

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

July 2023

Project Update

Tangaroa Blue Beach and Estuary Clean Ups

Landholder Story

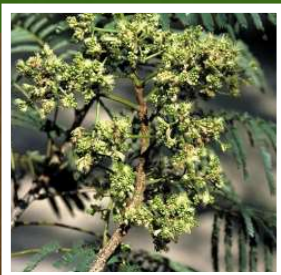
Cane Paddock to Koala Oasis

Native Species Talk

At Mirani State School



Plant of the Month -
Mackay Cedar



Pest Spotting -
Poinciana



Welcome -
Donna Jackson



DES Writing
Workshop



Our Mission

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

Mirani State School native species talk and planting day

To celebrate Under 8's Week at Mirani State School, PCL officers attended the school to share information about local native plants and animals. This event on Monday 15th May was followed by a planting event on Friday 19th May. PCL Officers held an interactive presentation with several groups of 35-40 students from Prep to Year 4, allowing the children to feel and smell the different exhibits, which included the following native plants and animals, many of which are also edible or have other traditional uses:

- River Mint
- Lemon Myrtle
- Soap Ash
- Bottlebrush
- Dianella berries
- Yabbies
- Mangrove Mussels
- Grubs
- Cat's-eye Snail

The planting day was a success with 40 native species planted at the school with the help of some enthusiastic students who weren't afraid to get their hands dirty.



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 ◦

Landholder Story: Cane paddock to koala oasis

What was once an empty cane field near Teemburra Dam will soon become regenerated bushland full of Koala fodder trees, due to a passionate landholder's involvement with the Reef Assist Program, a successful project run in partnership with Reef Catchments and funded by the Queensland Government.

As a part of the Reef Assist Program, PCL Officers engaged with a landholder located adjacent to Teemburra Dam in Pinnacle, who wanted to restore a patch of land that had been previously used for sugar cane crops. The landholder aimed to improve the water quality of the adjoining creek and repair damage from cane farming, reducing the impact of existing soil and water pollutants.

As surrounding bushland is known to contain koala populations, the landholder also sought to create koala habitat at this site by planting koala fodder trees such as *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and *Eucalyptus grandis*. As PCL officers were conducting a planting day at the site, they witnessed a koala crossing the road which seemed a positive omen.

A challenge with this site had been vandalism caused by people entering the area as it is located next to the access road to Teemburra Dam. To address this issue, PCL paid for and installed 3 signs along the roadside to promote awareness of koala rehabilitation areas with the idea that a photo of a cute koala might deter people from damaging the property.

We are looking forward to watching this site become a safe haven for koalas in the future.



Welcome to the team: Senior Project Officer Donna Jackson



Donna Jackson recently joined the PCL team, becoming our new Senior Project Officer. She moved to Australia 18 years ago, coming for a holiday and decided not to leave.

She worked on stations, mustering and fencing in western Queensland for 3 years before finding work in local government in Barcoo Shire. Donna moved to Mackay in 2010 from Jundah and has also worked in Isaac and Whitsunday Regions.

Donna has 15 years experience working in Queensland local government in Parks and Gardens roles including 3 years as the Coordinator of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens.

Her career has had a focus on native plants, their promotion for use in the home garden, and the importance of using natives to boost habitat and food plants for native fauna in urban and peri-urban areas.

Donna has a passion for conservation, preservation and improvement of the natural environment while being sensitive to landholders and other land users' needs.

Welcome to the team Donna!

Tangaroa Blue Beach and Estuary Clean Ups

With our Tangaroa Blue Litter monitoring Project coming to its conclusion, PCL officers conducted the last few clean up days as a part of the project, removing another 25kg of rubbish from the Pioneer River and Mackay Harbour Beach. On May 24th, 3.9kg of rubbish was collected and sorted at the Pioneer River transects at Cullen Island and Matsuura Drive with the usual amount and assortment of litter items collected. However, on Thursday 8th June at Mackay Harbour Beach, a large amount of litter was collected, The 21.2kg of waste collected included 136 plastic lids and bottle caps within 400m. It is hoped that an outcome of this litter monitoring project will be the insights gained into the major causes and behaviours leading to litter pollution in our local environment so that future projects can be designed to



DES Writing Workshop: enhancing interest in our projects

PCL Officers, Donna and Nancy, attended a workshop on “case studies and other workplace writing”, facilitated by the Department of Environment and Science (DES). The full day course led by professional writer Judy Gregory covered diverse topics including “what good writing looks like”, “what a good case study looks like”, and “how to capture readers’ attention”. Being able to discuss these topics with other professionals in similar industries, such as Reef Catchments and Canegrowers Mackay, led to sharing of combined knowledge and experience.

The learning achieved through the day focused on how to grab attention, how to add a catchy subheading containing enough information about our projects or events, how much detail to include and where to include it. For our case studies and reports, the workshop made it clear that the most important things are to have a good use of pictures on the front page, have an unforgettable heading, and have the content of the project obvious in the first two or three lines.

Many of the participants shared issues of knowing that the case studies and reports they wrote were never fully read, which shows the importance of presenting the information about the project and what it has achieved in the first couple of sentences, with the details following.



Image: Stocksy

The value that courses such as this bring to our organisation has many aspects, developing a clearer writing style, the ability to grab attention in a world where we are overwhelmed with information, and keeping our content informative and easy to read.

