

SLCMA Catchment News 2020



October 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

Vacant

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 20/21

Chair: Mark Evans

Vice-chair: Lachlan McBride

Treasurer: Kevin Plumb

Secretary: Shirley Sidey

Executive members:

Sandy Evans

Karen May



Sarina

Landcare

SLCMA News!

Friendly reminder that membership renewals are due (*to align with financial years*). 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 on 4956 1388, to discuss the best option for you.

SLCMA Office — is 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.
- ◆ 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

Annual General Meeting

A big thankyou to those who attended the Annual General Meeting on 21st October. It was a great opportunity to celebrate our successes for the previous year and find out about the diversity projects and programs being delivered in the Sarina Catchment. Many thanks to our outgoing volunteer Management Committee for their support throughout the 19/20 year and their willingness to re-nominate for this new year.



Image: S von Fahland

Thankyou and welcome to our Management Committee members for 20/21:

Chair—Mark Evans

Vice-Chair—Lachlan McBride

Secretary—Shirley Sidey

Treasurer—Kevin Plumb

Executive members— Cr Karen May and Sandy Evans

Goodbye and thankyou to Davina

We are sad to see our Nursery Officer Davina, leave the SLCMA team recently. Davina was an asset to the SLCMA team and we would like to thank Davina for her innovation, happy, fun disposition and the positive impact she made to the SLCMA Community Nursery, SLCMA Volunteer Program and Sarina Community Native Gardens over the last 12 months. We would like to wish Davina all the very best!



Image: S von Fahland

Helping our local turtles

Mackay and District Turtle Watch Association is currently seeking volunteers to help report turtle activity on our local beaches, **including the Sarina Beaches**. If this interests you, or you regularly walk any of our local beaches, you can help monitor turtles by notifying Turtle Watch of sightings, turtles and turtle tracks. **Your help will significantly improve protecting turtle nests in the area.** For more information or to become a member please contact Steve Fisher on 0413 394 982 or visit: www.mackayturtles.org.au



Weed Feature — Siam weed

Siam weed (*Chromolaena odorata* and *Chromolaena squalida*) is believed to be one of the most invasive weeds in the world, due to its astonishing growth rate and extensive seed production and dispersal.

Siam weed is a perennial weed, native to Central and South America which can easily out-compete and smother crops or native vegetation due to its rapid growth rate, which can reach up to 20mm per day/5m per year.

Plants generally grow between 1.5 to 3m tall, creating impenetrable thickets. They also have the ability to scramble through other vegetation to a height of up to 20 metres. It has the potential to spread across Northern Australia and down the eastern and western coastlines, threatening grazing, agricultural and forestry industries. Infestations have been found as south as Rockhampton, and therefore we encourage all landholders to be on the lookout for this aggressive invader.

Juvenile Siam weed resembles Billy Goat Weed (*Ageratum houstonianum*), however as plants continue to grow, their growth habit becomes more similar to Lantana (*Lantana camara*).

The plant produces multiple stems from the crown, which are smooth, round and fairly brittle. Leaves are soft, green, hairy and triangular in shape with a distinctive three-vein "pitchfork" pattern. New leaves display a purple colouration and emit a pungent odour when crushed. Flowers are in clusters of 10-35 pale pink-mauve tubular flowers, at the end of branches. Seeds are brown to black, with a parachute like tuft of white hairs at the top of the seed and fine barbs.

Siam weed flowers from May to July, and again in September to October and will produce a staggering number (**more than 80 000 seeds per plant, per season**) of windborne seeds within 8-10 weeks after flowering.

Controlling Siam weed is recommended before flowering and seed set to reduce the spread. Physical removal of the basal root ball is extremely effective and recommended for small infestations provided the removed plant does not remain in contact with the soil (to prevent re-shooting). Likewise, ensuring the correct washdown of vehicles, machinery, equipment and clothing can also minimise the spread.

