

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

February 2023

Interesting Finds

Tangaroa Blue Litter
Monitoring Project

Bail out the Bees Project Update

Slade Point State School

PLUS

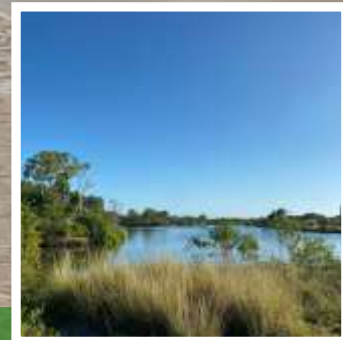
Keep up to date with PCL's
recent and upcoming
events!



Plant of the Month -
Lemon Scented Myrtle



Pest Spotting -
Indian Myna



Land for Wildlife:
How to get involved



PIONEER
Catchment
LANDCARE

Our Mission

To implement an integrated, science-based approach to natural resource management through supportive partnerships across our catchment

Interesting Finds—Tangaroa Blue Litter Monitoring Project

Gathering data on the types of rubbish polluting our waterways and beaches, is important to understand the behaviours that drive people to litter in the first place. With this knowledge, the government can develop policy and programs to address these issues and try to encourage behavioural change. The following images show some interesting finds collected throughout our recent litter monitoring and clean up days. Take a look and see if you can understand why these items may have ended up in our environment.



Above: Lawn mower and metal.
Below: Cigarette butts and overflowing cigarette bin.



Above: Piece of boat sponson. **Below (left to right):** Light bulb, party supplies.



Above: Bean bag at Harbour Beach, Mackay.



Above: Clean up volunteer holding street sign found along a creek.

Far Left: Vape. **Left:** Used syringes.

Bail out the Bees Project Update: Slade Point State School

In the latest update to the Bail out the Bees project funded by Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal and BMA, one of the hand crafted bee hotels that were lovingly assembled by residents at Nanyima Aged Care as a part of a workshop held in November, has now been installed at Slade Point State School. One of the residents at Nanyima Aged Care, Heather, assisted with with the assembling of this particular bee hotel, placing bee habitat inside the hexagonal frame on the day of the workshop.

The students collected flowers and put them in the hotels to attract bees. The hotel was then installed in the school's indigenous garden. Staff and students "absolutely loved it". Bee hotels from this project have now been installed in a number of locations around Mackay, including PCL's Gardens for Wildlife display garden, Wetlands Walkabout, Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, Nanyima Aged Care, Slade Point State School, Bee Creative, Mackay Natural Environment Centre, PCL landholder, West Mackay Community Gardens and Slade Point Community Gardens. This project continues to exemplify the far reaching positive environmental and social impact that community projects can have. Keep up to date with Bail out the Bees project updates on our [website](#), where you can also find instructions on how to make your very own durable bee hotel.



Slade Point State School students with their new native bee hotel installed in the school's indigenous garden.



MNEC Volunteer Christmas Party 2022

We love to celebrate our volunteers! Below is a quick snap of our volunteer Christmas Party with Mackay Regional Council's Mackay Natural Environment Centre Team. Thanks for another great year!



Lemon Scented Myrtle**Family: Myrtaceae**

Backhousia citriodora is a medium to tall tree with fragrant foliage. It is endemic to sub-tropical rainforests and dry vine forests on the east coast of Queensland. The Whitsunday population are canopy trees that when flowering, can be easily identified from the air. The flowers are great for attracting bees and birds and the leaves have numerous culinary uses. There are commercial Lemon Myrtle farms that produce a range of items including health-care products made using the oils from the leaves.

Leaves: Opposite, simple, dark green, oval shaped with a pointed apex, 35-150 x 10-50mm, usually with minutely toothed margins; new growth is reddish in colour and like the undersides of leaves, may be hairy; oil dots are numerous giving crushed leaves a strong lemon-scent.

Flowers: Numerous, perfumed, white or cream, borne on very showy axillary sprays. Each flower is 5-7mm in diameter with 5 petals, numerous fluffy stamens and a green calyx with 5 persistent spreading lobes. Flowering occurs in Spring and Summer.

Fruit: A brown samara around 8mm in diameter including the calyx lobes, containing many small seeds that are usually retained until the whole fruit falls from tree. A *Samara* is a winged dry fruit that does not split open at maturity.

