

SLCMA Catchment News 2020



April/May 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



Sarina
Landcare

SLCMA update

We hope our latest newsletter finds you all well and coping with current social restrictions. We are continuing to monitor the situation and will open our office, nursery and other services when we are able.

Our office is open for staff only, and measures have been put in place to ensure increased hygiene protocols and to minimise contact with one another, including some staff working from home.

Our Community Nursery is closed to our volunteers and the public, until further notice. Provisions are now in place for members, volunteers and the public to submit and collect plant orders. Please contact us for a copy of the Plant Order Form.

Property visits for the Land for Wildlife Program and Landholder Support Program are still able to be carried out for landholders wishing to participate. Again, we have increased our hygiene protocols and ensure social distancing is practiced during all visits.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact us on admin@sarinalandcare.org.au or 4956 1388. Please leave a phone message, so we are able to call you back.

Funding received for Sarina region

We are excited to be receiving a total of \$58,593 to undertake three important environmental projects in the Sarina region, from the Federal Governments Communities Environment Program.

The program seeks to support community groups to address local environmental priorities. The program also seeks to encourage the community to connect with their local natural environment and to build and strengthen local communities.

The Australian Government will invest up to \$22.65 million this financial year through the Communities Environment Program (CEP) to support a wide range of small-scale, on-ground projects that aim to conserve, protect and manage our environment.

The three environmental projects include:

- Landholder Support for Streambank Rehabilitation - \$19,988
- Friends of Sarina Community Native Garden Pilot Project- \$18,675
- Sarina Inlet trail - \$19,930

Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry said she is glad to see organisations like SLCMA receive funding to continue their hard work to help the Sarina Catchment Area. "Over the years, I've seen what our local community organisations have to offer when it comes to caring for our environment. "Sarina Landcare is doing amazing work to manage, conserve and protect our natural habitats, land, rivers, wetlands, coasts and local species. "The local community know their local environments better than most, and they have the knowledge and the passion to take care of our beautiful places and the unique wildlife within them," Ms Landry said.

SLCMA Coordinator Saskia von Fahland said the federal funding received helps their community organisation continue important work. "We want to continue to assist the local community in understanding, managing and retaining its natural resources and unique biodiversity. "We do this by providing property visits and land management advice to landholders, undertaking on-ground rehabilitation projects; and engaging youth and volunteers in educational and practical landcare activities".



Top: Sarina Inlet Trail
Middle: Sarina Community Native Gardens
Bottom: Landholder support for streambank rehab.



African Tulip Tree—a deadly threat against some of our most valuable pollinators by Morgan Thomas

Have you seen this tree before? This bright orange-red flowered, exotic tree has become popular as an ornamental tree in gardens and streets in both NSW and Queensland, but their attractiveness poses a significant threat to our native insect species.

The nectar and pollen of the African tulip tree (*Spathodea campanulata*) contains toxins which are extremely harmful for insects, particularly our native stingless bees (Australia has 11 species of social stingless native bees) which have seen whole colonies wiped out from exposure to these flowers.

African tulip tree is a fast-growing tree which can grow up to 24 metres tall. Mature leaves are deeply veined, oval-shaped, green and glossy. Young leaves of the tree however look quite bronze/brown and will darken over time. Identification of this tree is typically easiest using the large clusters of large orange-red flowers with yellow frilly edges (typically flowering in Spring but can occur all year round). Seeds are typically reddish-brown, and can be up to 20cm in length. These trees reproduce via both seeds and suckers, and therefore demonstrate an exceptional ability to spread. They form dense stands, typically in gullies, along waterways and in disturbed rainforest, which act to shade out and crown native vegetation, eventually taking over.

Removal of African tulip trees is highly recommended not only for our insect species but for ecosystems as a whole, particularly when they are in close proximity to natural areas. African tulip trees are a category 3 restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* and therefore must not be given away, sold, or released into the environment. The Act requires everyone to take all reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive plants under their control. If you would like further information or advice on this pest species, please contact us.



Photos: contributed

Top: African Tulip Tree

Right: Flower with dead native bees



Little Perils of the Bush—Scrub Itch

After a recent encounter with these tiny critters I thought it would be a fitting reminder to those of us who have been unlucky enough to come across them and, to those who haven't come across them – you are now warned! These animals appear high on the list of potential bitey critters, along with mozzies, ticks and march flies...

