who has had the COVID-19 virus.
- ◆ If you have a Landcare enquiry that you think can be discussed/solved over the phone then please give us a call. If needed, we will be happy to organise an appointment.
- ◆ All visitors must:
 - ◆ Complete the sign-in/out register
 - ◆ Maintain social distancing (minimum 1.5m spacing)
 - ◆ Utilise hand sanitiser supplied upon entry & exit to the office or nursery

DBCT Sponsorship funding



We are pleased to announce that SLCMA has been successful in obtaining sponsorship funding from **Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal Pty Ltd.** to the amount of \$2567.

The sponsorship will be used to improve the safety and efficiency of SLCMA staff and volunteers through the purchase of new tools, equipment and nursery upgrades.

The project will enable SLCMA to provide:

- Additional benches to increase the number of plant trays placed at waist height, thus decreasing the need for awkward manual handling of plant trays under the current benches, when at capacity.
- Long-sleeve sun-safe shirts to volunteers while undertaking Landcare activities.
- Two-way radio for improved communication between the SLCMA Community Nursery and Office and, for use during seed collection trips.
- Electrical items that are in safe, good working order by ensuring all equipment are 'test & tagged'
- A blower for an easier and more water saving way of cleaning the SLCMA Community Nursery propagation area and downstairs of the SLCMA Office.



Weed Feature — Arrowhead/Goosefoot vine

Juvenile leaves (top) and adult leaves (middle) of Arrowhead

An invasive weed we are seeing more and more of during property visits and local bushland areas, is the Arrowhead vine (*Syngonium podophyllum*). Arrowhead vine, also known as Goosefoot vine, is an environmental weed which is native to Central America. This plant is a common garden plant which has serious weed potential and has already invaded beyond just garden beds. Preventing the spread of this species NOW is better than having to control large infestations in the future.

This creeping/climbing vine is easily propagated by cuttings and will root wherever the stem touches the ground. Hence, dumping of garden waste, mowing or brush cutting are common ways this weed is being spread, often unintentionally. It is already impacting on natural areas in our catchment, where it climbs rampantly over native vegetation in shady areas, acting to smother it.

Given its ability to spread, we suggest hand pulling isolated plants and small infestations, making sure that all roots and stem fragments are removed to ensure no further spread. Plant pieces should be bagged and taken to landfill (not green waste).

It is most easily identifiable because of the three-lobed or arrow-shaped leaves (see picture). However, these are juvenile leaves, whereas mature leaves are dark green, and segmented into three leaflets with the central leaflet being the longest.

See the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries pest fact sheet for pesticide options and application rates here: https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/59948/arrowhead-vine.pdf



Riparian Rehabilitation with Sarina State High School

On the 3rd of August, our Project Officer Morgan had the opportunity to join Sarina State High School students at the Ted Malone Sarina Rural Skills Centre (SRSC), for an afternoon of revegetation to help rehabilitate their waterway. Bob North, Manager of the SRSC participated in SLCMA's *Riparian Rehabilitation Project after Cyclone Debbie Project* with the aim to revegetate and strengthen a waterway running through the centre's grazing paddocks.

During the event, Morgan shared his knowledge with the students; about the importance of riparian (creekbank) vegetation, types of erosion and how to build resilience into streambanks and, then joined the students to plant their 40 free plants and install plant guards. The plants utilised for this project were all local native plants sourced from the SLCMA Community Nursery. The plants are all suited to the local riparian environment to maximise their growing potential and suitability to help stabilise the creekbank, once established.

As with all revegetation projects, the young plants should be closely monitored and maintained for at least the 12 months with regular watering during the drier months and weed management during the wetter months, as needed. To ensure their success and longevity into the future, they will need to be looked after for up to 5 years or when closed canopy cover is achieved.



Sarina State High School students rehabilitating the waterway which runs through the Sarina Rural Skills Centre.

Koalas are on the move!How you can help

SLCMA is working with stakeholders and the community to improve our knowledge of local koala populations and the habitats they utilise. As we come into breeding season, we are more likely to encounter them, as they increase in movement across the landscape. **How can you help?** Community members can help play a role in keeping our koalas safe, through a range of actions:

- Take care when driving near koala habitat, especially between dusk and dawn
- Create and/or retain koala friendly bushland and corridors to encourage safe movement
- Contain your dog at night either inside or safely restrained
- Report sick, injured koalas to a local wildlife carer
- To help improve our knowledge, please report all sightings to SLCMA or Fauna Rescue Whitsunday. Information should include photo/s, location, date/time, observations. Contact SLCMA for more information.



