



Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

February 2013

Save the Date! Friday 15 March

Want to find out more about what PCL does? Come to our General Meeting on Friday 15 March, further details in the March newsletter

Projects a Plenty

We are now in the second month of 2013 and things are already steaming ahead. Along with a number of projects continuing from last year to keep us busy we will be adding three new projects with the success of PCL, Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association and Whitsunday Catchment Landcare in their applications to the Queensland Government's Everyone's Environment Grant.

For these projects we will be working in collaboration with SLCMA, WCL and Reef Catchments, and other stakeholders, community members, groups and schools to undertake restoration works in coastal and riparian areas.

Working with our sister Landcare groups we will be returning to an old site, rehabilitating a stretch of coastal vegetation along Far Beach. Removal of weeds and establishing new vegetation to stabilise dunes and add habitat being the goal.

PCL will continue to work with the Marian Community Group along the Pioneer River at Marian, improving the health of the riparian zone.

And last of all, we will be teaming up with Reef Catchments and the Pioneer River Improvement Trust to work with private landholders at Owen's Creek to undertake stabilisation works. This will include the installation of an Engineered Log Jam to reduce erosion and mass wasting, only the second to be installed in the region.

Full steam ahead!



*Members of the Marian Community Group get their hands dirty
Image: M. Lane*

PCL has worked closely with the Marian Community Group, community volunteers and MRC undertaking Stage 1 of the restoration works along the Pioneer River at Marian and Stage 2 is underway.

With the Everyone's Environment Grant we look forward to starting on Stage 3, helping the Marian Community Group to move further ahead in their goals to return the riverbank to a valuable community asset with the removal of weeds and revegetation with local natives.

How far we have come... below is an image of the start of weed control at Stage 1



*Marian Riverbank
Image: D. Milburn*

Welcome! New Members, Returning Members and our Management Committee

PCL is a community organisation, and in order to continue the great works we do we need a community, and we have one!

We would like to welcome all new members for 2013, and a 'welcome back' to returning members. We have a great diversity of members that makes PCL what it is, from community members, agricultural landholders, environmental workers, students...the list goes on. Membership is free and we encourage our readers to sign up.

Our Management Committee has continued to guide us this past year and will do so into the new.

A big thank you to those members who stepped down during 2012, Mr Bruce Miles, Cr Wendy Cameron, Cr Ross Walker, and long time MC member, Dr Joan Fitzsimmons—thank you to all of you for all the great work you did in furthering PCL.

A big welcome to those stepping up to the role, Cr Theresa Morgan representing Organisation Member for Mackay Regional Council and Mr John Atkinson.

Last, but certainly not least, to those returning for yet another year Mrs Margaret Lane (Chair), Mr David Hunter (Deputy Chairman), Ms Wendy Eiteneuer (Secretary), Ms Dianne Williams (Treasurer), Ms Irene Champion and Ms Di Salau, welcome back and thank-you! We look forward to another year.

Want to get involved? Or just want some advice?

If you are interested in volunteering, want to get a bit of advice on managing your property, helping the natural environment or are simply after a bit of information, contact us and we will do our best to help out
admin@pioneercatchment.org.au, 4944 1979, www.pioneercatchment.org.au

Wet Season?

With the wet season making a late arrival this year water restrictions are still in place for most of Mackay and surrounding areas, do your part to conserve this valuable resource by adhering to and staying up to date with water restrictions. Most of the Mackay Region is currently on Level 1 or 2 water restrictions. To see where you are and to stay up to date go to;

http://mackay.qld.gov.au/water_services/water_restrictions

Weed of the month

Opuntia spp.

Prickly Pear

Description: 'Prickly Pear' is a name used to describe a number of members of the cactus family, based on the prickly fruits. They are 'leafless' (leaves being modified into spines) and form large shrubs comprised of modified stems which are divided into a series of flat, soft pads and stronger 'joining' sections.

'Leaves': as with all cacti the leaves are actually the spines. Young plants have true leaves (small scale like) which fall off as the plant matures. The 'leaves' are large, flat, fleshy pads to 700mm, and have regularly spaced spines across them.

