

SLCMA Catchment News 2020



March 2020

Office: 101 Sarina Beach Rd
Postal: PO Box 682
Sarina QLD 4737
Phone: (07) 4956 1388
www.sarinalandcare.org.au
Email:
admin@sarinalandcare.org.au

Our office is currently closed to the public. We are still operating, please call on 4956 1388 and leave a message.

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—**on hold until further notice.**

Native plants available for purchase \$3 each.

SLCMA Executive 2020

Chair: Mark Evans

Vice-chair: Karen May

Treasurer: Kevin Plumb

Secretary: Shirley Sidey

Executive members:

Sandy Evans
Lachlan McBride



SLCMA update—COVID-19 impact

The outbreak of COVID-19 continues to pose a significant health threat to people across the globe. As the nature of the outbreak changes, the response from relevant authorities is evolving accordingly. SLCMA is taking steps to maintain business continuity while minimising risks posed by COVID-19 to staff, members, volunteers and the general public. We regret having to take this action, however, safety is our number one priority.

In keeping with the latest government advice, we are cancelling or postponing all community/school/volunteer activities and events effective immediately, until further notice.

Our office will remain open for staff (only), who wish to continue working there; measures have been put in place to ensure increased hygiene protocols, minimise contact with one another and to work remotely if/when needed.

Our Community Nursery will be closed to the public and SLCMA Volunteers, until further notice. Provisions are in place to allow plant orders to be made and collected. We will be distributing a Plant Order Form shortly, but in the meantime, please contact us to discuss and organise this.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact us on admin@sarinalandcare.org.au or 4956 1388. We wish you all safe times ahead and look forward to seeing you out and about on Landcare activities, as soon as possible.

Regards,
The SLCMA Management Committee and Staff

How we can support you during this time.

The SLCMA team still welcome your land management questions and enquiries. Feel free to drop us a line, email or even facebook messenger through our facebook page. *If you give us a call, please leave a message so we are able to call you back.*

You are also welcome to email through your questions or photos if you would like a plant identified—and we will endeavour to have it identified and return relevant information to you.

Photos, photos... Why not take this opportunity to take some photos for next year's SLCMA Calendar?

We would love to see what natural wonders you are sighting while you are at home or exercising in the nearby environment. Please send your high quality/size photos to admin@sarinalandcare.org.au - along with the following details: approximate location (eg. suburb is sufficient), photographer name and date.

Blue tiger Butterflies Have you seen large numbers of butterflies lately?

These are likely the Blue Tiger Butterflies (*Tirumala Hamata*). Blue Tigers are mostly tropical butterflies and can be observed typically all year round in areas of North Queensland. However, they are migratory butterflies, and fly south during spring and summer, before heading back north during cooler months. We are currently witnessing large numbers of these butterflies in the Mackay-Whitsunday area, which is likely due to recent high rainfall and hot temperatures which has led to new foliage on their main larvae host plant, corky milk vine (*Secamone elliptica*). During cooler periods, Blue Tigers migrate back north, known to congregate in large numbers over winter, clustering on stems and vines in north Queensland. Individuals may live up to 6 months, which encompasses their migration, breeding and possible over-wintering.

Common host plants for the Blue Tiger Butterfly are:

- Corky Milk Vine (*Secamone elliptica*)
- Mangrove milk vine (*Cynanchum carnosum*)
- Butterfly Vine (*Cynanchum leptolepis*)
- *Heterostemma acuminatum*
- Monkey Rope Vine (*Parsonia straminea*)



Fun fact about butterflies: Butterflies can directly absorb heat from the sun via their wings, which enables them to fly autonomously.

Removing barriers to fish migration—a local example

Fish movement barriers such as dams, weirs, culverts, bed level crossings and causeways significantly impact the life-cycles of key species for commercial and recreational fishers. These structures have been built throughout the state for a variety of purposes such as irrigation supply, flow gauging and regulation, on-farm stock watering and irrigation supply, urban and industrial supply, flow management and flood control, prevention of tidal incursion, road crossings or simply for urban beautification and recreation facilities (Marsden et al. 2003).

These “barriers” have significant impact on fish migration within creeks and hence their survival and productivity. All fish undertake some form of migration during their lifetimes, especially Queensland fish species. “Barriers” consequently act to restrict vital fish movement through creeks and streams, impeding a fish’s ability to fulfil certain requirements such as entering different habitats for breeding, to rear young, or to find essential habitat for food or protection. The construction of fishways are imperative to the longevity of our native fish species, as they act to reconnect habitat and remove the difficulties of navigating instream barriers, consequently increasing fish passage and migration.

In June 2019, *Catchment Solutions* undertook a fish passage improvement project to repair fishways in the Tedlands wetlands area. The aim of this was to provide habitat connectivity along Rocky Dam Creek and allow for fish passage for a variety of recreationally and commercially important species such as barramundi, giant herring, tarpon and sea mullet.

