



Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

March 2013

**PCL General Meeting, Friday 15 March, 10am–12 midday
Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, Meeting Room (near the Café)**

Guest speakers—Ahri Tallon from Communities Protecting our Region, and Carolyn Thompson from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, plus hear about our current projects

RSVP Monday 11 March, admin@pioneercatchment.org.au, 4944 1979

Welcome Kate

Kate Steel started with PCL on 18 February as our Project Manager. Kate comes to us from Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority where she worked on the Reef Guardian Farmer and Grazier Program in Mackay Whitsunday. Her experience as Land for Wildlife officer in Western Queensland will be put to good use as she delivers that program in our catchments.

Kate will also be involved with a number of rehabilitation and revegetation projects, both coastal and riparian. In fact, Kate will be very busy! On behalf of all our members and stakeholders, I am very happy to welcome Kate and I hope she enjoys her time with us.

Margaret Lane, Chair



*Welcome Kate!
Image: M. Kemmerer*

Introducing The Doctor *Kate Steel*

Hi, I am pleased to bring a strong background in community-based natural resources management to the Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group. I enjoyed working with Landcare and Catchment groups in the Queensland Murray Darling Basin for over seven years as a Biodiversity Officer working out of Goondiwindi, Roma and Toowoomba. During this time I delivered amongst many things, sub-catchment planning workshops with hundreds of landholders, initiated ecological surveys on properties and delivered the Land for Wildlife program across the region.

More recently I was program manager with the GBRMPA, establishing the Reef Guardian stewardship recognition program for farmers and graziers in the Great Barrier Reef Catchments. My interest is in voluntary conservation efforts, believing that real change in the health and sustainability of our living systems can be gained when people find their own physical, emotional and spiritual connections to the earth and seas.

This theme was a motivating reason to complete a doctorate in cultural geography, where I studied the relationships between people and landscape and the shaping of culture, in south western Queensland.

A highlight for me working in the Landcare network was participating in a cross-cultural Landcare project in southern Sri Lanka after the 2005 tsunami. We worked within the cultural values of a rural community to assist local family groups rebuild economic opportunities around the world heritage wetland areas of southern Sri Lanka after complete devastation. The experience showed me that the Landcare ethic is universal, and it is about local people doing what they can with their resources locally to make a greater difference together.

Sea change for Claire

The past 12 months with PCL have been busy (hectic) with a (very) steep learning curve. I have enjoyed learning about the landscape of the Mackay Region over the past 12 months, it's processes, plants and animals, however my time with PCL has come to an end and I will be leaving my current role to get closer to my Marine Science background, working with Reef Catchments on their Coastal Programme (so I won't be going far).

I look forward to continuing to work with PCL staff and the Management Committee in my new role. I know that Kate will hit the ground running to further the many projects we currently have underway, as well as our programmes and work in assisting the community. Kate will soon be joined by the new Regional Landcare Facilitator for the Pioneer Catchment and together they will take PCL forward.

A big thank-you to Margaret, Di Salau, the rest of the Management Committee and Wendy (and Dallas), for all the help and guidance they have given me during my time with PCL.

Community Landcare Grants

Closes 20th March www.nrm.gov.au or call 1800 552 008

Coles Junior Landcare Garden Grants

Round 2 now open! Closes Friday 10th May www.juniorlandcare.com.au/grants

Weed of the month

Psidium guajava

Yellow Guava

Description: small tree to 10m, spreading branches and copper coloured bark which flakes to reveal a pale green layer.

Leaves: wide and oblong in shape with deep veins, 70-150mm long and 30-50mm wide. Dark green leathery upper with a downy underside. When crushed the leaves are aromatic.

Flowers and fruit: creamy white flowers, with five petals and numerous, prominent stamens.

When ripe fruits are near spherical with yellow skin and pinkish-red flesh, typically between 50-100mm in size.

Currently fruiting in the Mackay Region

Origin: tropical Americas

The problem: known to form dense stands to the exclusion of native species. Seeds are easily spread by birds, native mammals, livestock and people through their highly palatable fruits which are commercially used in jams and juices.

Guava can be difficult to kill and readily suckers. It is also a known host for the papaya fruit fly in North QLD.

Where in our region: commonly found along roadsides and water courses. With Yellow Guavas currently in fruit it is a good time to identify them on your property. Removing fruit can help reduce the spread.

What you can do: Guavas can be difficult to control, being able to sucker from their roots away from the parent plant and re-shooting from cut stems if they aren't treated. Current treatment involves basal bark and root scraping then treating with a mixture of herbicides with the active ingredients of triclopyr and picloram with diesel. Repeated treatments may be required.



Plant of the month

Stenocarpus sinuatus

Wheel of Fire Tree

Description: tall, slender rainforest tree, to 20m. When grown in a sunny garden it reaches 6-10m with a canopy spread of 2-3m. Its bright red flowers against glossy green leaves makes it a very attractive tree.

Leaves: glossy, dark green, simple, lobed or entire with undulate margins, 400mm long to 150mm wide.

Flowers and fruit: flowers bright to deep red in colour arranged in wheel-shaped umbels from which they get their name. Umbels are borne from the leaf-axils from the branches. Flowering from spring into summer.

Fruits mature in summer to autumn to a green to brown densely haired woody follicle up to 100mm by 20mm containing flattened, winged seeds.

Habitat: locally occurs in rainforest, usually above 600m in altitude. They can be found in Finch Hatton Gorge at the 'Wheel of Fire' (named for the plant).

Origin: occurs from northern NSW to the Daintree in QLD along the eastern coast

Propagation: easily grown from seed and from cuttings, tends to do quite well in a garden setting though it can be slow growing for the first two to three years. Trees may take a number of years to mature and flower. Grows best in rich soils with good drainage.