Eungella Bird Week—September 14th—18th

What: Eungella bird week 2020—Present by Birdlife Mackay

When: Kicks off on the 14th of September and runs until the 18th (4 days).

Why: Collecting data on bird species, along with guided birding through the Eungella National Park and the Clarke Ranges.

Register at: <http://birdlife.org.au/locations/birdlife-mackay/upcoming-events>

Or contact Daryl Barnes on 0438 134 738

Spaces are limited so get in quick.



Image: Barry Deacon

Wrapping up our water quality monitoring project

We have officially wrapped up our part of the *Plane Basin Grower Led Water Quality Monitoring and Engagement Project*. The project, which began in January this year, aimed to provide participating landholders with first-hand knowledge of water sampling and an improved understanding of the potential impacts from their agricultural practices on the local waterways around the Rocky Dam catchment.

The project also involved additional water sampling of local catchments. **Keep an eye out in the coming months for the water quality reports relating to these catchments.**

It was great to work with the landholders and Reef Catchments on the project which was funded through Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. If this type of project interests you please contact SLCMA to express your interest and we will keep you in mind for any future water quality monitoring projects.



Image: S von Fahland

SLCMA Community Nursery “Plant of the Month”

This month’s ‘Plant of the Month’ is ***Neolitsea brassii* - Northern bolly gum**

Family: Lauraceae

What is in a name? *Neolitsea* from the Greek *neos* meaning new, and after the genus *Litsea*; *brassii* named after Leonard J. Brass (1900-1971) collector of the type specimen.

Form: Shrub to small tree; stems slightly buttressed in larger trees

Leaves: Simple, alternate or whorled, entire, elliptic to lanceolate, 6.5-15.5 x 2.5-7.1cm; three veined or sometimes penninerved; glossy green above, usually slightly glaucous below; underside of young growth covered in straight, white, appressed hairs but almost completely glabrous when mature; three to seven pairs of primary veins; domatia absent; oil dots visible with a hand lens.

Flower: Axillary umbels of small, creamy flowers on older wood rather than outer branchlets; dioecious, January to April.

Fruit: Drupes, globular to ellipsoid, red when ripe; May to November.

Habitat: Wetter rainforests, and eucalypt forests with a rainforest understory, on a range of soil types.

Distribution: Queensland, Northern Territory and New Guinea.

Notes: Grow from fresh seed from which the flesh has been removed; seeds germinate in about six weeks to six months. Fruit eaten by the topknot and white-headed pigeons, green catbird, regent and satin bow-erbirds and metallic starling.

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.

Information sourced from: Melzer and Plumb (2007) *Plants of Capricornia*, Townsend (1994) *Across the Top—Gardening with Australian Plants in the tropics*.



Image: CSIRO



Image: B. Gray

Want to help SLCMA out but unsure how? Collect seeds!

To ensure the integrity of the native plants we grow in the SLCMA Community Nursery, we only use seeds sourced from plants that have grown naturally within our catchment and the wider Central QLD Coast Bioregion. A large amount of time goes into looking after the plants in the nursery and nursery maintenance and therefore, sometimes we miss the seeding of some of our native plants. This is where we would love YOUR help to contribute to the success of growing native plants to put back into our local environment as well as helping our organisation.

Heading into Spring we should see the following species in fruit (*please note timing may vary depending on seasonal conditions*). If you have some of these plant species on your property and would like to share the seed, please give us a call:

- **Alexandra palm** (*Arthontophoenix alexandrea*) - July to Oct
- **Blue quandong** (*Elaeocarpus grandis*) - August to October
- **Broad leaf paperbark** (*Melaleuca viridiflora*) - All year
- **Celery wood** (*Polyscias elegans*) - August to October
- **Cabbage tree palm** (*Livistonia decipiens*) - August to September
- **Native Nutmeg** (*Myristica insipida*) - July to October
- **Pandanus** (*Pandanus spiralis*) - October to November
- **Peach cedar** (*Trema orientalis*) - August to October
- **Red ash** (*Alphitonia excelsa*) - August to September
- **Rusty pittosporum** (*Pittosporum ferrugineum*) - August to September
- **Sandpaper fig** (*Ficus opposita*) - July to October
- **Swizzle bush** (*Timonius timon*) - May to November
- **Tuckeroo** (*Cupaniopsis anarcardiodes*) - October to November
- **Wattle** (*Acacia sp.*) - September to November
- **Weeping bottlebrush** (*Melaleuca viminalis*) - September to November
- **Weeping paperbark** (*Melaleuca leucadendra*) - August to September

