

SLCMA Catchment News 2024



February

Office: 101 Sarina Beach Rd
Sarina, QLD, 4737

Phone: (07) 4956 1388

Website:
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Email:
admin@sarinalandcare.org.au

Office hours:

Mon/Wed: 9am-4pm

Tue/Thu: 9am-2pm

Fri: 9am-3.30pm

Please phone ahead to confirm availability, just in case we are out on a project or meeting.

Staff

Coordinator

Saskia von Fahland

Administration Officer

Helen Dangerfield

Project Officer

Rodney Fraser

Nursery Officer/ Field Supervisor

Susie Tomlinson

Field Team Leader

Helen Lynch

Field Team

Nate Farnham

Chantelle Woods

Dominique Jooste

Call us for information:

- ◇ Weed management
- ◇ Plant identification
- ◇ Land management
- ◇ Land for Wildlife

Volunteer opportunities:

SLCMA Community Volunteer Program, Wednesday, 9-12 noon.

Native plants available for purchase \$3.30 each. Visit [website](http://www.sarinalandcare.org.au) for latest plant order form.

SLCMA Executive 23/24

Chair: Lachlan McBride

Vice-chair: vacant

Treasurer: Susan Andrews

Secretary:
Karen May

Executive members:
vacant



SLCMA News!

Welcome to Helen, our new Field Team Leader.

Helen's experience includes 5 years as Northwest Queensland Extension Officer for Greening Australia, Qld (Inc.). She sat on the National Landcare Assessment Panel western Qld and was an active member of McKinlay Shire Landcare Association working on local projects including native pasture seed harvesting and seeding, management of the local woody weeds including Prickly Acacia (*Acacia nilotica*) and Parkinsonia (*Parkinsonia aculeata*).



Photo: contributed

Helen, SLCMA Field Team Leader

Helen coordinated and worked on a Landcare-funded project to produce a film about the Great Artesian Basin - "The Gift of the GAB". The film is currently playing "At The Creek", tourist information centre in Julia Creek.

"My passion is connecting with community and nature. Anything can be achieved through good collaboration of a group. There's no better way to connect with people of all ages than spending time and an interest in the nature we live in." Working in her family's beef and wool grazing operation based north of Julia Creek, Qld for the past 30 years has provided Helen with an innate understanding of the country and the importance of looking after the land we as custodians are privileged to live and work upon.

Composting Workshop - What a turn out!

On Saturday the 10th of February SLCMA, with the support from Mackay Regional Council, hosted a free composting and worm farm workshop for the community. The workshop was very well received with 38 'compostees' attending and, keen to learn. Luke Matthews from *Pandurunga Permaculture Farm* did an amazing job, sharing his wealth of knowledge and skills in composting and worm farming. Some of the topics covered were: what can be composted, how to create usable compost, why is my compost not working, why compost shouldn't smell, how to use and what can be put in a worm farm and much more. There were also prizes given away, a worm farm, worm castings and composting tubes. These were all given away to some very happy attendees. We would like to thank Luke, Mackay Regional Council and those who attended for a wonderful day of learning.



Photos: R Fraser

Compost and worm farm prize winners!

We would like to congratulate our happy prize winners from the composting workshop.

Prizes were purchased or donated from Mackay Regional Council.





Sarina Community Native Gardens

February has been a month of weed control in the gardens. The field team, Project Officer and Nursery Officer have all been lending a hand to whipper snip the grass and keep the gardens looking tidy and accessible. The garden beds have some of the usual suspects trying to dominate the bare patches, the most persistent being nut grass (*Cyperus rotundus*). We are trying a couple of methods to get this beast under control without using chemicals:

- We have weeded an area and planted it with native shrubs and groundcovers that will hopefully outgrow the nut grass and smother it out. We will then apply a good layer of forest mulch, if required. We will need to revisit with weeding until the plants mature.

- Another method is applying molasses at a rate of 1 cup to 4 litres of water per 3m square. Molasses is a great sugar source for all the beneficial microbes that are found in healthy soils. Molasses provides the microbes with energy and the microbes then work at top speed, which is a good thing for the soil. As the microbes are doing their thing, the nutlets of the nutgrass will be digested along with all other kinds of organic matter. After some time, we should notice the nut grass starts to turn yellow and eventually die. We will reapply once or twice a month, as needed.