Herbicide application before flowering at correct application rates can also provide effective control. See the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries pest factsheet for more information on herbicides for the control of Siam weed here: https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/50028/siam-weed.pdf

Siam weed is a **category 3 restricted invasive plant** under the Biosecurity Act 2014. It must not be given away, sold, or released into the environment. The Act requires everyone to take all reasonable and practical measures to minimise the biosecurity risks associated with invasive plants under their control. This is called a general biosecurity obligation (GBO).

If you believe you may have Siam weed on your property, you can send a photo of the plant (leaves, flowers, bark, habit etc.) to admin@sarinalandcare.org.au, or bring in a sample and we can confirm the identification.

Vegetation management workshop

Last month SLCMA and landholders had the opportunity to attend a vegetation management workshop held by Reef Catchments Ltd. Our officers were able to learn from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy staff about vegetation management including permit requirements and options. We also learnt more about:

- The Vegetation Management Act,
- Queensland Globe,
- Development approvals and fast track five thinning processes,
- Property maps of assessable vegetation,
- State landcover and trees study and the early detection system,
- Tree counts and GPS point capture, and
- Accepted development vegetation clearing codes.

If you would like to know more, or are interested in events such as these, please contact us at admin@sarinalandcare.org.au and we can direct you to similar events in the future.



Image: DAF

Above: Siam weed flowers



Image: Queensland Government

Above: Siam weed infestation resembling Lantana



Great Northern Clean-Up

SLCMA had the pleasure of hosting a Great Northern Clean-Up (GNCU) site at Sarina Beach on the 12th of September. The GNCU has run since 2009 and is scheduled between August and October to make the most of the cooler temperatures and remove rubbish before the wet and cyclone season.

The aim of the day is to remove as much rubbish out of our precious environment as possible before the onset of the monsoon and cyclone seasons, therefore reducing its spread. Over the last decade, an estimated 37,500 volunteers have removed the equivalent of 2548 ute loads of rubbish from 1147 locations.

Our Project Officer Morgan ran the event at Sarina Beach with volunteers arriving between 8am and 10am to help protect our beautiful local beach. We managed to collect rubbish along the beach, the parklands which border the beach and the boat ramp, which consisted of cardboard, paper, food waste and even clothing.

We still have a few remaining clean-up bags if anyone does rubbish collection in their own time and would like some reusable recyclable bags to help their efforts.

A huge thank you to the volunteers who turned up on the day to help-out and clean up! Please keep an eye out next year for the event as we would love to have as many participants as possible and please ensure you are not leaving any rubbish wherever you go.



Image: M. Thomas



Image: M. Thomas

Plant of the month—Coast caper

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is ***Capparis lucida* Coast caper**

Family: Capparaceae

What is in a name? *Capparis*, derived from the ancient Arabic name "kapar" for *Capparis spinosa* (the caper plant) and *lucida*; meaning shiny in Latin, referring to its glossy leaves.

Form: Shrub to small tree; typically 3-4m.

Leaves: Alternately arranged, elliptical, glossy green leaves.

Flower: White or cream coloured flowers with innumerable long white or purple coloured stamens. Flowering between January and March.

Fruit: Large purple to black edible fruits hanging in clusters when ripe with flavour similar to guava.

Habitat: Found in coastal forests, tidal flats and vine thickets.

Distribution: QLD, WA and some parts of north-eastern NSW

Notes: Thin thorns are present during the juvenile stages to prevent grazing, with thorns greatly reducing in the adult stage. Host plant for caper gull, caper white and chalky-pearl white butterflies.



Image: CSIRO



Image: Australian tropical butterflies



Image: A. Eaton

Riparian Rehabilitation Community Awareness Tour

Twenty four community members attended the *Riparian Rehabilitation Community Awareness Tour*, held by SLCMA on the 23rd of September.

The morning featured a walk through the Plane Creek Revegetation Site (*aka Brewers Road Reserve*) which included discussions about: history of the site, importance of and threats to riparian vegetation and revegetation/rehabilitation techniques.

The Plane Creek Revegetation site was damaged during the high flow event of Cyclone Debbie in 2017. Subsequently, SLCMA was successful in receiving funding through the *Community Sustainable Action Grants* to assist in rehabilitation works including weed control and revegetation; community working bees and litter collection.