Flowers and fruit: large flowers, yellow, orange, pink, red, purple or white depending on species. Fruits form terminally on the pads and are typically red-orange-yellow in colour. Fleshy and bearing areoles (clusters of small spines) to 150mm they bear many seeds.

Habitat: found in many habitats, though tend to thrive in 'harsher' environments, and are most commonly found in coastal regions.

Origin: the Americas

The problem: Class 1 and 2 pest species (dependent on species). Very resilient, being a succulent they can tolerate drought, and their spiny nature detours grazing. Can produce vegetatively from fallen pads and joints and their seeds are spread by a variety of animals.

Where in our region: Prickly Pears are largely found along our coastal regions, occurring at many of our popular beaches. They have even been observed invading mangroves, so are obviously salt tolerant.

What you can do: biological agents are used in the control of Prickly Pears, *Cactoblastis* moths lay their eggs on the cacti (species specific) and the larvae eat out the contents of the pads. Small plants may be hand pulled, and larger plants can be removed by cutting and digging. Though care to remove all pieces must be taken with follow-up monitoring essential.



Ipomoea pes-caprae

Goat's Foot Convolvulus

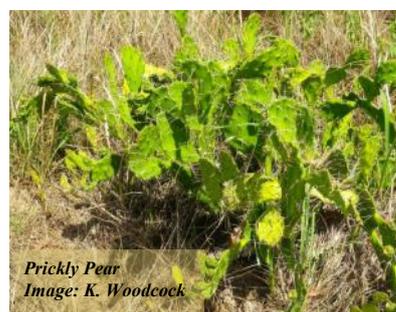
Description: prostrate, spreading, herbaceous perennial with trailing vines to 8m, which when damaged exude a milky sap. Roots and lateral branches are produced at nodes along the vines length.



Leaves: roughly oval-shaped, 30-140mm long, with a notch in tip giving a 2-lobed effect, producing the 'goat foot' shape of the plants name.

Flowers and fruit: attractive bell-shaped pink-purple flowers, 30-70mm long, borne on long stalks. Stalks may be branched and bear several flowers which are present in spring and summer.

Forms a globular seed capsule which is brown externally and white inside (which can be seen when open). Seed capsules contain up to four seeds. Seeds are 7mm in diameter, round and covered in minute brown hairs



Habitat: highly salt-tolerant coastal plant widely spread along the QLD coastline. Important as a primary sand stabiliser species often as the first coloniser. Most often found on the seaward side of the fore dune.

Origin: found across northern the QLD coast and northern NSW as well as other countries along the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic ocean

coastlines.

Propagation: easily grown from seed or direct planting of runners, may be seeded and planted directly to site. Grows well in sandy soils.

This plant is currently being grown in the Pioneer Community Nursery for use in coastal projects.

Sources: Weeds of National Significance website, Plants of Capricornia

What is Land for Wildlife?

Land for Wildlife is a voluntary program which aims to encourage and assist landholders to provide habitat for wildlife on their property. Properties in the program can be devoted to habitat protection or be managed for other purposes, such as farming and agriculture, whilst incorporating nature conservation.

The retention of habitat for native wildlife can play a major role in sustainable land management. It can provide a natural means of pest control, help with erosion and salinity management and provide shade and shelter for livestock. Whilst National Parks and other reserves protect natural areas, they only cover four per cent of Queensland.

The protection of habitat on private land plays a critical role in helping maintain the survival of our native plants and animals. It also contributes to providing habitat links between isolated pockets of vegetation or nature reserves.

Why join?

Receive a property visit and a Conservation Management Plan with advice on:

- How wildlife habitat can be integrated with other uses on private land, to benefit both the landowner



Image: C Bartron

and wildlife

- Management and protection of habitat areas
- Weed control
- Incentives and assistance available to landowners

Property assessments are a key component of Land for Wildlife. Individual property assessments provide landholders with personalised advice, feedback, support and encouragement.