Our native juvenile fish are typically only able to utilise short bursts of speed when swimming upstream to nursery habitats, before needing to rest and recuperate. Fishways work successfully because they provide areas of ‘resting pools’ in between ridges (see image), and thus provide suitable conditions to allow for successful fish migration past instream movement barriers.

SLCMA was successful in applying for funding through the Australian Government - Communities Environment Program to undertake the *Tedlands Wetland Fishway Assessment Project*. The project engaged *Catchment Solutions* to monitor and evaluate the successfulness of the recently installed rock ramp fishway into the Tedlands wetlands.

The project provided the opportunity for *SLCMA Project Officer, Morgan Thomas* to get out in the field over two days, with *Catchment Solutions* to undertake the monitoring of the fishway. Overall, an average of 5327 fish/day were captured migrating up the Landing’s Road Fishway into Tedlands Wetlands. This was made up of 7 species including eastern rainbowfish, tarpon, empire gudgeon, barramundi, olive perchlet and spangled perch, highlighting the importance of these fishways.

The data collected during the monitoring, once analysed, will provide information about the fish utilising the fishway as well as validate the cost-effective design of the structure for use at other sites throughout Queensland. The project will also incorporate a community field day to showcase the fishway and wetlands to the local community and promote the benefits to the biodiversity and fisheries resources that the fishway and associated wetlands provide. Watch this space, for when we are able to hold the community field day - we are looking forward to showing you this great local project.



SLCMA Project Officer, Morgan Thomas undertaking fish assessment



The yellow outlines represent the resting pools in between each jump to the next pool. This is where juvenile fish can rest before moving into the next pool through a short but fast flowing passageway between pools (blue arrow). Utilising rough rocks within the fishway also provides more roughage and therefore resting spots for fish.

Keep an eye out for: Fall Armyworms!

Fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) is an exotic pest which has been detected in Queensland and poses a significant threat to natural and agricultural resources. This pest has already caused significant economic losses overseas because of its rapid spread. Originally from the Americas, fall armyworm has now been detected in Africa, the Indian subcontinent, China and Southeast Asia, with confirmed reports of it now having spread to Australia (Bundaberg is now the most southerly detection since the initial detection in the Torres Strait islands in January 2020).

Fall armyworm has been reported to feed on more than 350 plant species, including sugarcane, wheat, vegetable/fruit crops, cotton, rice, maize etc., which can occur rapidly when infestations are high, affecting leaves, shoots, stems and fruit and plants of different ages (seedlings to mature plants). Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) suggests inspecting your plants regularly for the presence of unusual pest and disease symptoms.

How to identify fall armyworm

Adults

- Moth, 15 – 20mm with 32 – 40mm wingspan

- Brown or grey forewing and white hind wing
- Male moths have more patterns and a distinct white spot on each forewing
- and an inverted Y shape pattern on their heads.
- Eventually reach a length of about 34mm.
- under the host plant, occasionally in host vegetation.

Larvae

- Newly hatched ~1.7mm, light green to brown with a larger darker head
- As they develop, become darker greyish brown with white lengthwise stripes and dark spots with spines on their upper surface. Older larvae have distinctive pattern of 4 spots on the second to last body segment and an inverted Y shape pattern on their heads.
- Eventually reach a length of about 34mm.

Pupae

- Pupa is red-brown, 14–18mm long and approximately 4.5mm wide. Pupation mostly occurs in the soil under the host plant, occasionally in host vegetation.

Fall Armyworms *continued*....

Egg

- Pale yellow and clustered together in a mass.
- An egg mass can contain 100–200 eggs.
- Egg masses are usually attached to foliage in a mound, with a silk-like furry substance

To help identify symptoms of fall armyworm, DAF suggests examining plants for:

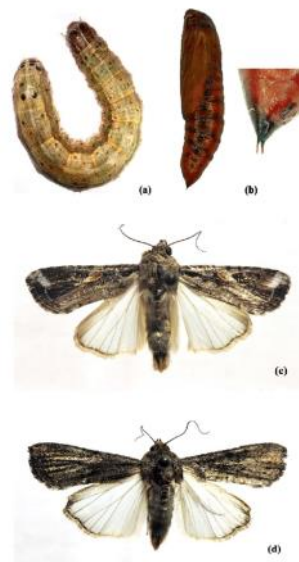
- leaf damage, including pinholes, windowing, tattered leaf margins and defoliation of plants.
- tiny larvae, less than 1mm, that are more active at night, eating pinholes and transparent windows in leaves.

- bigger larvae grazing on leaves, stems, trunk and fruit, and leaving behind insect droppings.
- in monocots, larvae are often in plant whorls (where leaves radiate from or wrap around the stem or stalk).