Plane Creek meanders along the eastern boundary of the site and provided a visual demonstration of the importance of riparian vegetation in strengthening creekbanks and bank stability as well as, the processes involved during flow events in regards to water flow and potential impacts on certain areas.

Rehabilitation history of the site: Rehabilitation of the site began in 1994 when community members formed the *Plane Creek Revegetation Community Group*. Initial work began with removing non-native species through manual control, slashing and herbicide application and the planting of local native species. Initial plantings were damaged by floods in 1994 and the site was successfully replanted in 1995.

SLCMA has a long history of maintaining and monitoring the site with the support of Local Council, volunteers and many Sarina Green Corps Teams. Funding was acquired through Envirofund to construct the original Plane Creek Trail which included building a walking trail, bridges and signage, as well as additional revegetation works.

The site is listed under the Land for Wildlife program and in 2019 a new walking track was installed by Mackay Regional Council. The area continues to be monitored and maintained by SLCMA and Mackay Regional Council onground teams.

Thank you to all of those that attended, it was great to see community members so interested in learning more about riparian vegetation.

So why is riparian vegetation important?

Providing biodiversity and wildlife habitat Riparian vegetation provides a network of corridors across the landscape which animals may utilise for daily or seasonal movement. Diverse riparian vegetation provides food, shelter and other resources for many animals. Likewise, riparian vegetation supports aquatic habitats through the deposition and woody debris (such as branches), large limbs and even whole trees.

Buffering sediment and nutrient run-off Riparian vegetation is essentially the last line of defence against pollutants found in surface run-off. The vegetation acts as a natural barrier which filters, traps and absorbs nutrients/sediments before it is able to enter the waterway. By slowing the movement of water, sediment is captured and deposited on the land before spreading any further.

Stream bank stabilisation Vegetation within the riparian zone helps to greatly support the soil so that the bank does not erode. Combining deep-rooted shrubs/trees on the upper banks, and fine rooted species such as reeds, sedges or grasses lining the lower banks is typically the most essential safeguard against stream bank erosion.

Temperature and light control Riparian vegetation helps to keep waterways healthy by regulating temperature and light. Cooler waters contain higher levels of dissolved oxygen which is essential for the survival of fish and aquatic invertebrates. Without riparian vegetation, waterways tend to have lower water quality due to increased light/temperature and nutrient run-off which can lead to excessive growth of algae or water weeds.

If you would like to know more, or are interested in similar events, please contact us at admin@sarinalandcare.org.au and we would be happy to discuss this further with you. We hope to see you all at our next event!



Image: S von Fahland



Image: S von Fahland



Image: contributed

SLCMA Community Volunteer Program

Our volunteers were sad to see our Nursery Officer, Davina finish up with SLCMA and definitely miss her cheery face. In true style, the volunteers have continued to attend our volunteer mornings, keeping busy in the both the nursery and the Sarina Community Native Gardens.

In the nursery, there has been lots of seeds to clean, plants to pot-on and weed. It is nice to see the plants growing more quickly with the warmer weather! In the gardens, the volunteers added some colour by planting Golden paper daisies (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*) throughout the coastal gardens. Thankyou to our volunteers Mick, Neil and Peter for undertaking the subsequent watering and, to Peter for mulching.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we have been enjoying our morning teas in the fresh air, beside our food garden.

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

Sarina Catchment Waterwatch 2020-2023

SLCMA was recently successful in sourcing \$30 000 towards the Citizen Science project, 'Sarina Catchment Waterwatch'. The project will be delivered over three years and aims to engage with local landholders and community members as Citizen Scientists, to monitor water quality within four creek systems in the Sarina catchment, all of which feed into the Great Barrier Reef Lagoon.

Water quality is at the forefront of natural resource management (relating to land management topics such as riparian health, nutrient, herbicide application and sediment runoff) in the Mackay Whitsunday region. By monitoring water quality in-situ and collecting grab-samples for laboratory analysis, we will gain a better understanding of the health of our local waterways, identify long-term trends and enable options for remediation if/where necessary to protect the health of our waterways.