Scrub itch is the irritation caused by the bite of a tiny [barely visible to those with 20/20 vision] orange-red mite called a Trombiculid larva. These critters are related to other mites and ticks and various species are found around the world.

Eggs are laid in the soil and, during the summer months the newly hatched larvae climb up grass or other low vegetation. When humans (and other animals) brush past the plant, the larvae drop and, if successful, land on fur or clothing where they start exploring the nooks and crannies of their unsuspecting targets.

Typically, humans are bitten at sites where the mite can get entry: the collar line, belt line and tops of the socks. The favoured sites are the armpits, pelvic region and calves of the legs. The mite secretes a saliva which dissolves the upper layers of skin - the resulting fluid being sucked up. This process rapidly produces a very itchy, angry, red lump with the mite continuing the process for several days. After a few days of feeding, the larva drops off and for the rest of its life cycle is no longer parasitic on warm-blooded animals.

Individual reactions vary greatly, and the more sensitive skinned can suffer badly from them. As with ticks, scratching only further aggravates the itch but fortunately these mites are more easily overcome.

But don't let all this turn you off going bush, just prepare well, particularly when going there in hatching season. Prevention is the best recourse and some pharmacists recommend using Citronella Oil or Tea Tree Oil, applied to the skin at places where the mite can gain access; wear a broad-brimmed hat, long pants and long sleeves and do not sit on the ground.

If you have been bitten, then an over-the-counter mite nukers are available, as will dabbing with kerosene, petrol or alcohol (externally of course), but these fluids might produce their own reactions. If the itching is really severe, then medical advice might be necessary and the best relief will be to take some antihistamine orally. Rubbing anti-itch creams on the lumps is more likely to aggravate the skin reaction.

Information sourced from SGAP, Village journal.



Photos.....for next year's SLCMA Calendar :)

We would love to see what natural wonders you are sighting while you have spent more time at home or exploring the nearby environment. If you would like to share them for next year's calendar—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.



SLCMA Community Volunteer Program

April and May have been and gone, and to say I have not missed the volunteers would be a lie, very quiet and lonely here at times.

We have started an all over stocktake of the nursery to keep things flowing as much as possible for members and the community, who would like plants to plant while the covid virus is on.

Our seeds have grown into small plants, growing quickly. Some have grown up so much they have been potted up, while others have gone out to get sun hardened getting ready to be taken and replanted in their new homes.

We have been able to make arrangements to allow Peter to continue looking after the *Sarina Community Native Gardens*, as well as popping his head in every now and then, to check I'm okay. So thankyou Peter.

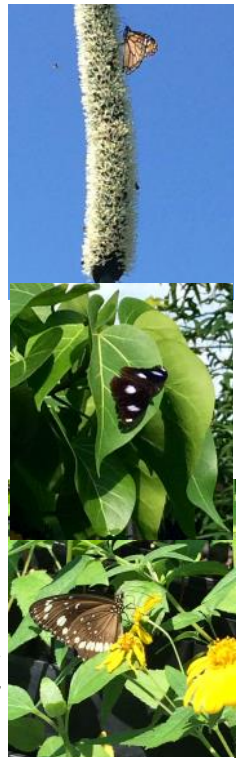


Seedlings growing nicely in shadehouse

We have recently created a private *SLCMA Volunteers* Facebook page – if you are a SLCMA volunteer and interested in joining, please do so. It is a nice opportunity to keep connected with each other.

We'll miss you all and can't wait to see you all at the end of this virus period, take care and see you soon, Davina.

The SLCMA Community Volunteer Program is proudly supported by Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Levy. The volunteer mornings are currently on hold due COVID-19 restrictions. For more details contact SLCMA on 4956 1388.



Recent visitors to the nursery and Sarina Community Native Gardens :)

SLCMA Revegetation Team— Plane Creek Revegetation Site

The SLCMA Revegetation Team continue to put 'hard yakka' into a number of rehabilitation projects across the Sarina Catchment. One of these projects is the Plane Creek Revegetation Site (*aka Brewers Park Reserve*). Over the last 2.5 years, the team has spent 30 days of weed control and revegetation activities to continue rehabilitating the site, particularly after being effected by Cyclone Debbie in 2017. The revegetation activities have focussed on stabilising damaged areas of the creek bank, while weed control activities targeted Madeira vine (*Anredera cordifolia*) and other vines that exist on the site. The Revegetation Team have worked alongside community volunteers and the Mackay Regional Council Vegetation Team at various times, throughout the project. Other activities undertaken through the project have included community working bees: rubbish clean-ups, resource sharing & training days for Madeira vine control, school educational tours and; plant identification and seed collection events.