Nut grass control trials underway in the gardens

The gardens are always open to the community and many of the plants are labelled to assist with identification. Visitors are welcome to walk around the gardens on a self-guided tour or if you would like to organise a group guided walk, contact us 4956 1388 or admin@sarinalandcare.org.au



Below: Cats whiskers are currently in flower



Photos: R Fraser

Sarina Community Nursery Volunteer Program



Photos: S Tomlinson

In the SLCMA Community Nursery this month, our cheerful volunteers have assisted with weeding tubestock, cleaning and sowing seeds, propagating from cuttings, and potting seedlings on. Leah from Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) joined us to pot on *Melaleuca* species that were collected from St Lawrence wetlands, in preparation for planting back in the wetlands at a later date. We grow native plants in our nursery for a few projects carried out by CVA. Leah visits the nursery once a month to assist, often bringing seed collected from rehabilitation sites, for propagation.

Through the SLCMA Community Nursery we are providing local native plants for a range of local projects including koala fodder and habitat plants for the *Sarina Koala Habitat Restoration Program* and other local native plants for landholders in the *Land for Wildlife Program*. A big thank you to our volunteers, who have been helping our Nursery Officer Susie, to grow plants ready for these programs. They have attended seed collecting expeditions throughout the Sarina area to top up the nursery seedbank and make sure we have the appropriate plant species available. Back at the nursery, volunteers assist with the task of extracting seed from its fruit ready for storing or sowing.

The last Wednesday of the month has been designated as a seed collection and plant identification field trip. Volunteers will be notified via email regarding the location, meeting place and other details. Our next trip will be on Wednesday 27th March.

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. The SLCMA Community Volunteer Program is proudly supported by Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Levy.

Photos: Our volunteers out and about collecting seed and enjoying the sights nature has to offer :)



Problematic Pest Profile – Cats Claw Creeper

Cat's claw creeper (*Macfadyena unguis-cati*) is a Weed of National Significance (WONS) and regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread and, economic and environmental impacts. It was introduced to Australia as a garden plant, particularly for screening trellises and walls, and has escaped to become a major weed of native forests and riparian areas in eastern Australia. Its climbing woody stems (lianas) cling to tree trunks, enabling it to grow into the forest canopy, killing mature trees and opening up the canopy for light-loving weeds. This can lead to further degradation in the structure and composition of the native plant community. It also out-competes native plants by forming a dense above-ground mat and numerous underground reproductive tubers. It produces abundant seeds that are dispersed by wind and water.

Cat's claw creeper belongs to the family Bignoniaceae. It is a perennial woody vine with numerous stems, generally up to 15cm thick, with distinct three-pronged tendrils, which climb vertically and also creep along the ground and over other vegetation. The leaves are opposite and compound, with a 1–2 cm long stalk (petiole). Each leaf has a basal pair of lance-shaped leaflets 2–7cm long x 1–3cm wide.

Cat's claw creeper is a category 3 restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* and a Weed of National Significance (WONS). As such it must not be given away, sold or released into the environment; and, you must take all reasonable and practical measures to control it, under a [general biosecurity obligation \(GBO\)](#)

Ongoing control using a variety of methods for at least 5 years (or more) and monitoring is required. This is due to the multitude of tubers per plant and new regrowth coming from next tuber. A range of control methods are available including: **Physical control**—digging tubers out (*however depending on size of infestation, this may not be practical*); removing any regrowth to prevent reaching host tree's foliage. **Herbicide control**—Foliar spray regrowth and seedlings; cut stump—*applying herbicide within 15 seconds of cutting*. **Biological control**—Tingid bug *Carvalhotingis visenda*, leaf-tying moth *Hypocosima pyrochroma* and leaf-mining jewel beetle *Hylaeogena jureceki* have been released. They have become widely established within release sites, causing visible effects. Biocontrol bugs are available through Gympie Landcare (click [here](#) for more details).

It is worth noting, there are a variety of native vines that occur naturally and without impact, in the habitats invaded by cat's claw creeper, all of which do **not** have the distinctive three-pronged tendrils display by cats claw creeper. Some of the native vines include:

- Wonga vines (*Pandorea* species) are related to cat's claw creeper. The small flowers are pink, white or cream. Most species are native to the eastern states, but *P. pandorana* has a wider distribution. It has much smaller leaflets than cat's claw creeper with darker green glossy leaves.
- Silkpods (*Parsonsia* species) are native vines with simple, opposite leaves and small flowers that are not trumpet-shaped. Several species are native in eastern Australian forests.

SLCMA is currently working on a project, assisting landholders along Carmila Creek to control cats claw creeper. This project is supported by Reef Catchments.