When collecting seed, ensure you:

- Collect seed from your own property or **only** with written permission if from another property.
- Source seed from plants which have grown naturally within the Sarina catchment (no cultivars) or, if the source can be verified *eg. from the SLCMA Community Nursery or Native Plants QLD—Mackay Branch*.
- Collect ripe, mature seed and no more than 10% of the seed from any one plant
- Collect from several parts of the plant, mainly the middle and upper branches and ensure the plant is healthy
- Use paper bags (not plastic) to store the seed and keep them in a cool, dry place.
- Label the bag with the species, location, date and your name.

To ensure we identify the plant accurately, please include a sample such as branch with leaves, or send through some photos showing key distinguishable features.

You can drop seeds off to our office during the week between 9am and 2pm, or at our volunteer mornings at the SLCMA Community Nursery on Wednesday between 9am and 12pm. Finally, an enormous THANK YOU for all your seed contributions (or attendance on seed collecting trips) over the years, we certainly couldn't have done it without everyone's help.

SLCMA Community Volunteer Program



Thankyou to our volunteers who have been helping in the nursery. The warmer weather is encouraging the seedlings to grow more quickly which means more 'potting up' of seedlings into individual tubes. We are also seeing a range of native plants coming into seed (lucky we all love cleaning and sowing seed). A big thankyou to Neil and Mick who worked together to bury one of our exposed water pipes in the nursery, it is so nice to have it out of the way...*thankyou* :) :

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.



Images:
S von Fahland



Image: S von Fahland

Alexandra palm seeds



Image: M Meng

Blue quandong seeds



Image: S von Fahland

Pandanus seeds



Image: S von Fahland

Red ash seeds



Image: S von Fahland

Rusty Pittosporum



Image: S von Fahland

Swizzle bush seeds

Upskilling SLCMA staff — Biocondition Assessment Training

Last month SLCMA staff had the pleasure of joining Reef Catchments' *Biocondition Assessment using Ecological Condition Profiles* training. Biocondition is a vegetation condition assessment framework which is site-based, quantitative and repeatable. These bioconditions derive a number score based upon a condition scale ranging from functional to dysfunctional vegetation condition which are used to measure how well your terrestrial ecosystem is functioning for biodiversity.



Image: S von Fahland

The primary Biocondition framework components are:

- The assessment unit (based on regional ecosystems by broad condition state).
- A suite of vegetation condition attributes which are a direct or surrogate measure of species diversity/ecological processes (site and landscape based).
- Benchmarks for each of the vegetation attributes for each regional ecosystem.
- A scoring system that provides a final condition score which is comparable between and within ecosystems.

Benchmarks are imperative for this type of assessment, as they provide the objective comparison of vegetation condition states within and between regional ecosystems. Meaning that they are a quantitative value for each assessable attribute (tree canopy cover, grass cover, species richness etc) and are derived as the average or median values from field data collected from reference site, during optimal seasonal conditions. Benchmarks are set using reference sites, which are sites that are relatively unmodified, therefore representing the "best on offer" reference state for the regional ecosystem in the local area.

BioCondition assessment can be lengthy and without a proper understanding of the framework can prove confusing, which is where rapid assessments can be beneficial. Rapid assessments utilise Ecological Condition Profiles, which are based on benchmarks, to guide the assessment of broad ecological condition states typical or expected of the regional ecosystem.

SLCMA Officers were lucky enough to head out into the field with other stakeholders and Annie Kelly from the Queensland Herbarium, to learn how to complete rapid habitat assessments based on these Ecological Condition Profiles. The training helped to understand each attribute and how to measure it, along with definitions and approaches relative to completing the assessment.

This now means that SLCMA officers have the ability to complete rapid assessments more scientifically and quantifiably, leading to better understanding of ecosystems (such as the changes occurring, key species etc). The Land for Wildlife (Lfw) program that SLCMA delivers on behalf of Mackay Regional Council, within the Sarina Catchment area, is one which will greatly benefit from this training. The Lfw program requires a preliminary habitat assessment to determine the property's eligibility in the program, and therefore this training will help to improve our scientific rigour during these evaluations, and produce quantifiable assessments which can be used to determine the vegetation condition, monitor changes and identify areas which could benefit from changes in land management.