This plant is currently being grown in the Pioneer Community Nursery

Sources: Weeds of National Significance website, DAFF fact sheet, SGAP Qld Website, PCL Factsheet

It's a dirty job, but some one has to do it...

Dung beetles have a dirty job, but one that can greatly improve soil, pasture and waterway health. By burying the dung of livestock dung beetles rapidly bring nutrients into the root zone, providing a natural fertiliser for pasture grasses, improving pasture and reducing the need for chemical fertilisers. Through removing the dung pad the beetles reduce paddock fouling and the runoff of nutrients and pathogens into dams and waterways. It also removes potential breeding grounds for flies, which means fewer flies to bother you and your stock (also reducing disease spread).

By tunnelling down into the soil profile the dung beetle aerates the soil, and the organic matter from the dung makes for a richer, healthier soil, which together with the tunnelling action means increased water infiltration. It also makes it easier for plant roots to



Image: Landcare Australia

*Dung Beetles and doggy doo...
Whilst a number of species will make use of your dogs waste dogs alone do not produce enough waste to sustain a dung beetle colony.*

Picture a cow pat in comparison to your average dogs dropping, a cow will produce around ten to 12 pats of as much as a litre of waste each, now that's a feast for a dung beetle!

penetrate, improving plant growth and the binding of soil.

Free Dung Beetle Paddock Walk

Do you want to learn more about dung beetles and if they may be suitable for your property? Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association (SLCMA) is holding a free paddock walk with expert Mr John Feehan.

Thursday 14 March, 9-10.30am

RSVP by Wednesday 13 March.

To find out more and to register contact:

**Regional Landcare Facilitator
Saskia von Fahland
slcmaskia@mcs.net.au
or 4956 1388**

This workshop is supported by funding from SLCMA, Reef Catchments and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as part of the Regional Landcare Facilitator Program through the Australian Government's Caring for our Country



Where does marine debris go in the Whitsundays?

This is a question that Eco Barge Clean Seas and CQ University are trying to find the answer to. In a new study 'drift cards' are being released from specific points into the ocean, each card is individually numbered so that when they wash ashore Eco Barge and CQU can match them to their release site to determine their pattern of dispersal. This study will help CQU and Eco Barge better understand the movement of marine debris through the region. Beach goers and fishers are encouraged to keep an eye out for these drift cards along the coastline, but are asked not to touch them until they wash up on shore as removing them from the ocean will impact upon the success of the study. If they are seen washed up on the shore people are asked to record the number and location to CQU by following the directions on the cards. Your help can help us clean-up our regions beaches.

www.ecobargecleanseas.org

Coastcare in the Mackay Region Kerri Woodcock



Coastcare
in the
Mackay Region



Coastcare kids at Bucasia planting bee
Image: C. Bartron

The autumn calendar of Coastcare activities is now available. Volunteer activities planned for March to May include dune planting, weeding and beach clean ups across 14 of our beaches.

In 2013 the volunteer program sees a name change from 'Coastal Community Activities' to 'Coastcare'. Coastcare is an Australia-wide community of volunteers who care for their coast. A major element of the Coasts and Communities program is to work with coastal

communities to identify local environmental problems and achieve practical solutions.

The work of Coastcare volunteers complements the full suite of on-ground activities that are occurring across Mackay Regional Council's 23 coastal residential communities from Midge Point in the north, to Armstrong Beach in the South.

To volunteer at Coastcare events in 2013, or subscribe to emails to find out what projects are happening on our coast,

**Contact Kerri Woodcock,
kerri.woodcock@reefcatchments.com or 4968 4207**

**Or view the calendar on Reef Catchments website
at www.reefcatchments.com.au**

Coasts and Communities is a joint initiative of Mackay Regional Council and Reef Catchments with support from Mackay Regional Council's Natural Environment Levy and the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country initiative.

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

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Project Manager

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Office Manager

Wendy Eiteneuer

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admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Supported by:



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY

Upcoming Events

MARCH

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

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

Saturday 18, Coastcare Activities

8am-11am - Bucasia - Meet at the beach access track, accessed via easement alongside 172 Waverley St, Bucasia

3pm-5pm - Eimeo - Meet at the end of Graham Crescent,

contact Kerri Woodcock, kerri.woodcock@reefcatchments.com, 0488 765 106

Saturday 23, 9.30am-12 noon - Friends of the Botanic Gardens planting bee, Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, meet at the Meadowlands Ampitheatre. Wear covered shoes, morning tea provided, contact the Botanic Gardens, 4952 7300

APRIL

Sunday 5, 6.15am - BirdLife Mackay outing, Berri Werri Rd, Gargett, meet at tourist information centre Nebo Rd, contact 4952 2964

Thursday 4, 7.30pm start - SGAP General Meeting, *Common Reptiles and Amphibians Found in Your Garden* - Paul Horner, Mackay Gem and Craft Society Hall, Leisure Court

Check our website for more events and updates!

A Farleigh cane farm will be the meeting site next week (March 15) to start a new Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority funded project aimed at recognising the positive actions being taken by farmers, councils and schools working in the Mackay Jane's Creek and Gooseponds catchment.

The Reef Guardian's Gooseponds Community Project, initiated by Canegrowers Mackay, will start in the Jane's Creek sub-catchment with local cane farmers, GBRMPA, Glenella State School and PCL. In addition Mackay Regional Council will be working on repairing a fish way structure in the Gooseponds parklands. We will provide Landcare support to the project and we encourage all of the community to be proactively involved in stewardship of Jane's Creek and the Gooseponds



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