This is a great opportunity to engage the Sarina community in Citizen Science projects and raise community skills and awareness of water quality within the Sarina Catchment.

We need YOUR help! Do you live near one of the following creeks and would like to help collect water quality data?

To complete this project, we are seeking volunteers (citizen scientists) preferably to work in pairs and collect data on a monthly basis, from the following creeks: Plane Creek, Rocky Dam Creek, Basin Creek and Carmilla Creek. It is envisaged that different pairs of volunteers will monitor the different creeks (*unless volunteers would like to monitor more than one of the creeks*).

Volunteers (no prior skill or knowledge required) will be provided with water quality monitoring equipment and associated training to ensure the quality and integrity of the data collected, is of a high standard. Volunteers will gain an understanding of water quality monitoring and will contribute to an important dataset that will be utilised to guide future priorities and activities to improve long term water quality and protect our local aquatic environments.

If you would like to be involved, please contact SLCMA asap by email: admin@sarinalandcare.org.au or phone: 4956 1388, to express your interest and find out more.

If you would like to know more about citizen science visit: <https://www.chiefscientist.qld.gov.au/science-in-queensland/citizen-science-projects> or to the ACSA site - <https://citizenscience.org.au/who-we-are/>

This project is proudly supported by the Queensland Government – [Queensland Citizen Science Grants](#).





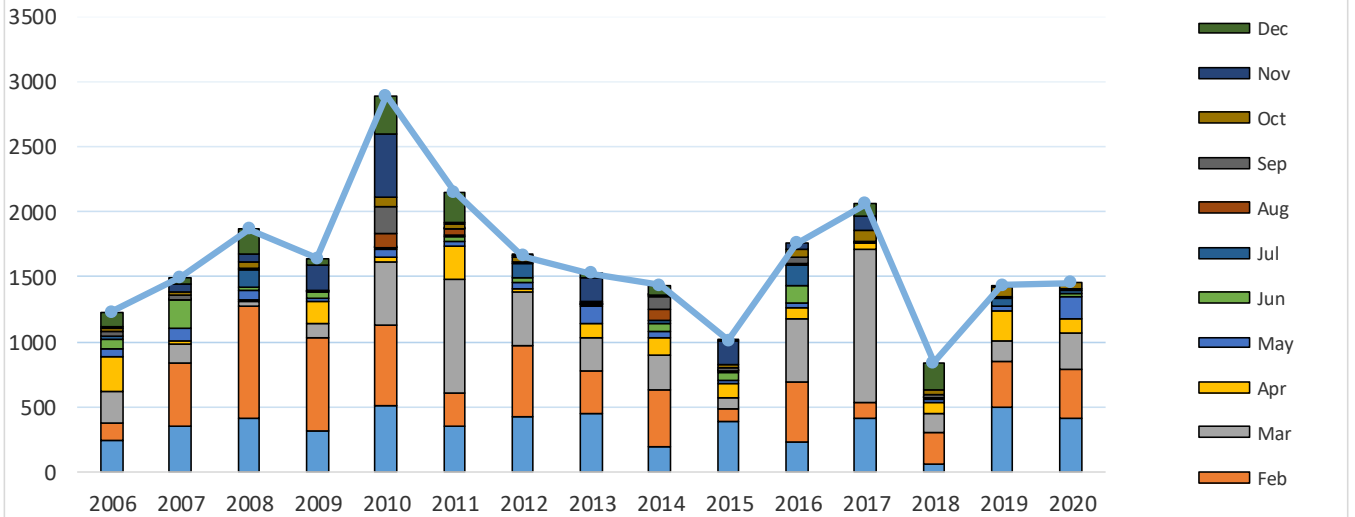
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What SLCMA Membership does for you !

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!

When do you go at red and stop at green?
 When your eating watermelon.

What type of tree fits in the palm of your hand?
 A palm tree.

What happens if it rains cats and dogs?
 You need to watch for poodles.

What does Alexandra the Great and Whinnie the Poo have in common?
 The same middle name.



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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. Thankyou to those who have donated your containers, so far we have raised **\$117.30** — Thankyou :)



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