If you suspect fall armyworm you can visit:

<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/queensland-fall-armyworm-resources>,

for a fall armyworm resources (ID guide, symptoms etc.), or report immediately to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 13 25 23.



SLCMA Community Volunteer Program

March turned out to be a bit of a wet month but a big thankyou to our volunteers who still waded through the water, in some places up to their ankles, with their gumboots on and umbrellas in hands.

We began looking at some new activities with our volunteers. This started with us taking a look in the *Sarina Community Native Gardens* and chatting about how we can improve its look and showcase some of the great plants we propagate in the Community Nursery. "Planes are starting to go on paper" by keen volunteers who love to design. We are looking forward to revamping the gardens, starting with the coastal garden, and making it a native garden that anyone can have and be proud off.

Sadly, in mid-March we had to cancel our volunteer mornings until further notice; due to COVID-19 pandemic. While, I have been busy in the nursery looking after the plants, I definitely miss our volunteer's helping hands and friendly chats. I look forward to when we can all get back together. In the meantime, I hope you are taking the opportunity to enjoy working in your own gardens. Stay safe and remember we are always on the other end of the phone or email, so please contact us if you need a chat.

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



We are looking forward to having our volunteers back together xx

SLCMA Community Nursery 'Plant of the Month'

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is **Bandicoot Berry** *Leea guineensis* prev. *L. indica*

Family: Vitaceae

What is in a name? *Leea* after James Lee (1715-1795), a horticulturist at Syon, near London.

Form: Large, spreading understory shrub with pithy stems, about 4m.

Leaves: Large, alternate, Bi- to tri-pinnate, up to 60cm long, leaflets with conspicuous veins (quilted appearance).

Flowers: Clusters of small, greenish-white to cream flowers borne in cymes about 20cm across.

Fruit: Globular berries turn from green to red to black when ripe, contain 2-6 seeds.

Distribution: Torres Strait to Mackay, Northern Territory and Asia.

Habitat: Riparian and rainforest.

Notes: Propagate from fresh seed or cuttings. Fast growing, suits moist protected areas. Will fruit while young. Fruits eaten by Wompoo Fruit Doves.



Fruits & leaves of Bandicoot Berry



Images: S von Fatland

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:** www.jcu.edu.au, PCL fact sheets



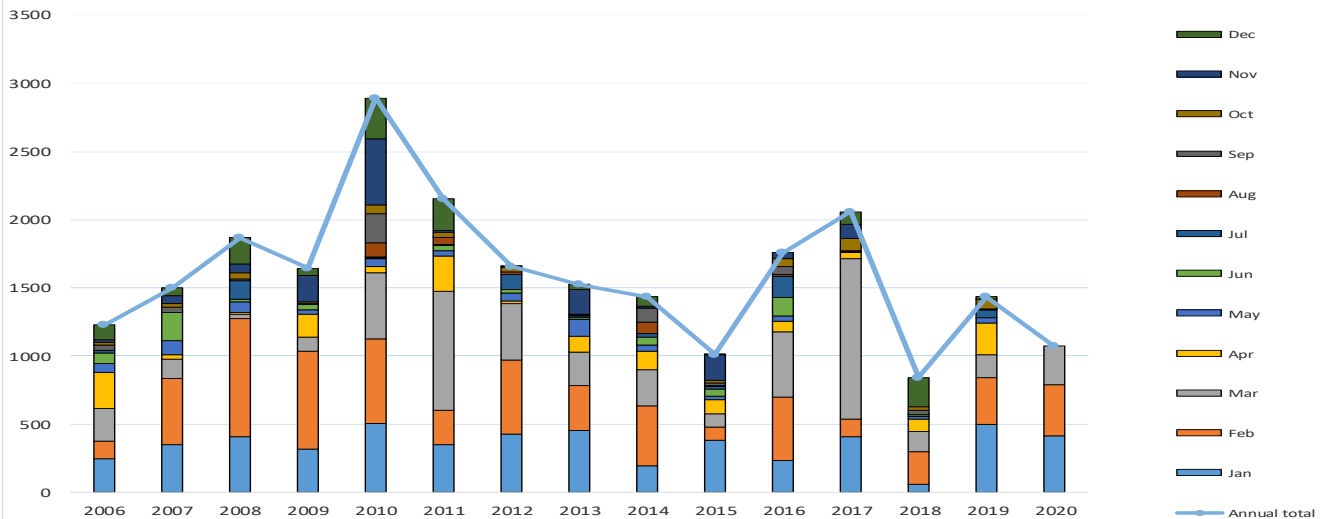
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What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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!

My daughter was keen to do some landscaping at her new home, but then she called up sounding discouraged.

"I don't think I'll ever get these flowers planted," she sighed. "It says to plant in full sun, but it's been cloudy for four days."



Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit;
 Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad



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.



SLCMA is proudly supported by:



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

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