Land for Wildlife also provides contact with like-minded landowners and offers a chance to share ideas and experiences through field days, workshops and other activities. Regular newsletters are also provided, covering a wide variety of topics, including flora and fauna, weed control, pest animals, habitat management and revegetation. A Land for Wildlife sign is provided free of charge to registered landholders to acknowledge their contribution to wildlife conservation.

Land for Wildlife in the Mackay Region is sponsored by the Mackay Regional Council through the Natural Environment Levy.

Think you may be eligible and interested in becoming a Land for Wildlife property? Contact PCL for more information!



The Environments 'Champion'

Our Management Committee is full of members dedicated to the environment, and on Australia Day long-time member Irene Champion became the inaugural winner of the Australia Day Environmental Achievement Award. Given by the Mackay Regional Council, this award recognises Irene's role in conserving Mackay's flora.



Over the past 35 years Irene has dedicated herself to helping the environment. As well as PCL Irene is an integral part of the SGAP Mackay branch and the Friends of the Botanic Gardens. Irene's local plant knowledge has led to her contributing over 2000 flora species to the Queensland Herbarium, and it is only fitting that she has had species named after her (*Actephila championiae* and *Myrsine ireneae*). Irene has made sure her vast knowledge is passed on to others

several books including 'One Hundred and One Trees of Mackay'.

Irene has made a significant contribution to PCL over many years, providing advice and guidance on local native species: identifying them; how to grow them; where to plant them. Her contribution has extended to making available information on weeds, as well as native plants. On behalf of PCL she was significantly responsible for the booklet 'Are Your Garden Plants Gong Bush?' She also made a huge contribution to the production of a book about local weeds – to be

published by Mackay Regional Pest Management Group this year. Recently Irene has helped us to get our community nursery up and running again, particularly by reviewing and organising the seed bank.



Irene sorting seeds for the PCL nursery
Image: M. Lane

Who's who in Pioneer Catchment & Landcare

Management Committee

Chair Margaret Lane (SGAP—Mackay Branch)

Deputy Chair Dave Hunter

Treasurer Dianne Williams

Secretary (Non voting) Wendy Eiteneuer

Committee Members

Irene Champion

Di Salau

Cr Theresa Morgan

John Atkinson

Pioneer Catchment office

4944 1979

www.pioneercatchment.org.au

Pioneer Catchment Landcare Facilitator

Claire Bartron

0419 778 402

claire.bartron@reefcatchments.com.au

Project Manager watch this space...

Office Manager Wendy Eiteneuer

0427 543 509

admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Supported by:



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News February 2013

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

If unable to be delivered please return to

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare

Group Inc.

P0 Box 1076

MACKAY Qld 4740

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

Thursday 7 February, 7.30pm start—SGAP 34th AGM, Mackay Gem and Craft Society Hall, Leisure Court, General Meeting follows including slideshows of 2012 events

Friday 8 February, 6.30pm—8.30pm—Mackay Conservation Group screening of 'Planet Ocean', Cook Theatre, CQUni., RSVP 8th Feb by 12pm, mcgmail@bigpond.com, 4953 0808

MARCH

Sunday 3 March, 6.15am—BirdLife Mackay outing, Tedlands Wetlands, meet at tourist information centre Nebo Rd, contact 49522964 or 0488315757

Sunday 9 March, from 8am - Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee, contact Jim McNichol, 4942 8802

Wednesday 13 March, 8.30am-5pm—Reef Rescue Grazing Forum, Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre, RSVP 6th March, 4968 4200

Thursday 14 March, 9am-10.30pm—Dung Beetle Paddock Walk, Sarina (location TBC), Contact Saskia von Fahland to register your interest, 4956 1388, slcmasaskia@mcs.net.au

Check our website for more events and updates!
www.pioneercatchment.org.au

**Are you on facebook? So are we! Search for
'Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc.'**

'Like' us to get updates and links to environmental news

Did you know...

The Genus that the five species of Australia's Black-Cockatoos belong to, '*Calyptorhynchus*', means 'hidden bill' ? This is in reference to the way they fan the feathers on their cheeks forward when at rest.