Information sourced from: <https://clarencelandcare.com.au/wp-content/Brochures/catsclawcreeper.pdf>; Biosecurity Queensland [Pest fact sheet](#)



Photo: P Alden
Smothering effect of Cats Claw Creeper over native vegetation



Photo: S von Fahland
Flowers (above), seedlings (below) of Cats Claw Creeper



Photo: P Alden



Photo: C Peterson

SLCMA 'Plant of the Month'

***Tacca leontopetaloides* - Polynesian Arrowroot**
Family: Dioscoreaceae

What is in a name? Tacca is from the Malayan word for the Black Bat plant; leontopetaloides is from the Greek λεωντος (leontos), of a lion, and πεταλον (petalon), a leaf.

Form: Herbaceous perennial plant producing a cluster of 1 - 3, leaves on long petioles from a tuberous rootstock.

Leaves: Palmately divided into 3-13 lobes, each lobe pinnately divided into numerous smaller ones.

Flower: Borne on tall stalks in greenish-purple umbel-like clusters surrounded by large bracts with long whisker-like appendages, their function is unknown. Each single flower has long, threadlike bracteoles 1 cm long.

Fruit: Fruit emerges from the bracts, each fruit are globular 4–5 cm long. The fruits ripen and turn from pale or dark green to pale orange.

Habitat: Open forest, but is occasionally found in monsoon forest and also in or on the margins of lowland rain-forest.

Distribution: Northern Australia, and southwards along the Queensland coast as far as Central Queensland. It also occurs in Africa, Madagascar, Asia, Malesia and the Pacific Islands.

Notes: The plant is usually dormant for part of the year, withdrawing underground; later new leaves will arise from the tuber. In traditional Hawaiian medicine, the raw tuber was mixed with water and red clay and, eaten, to treat internal haemorrhaging, diarrhea and dysentery. It was also applied externally to wounds to stop bleeding. The starch was also used to stiffen fabrics.



Photo: SLCMA

Information sourced from: <https://somensomagneticslandplants.com.au/polynesian-arrowroot>



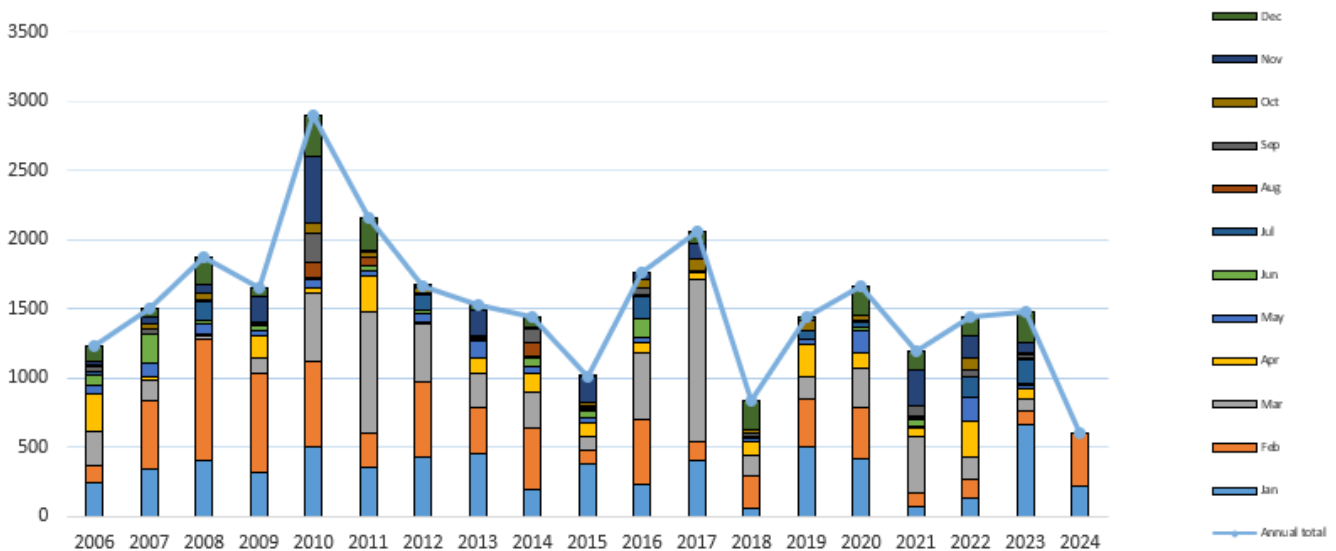
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What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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 -2023 (inc annual total)




Did you know? 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.



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

Just for fun!




Q:What did the celery say to the botanist?
A: "I'm stalk-ing you!"

Q: What type of plant sneaks up on you?
A: An ambush.

Q: How do botanists keep their plants entertained?
A: They play them some "root" music!

Q: How do you grow a flower that glows in the dark?
A: With a light bulb.





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