This project is supported by Queensland Government's Community Action Grant Program.

Revegetation and vine control at the Plane Creek Revegetation Site.



SLCMA Community Nursery 'Plant of the Month'

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is **Tie bush** *Wikstroemia indica*

Family: Thymelaeaceae

What is in a name? *Wikstroemia* named Johan Emanuel Wikstrom, a Swedish botanist who studied Thymelaeaceae; *indica* from the Latin *indicus* of India.

Form: Shrub to 1.5m with fibrous stems, reddish bark.

Leaves: Simple, opposite, ovate; dark green and glossy above; paler, dull below; venation visible both surfaces.

Flowers: Greenish yellow to white, tubular flowers; Spring-Summer.

Fruit: Poisonous, drupes, succulent, orange, red, yellow; Summer-Winter.

Distribution: QLD, NSW, NT and overseas.

Habitat: Sandy or rocky soils in woodlands on rainforest margins.

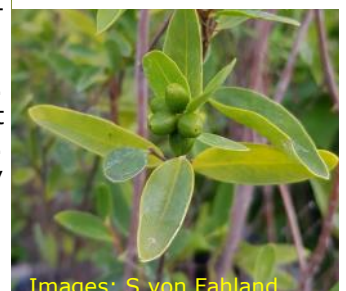
Notes: Fruit and leaves toxic to stock. The tough stringy bark can be stripped in long strands for rope-making. Fruit eaten by mistletoebird, brown cuckoo-dove and regent bowerbird.

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 R & Plumb J (2007) *Plants of Capricornia*



Flowers (above) and immature fruit (below) of Tie bush



Images: S von Fahland



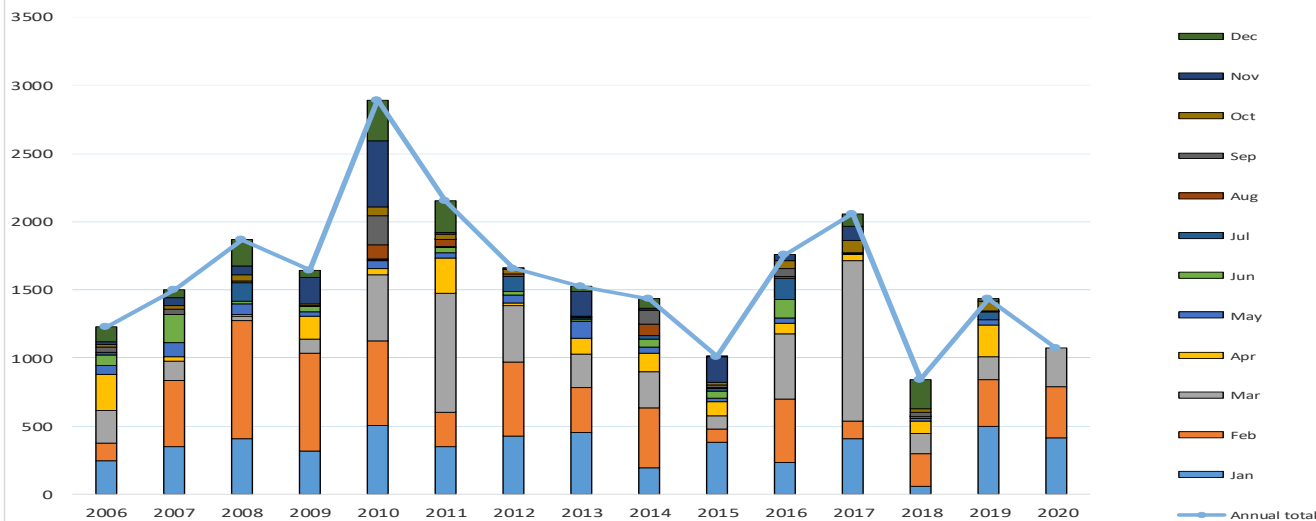
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What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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!

While attending a marriage seminar dealing with communication, Tom and his wife Grace listened to the instructor, "It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other.

"He addressed the men, "Can you describe your wife's favourite flower?"

Tom, smiling but looking a little nervous, leaned over, touched his wife's arm gently and whispered, "It's self-raising, isn't it?"



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Central QLD Coast
Landcare
 Network

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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MICHELLE LANDRY MP
 Federal Member for **Capricornia**

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

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