Growing Notes: Prefers part shade with rich soils. Young growth susceptible to frost. Propagation is relatively easy from cuttings. Regular pruning can maintain a nice shrub or hedge for your garden.

Sources: <https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/gnp14/backhousia-citriodora.html>. Cooper & Cooper (2004) *Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest*.

**Pest Spotting***Acridotheres tristis***Indian Myna, Common Myna****Family: Sturnidae**

Acridotheres tristis is a highly adaptable omnivorous bird native to South Asia, however, it has established populations in many other tropical regions of the world. It was introduced in the 1860's for the control of insects. The IUCN classes the Indian or Common Myna as one of the 100 world's worst invasive species. It has the ability to thrive in many different environments as a scavenger with aggressive behavioural tendencies during the breeding season. The Indian Myna is known to feed on the eggs and young of native birds and take over nesting sites such as tree hollows from native species. The Indian Myna populations are continuing to expand in urban and rural landscapes across Eastern and Southeastern Australia.

Description: 22-27cm in length with brown body, dark brown to black head, yellow bill and bare yellow skin beneath and behind eyes. Dark wings with white patches visible in flight, black tail tipped with white and long yellow legs. Male, female and immature birds similar in morphology; male birds are slightly larger in size.

Forages mostly on the ground and has a distinctive walk or strut. Noisy and produces loud calls including scolding and chattering. Calls and chattering continue late into the night and begin before dawn.

Control: Some specific actions to limit numbers of Indian Myna's include:

- ◆ Plant native trees and shrubs to improve habitat on your property and to attract a greater diversity of native birds
- ◆ Not feeding Indian Mynas and minimising access to food sources such as scraps and pet food
- ◆ Blocking any potential entry points to your roof and eaves where Indian Mynas may nest
- ◆ Installing nest boxes with a backwards-facing entry, to support native hollow-dependent fauna and exclude Indian Mynas



Sources: <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/birds/common-myna-animal-pest-alert?page=0%2C0>. Image: ABC Science

Upcoming Community Events

February

Thurs 2 - Native Plants Queensland (Mackay Branch) meeting 7:30pm at Mackay Regional Botanic gardens meeting room

Sun 5 - PlatypusWatch Walk and Talk with Wildlife Queensland, Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, meeting at the front of Lagoons Meeting Room, 8am to 9am (booking required)

Tues 7 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 14 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Sat 18 - Conservation Volunteers Australia National Day of Action, Bucasia Beach, Bucasia Esplanade, 2pm to 5pm.

Tues 21 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 28 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

March

Thurs 2 - Native Plants Queensland (Mackay Branch) meeting 7:30pm at Mackay Regional Botanic gardens meeting room

Tues 7 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 14 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 21 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 28 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.



**PCL'S ID:
C10041933**

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Keen to volunteer with PCL? We are looking for new volunteers keen to get involved in Landcare planting activities at beautiful locations! Come join us! Contact projectofficer@pioneercatchment.org.au for more information.

There are no longer restrictions in place for new volunteers for propagating activities at the MNEC nursery. Existing and new volunteers are welcome.

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc.

Executive

Chair | Sharon Dwyer

Deputy Chair | Judith Wake

Secretary | Fran Mann

Treasurer | Claire Stribbles

Committee Members

Earl Neilsen

Paul Tippett

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Have you considered whether your property could be eligible for Land for Wildlife? Land for Wildlife is a free, voluntary program that encourages and assists landholders to provide habitat for wildlife on their properties. When you apply for Land for Wildlife, you will be visited by qualified officer who can offer you Landcare advice. Registered landholders are also eligible to receive 20 free native plants per financial year from the Mackay Natural Environment Centre. Contact us at the PCL Office for assistance with your free native plants or attend one of MRC's Free Native Plant Program open days, located at 6 Swayne Street, North Mackay. The next open days will be on the 21st and 22nd of April. For more information, go to the [Mackay Regional Council website](http://www.pioneercatchment.org.au).

OUR VISION:

To empower our community to build biodiverse ecosystems

OUR MISSION:

To implement an integrated, science-based approach to natural resource management through supportive partnerships across our catchment.

VALUES:

- We are innovative, and driven by action at a grassroots level ◦
- Ethical ◦ Engaged ◦ Passionate ◦