If you would like to know more about rapid assessments or would like to express your interest in being notified for future training sessions, please feel free to contact the office on ph. 4956 1388 or email: admin@sarinalandcare.org.au

Landholder Support—Streambank rehabilitation projects

We have been successful in applying for funding to assist landholders with their streambank rehabilitation projects through the *Australian Government—Communities Environment Program*. The project builds on rehabilitation projects at 10 sites along Westhill, Marion and Cherry Tree Creeks and; compliments initial rehabilitation works funded through *Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements* in response to severe streambank erosion after Cyclone Debbie.

To date, the SLCMA Revegetation Team have assisted landholders with weed control activities and will undertake some infill planting in coming months, to maximise the successfulness of the rehabilitation projects. The landholders involved are committed to the ongoing maintenance of the rehabilitation sites with the aim to stabilise and build resilience into the streambank.

The projects will provide a range of environmental benefits both at the sites as well as downstream into the Great Barrier Reef marine environment. Environmental benefits include stabilising creekbank, reducing soil erosion and surface water runoff, improving water quality and aquatic habitat; as well as improving biodiversity and vegetation connectivity.

Project sites and activities under the Communities Environment Program.
Far right: Before & after a day of site work.



Images: A Campbell



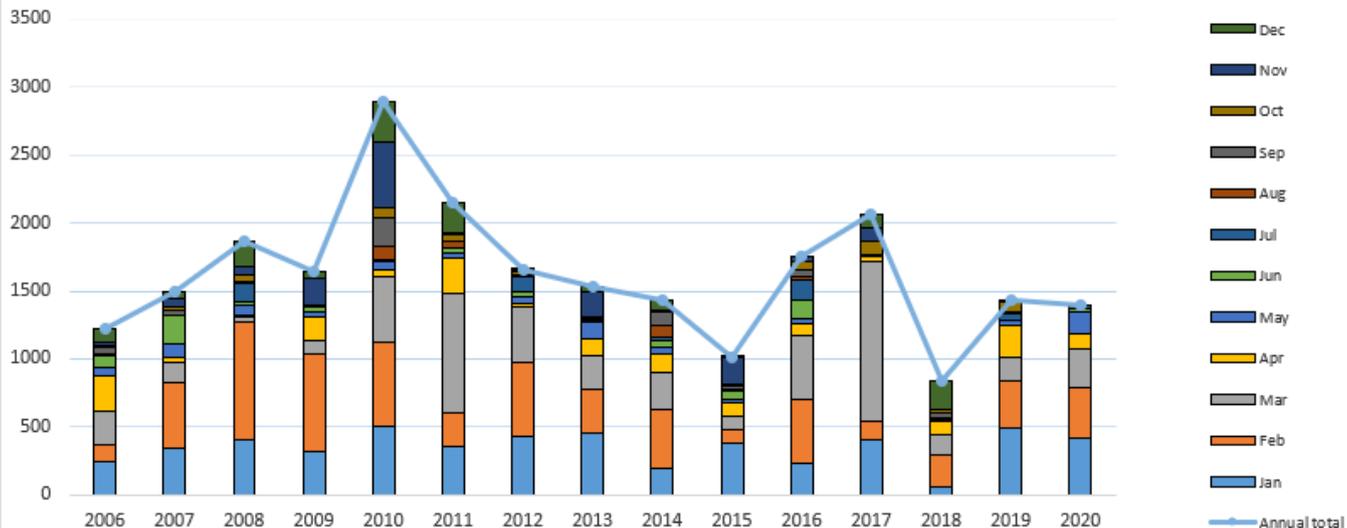
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What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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 -2020 (inc annual total)



Just for fun!

Knock knock!
 Who's there?
Honeydew!
 Honeydew who?
Honeydew you wanna hear some garden jokes?

What do you call two young married spiders?
 Newly webs.

How do trees get onto the internet?
 Easy, they just LOG on!

Find us on
[facebook](#)



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 **\$117.30** — Thankyou :)



SLCMA is proudly supported by:



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MICHELLE LANDRY MP
 Federal Member for Capricornia

If you have any issues, don't hesitate to contact my office

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