Mackay Cedar

Family: Leguminosae (Caesalpinioideae)

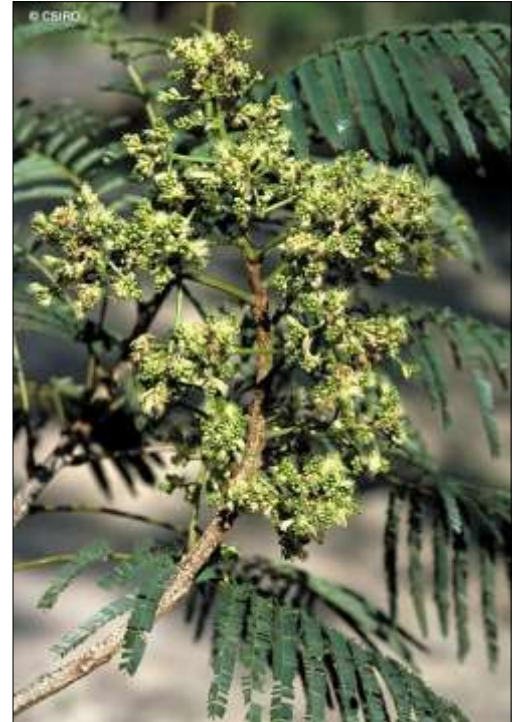
Falcataria toona is a deciduous tree with a broad spreading canopy of dark green ferny foliage, endemic to tropical Queensland rainforests and may extend to New Guinea. It can grow up to 24m and produces a decorative timber.

Leaves: Bipinnate, 5-22 pairs of pinnae with a gland between many pairs, leaflets numerous, opposite, narrow, about 3-9mm long. A fairly large, raised gland normally visible on the upper surface of the compound leaf petiole about 5-20mm from the twig. Similar, but smaller, glands are sometimes visible at the point of attachment of the secondary axes. Drops leaves between September and October.

Flowers: Five cream to greenish petals fuse to form 4.5mm long tube with 1.5-2mm lobes. Flowers without a stalk, smooth and hairless on the outer surface. Staminal filaments about 5-10mm long, forming a tube in the lower half, but free in the upper half. Flowering may occur in August but is irregular.

Seeds: Flat pods about 100-130 by 20-25mm containing flat seeds about 9 by 7mm, produced irregularly.

Sources: https://apps.lucidcentral.org/rainforest/text/entities/falcataria_toona.htm. Image: CSIRO



Pest Spotting

Delonix regia

Poinciana

Family: Leguminosae (Caesalpinioideae)

Delonix regia is a deciduous, spreading tree that grows up to 12m with horizontal branches, forming a broad dome-shaped canopy. It can be buttressed and has a strong root system. It is native to Madagascar and has been widely planted as an ornamental shade tree in streets, parks and gardens.

Leaves and stems: Alternate, fern-like bipinnate, 300-500mm long with 10-25 pairs of pinnae, each with 10-32 pairs of elliptical leaflets, 2-5 by 4-12mm, light green and minutely hairy on both surfaces.

Flowers: Large, somewhat orchid-like, 5 sub-equal petals, bright orange to deep red or with some petals, especially the upper long one, white or yellow and blotched with red. Flowering usually begins while trees are in the deciduous phase, in November and December.

Fruit: Persistent flat woody pods, 200-500 by 35-55mm, containing 20-40 dark brown or black seeds, 17-20mm long.

Spread by: Local dispersal of seeds, pods distributed by floodwaters, garden waste and contaminated mulch. Invades coastal communities especially close to previous or present human habitation.

Sources: *Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region: Second Edition, Mackay Regional Pest Management Group*. Image: Guild Garden Centre



Upcoming Community Events

July

Tues 4 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Thurs 6 - Native Plants Queensland (Mackay Branch) meeting 7:30pm at Mackay Regional Botanic gardens meeting room.

Sat 8 - Birdlife Mackay Outing, Wetlands Walkabout, Meet at the Carpark of Wetlands Walkabout at 7am, \$5 donation.

Tues 11 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 18 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Thurs 20 - Birdlife Mackay Outing, Slade Point Reserve, Meet at the end of Pacific Esplanade Slade Pt at 6:30am.

Tues 25 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Fri 28 - Birdlife Mackay Outing, Mackay Botanic Gardens bird count, Meet on the deck at 6:30am.

August

Tues 1 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Thurs 3 - Native Plants Queensland (Mackay Branch) meeting 7:30pm at Mackay Regional Botanic gardens meeting room.

Sun 6 - Birdlife Mackay Outing, Berri Werri near Gargett, Meet at the old Tourist Office on Nebo Rd at 6:30am.

Tues 15 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 22 - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

Tues 29 - 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.

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. Management Committee

Executive

Chair | Sharon Dwyer

Deputy Chair | Judith Wake

Secretary | Fran Mann

Treasurer | Claire Stribbles

Committee Members

Earl Neilsen

Paul Tippett

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projectofficer@pioneercatchment.org.au

Administration and Marketing Officer | Taleah Virgona
admin@pioneercatchment.org.au

Newsletter | Hannah Murphy
communications@pioneercatchment.org.au

Are you interested in birds?

You can be a part of an important citizen science project, collecting data on local native birds at Eungella. To register for Eungella Bird Week please visit the following website:

www.birdlife.org.au/events/birdlife-mackay-eungella-bird-week-2023/



Eungella Bird Week 11-14 September 2023

4 Days, over 140 Species including the Endemic Eungella Honeyeater

Data Collection and Birding through the Eungella National Park and Clarke Ranges

Presented by Birdlife Mackay

Program & Registration
<https://birdlife.org.au/groups/birdlife-mackay/>

or Contact Jenny White
on 0409 886 308

birdlife
MACKAY

Photo © Steve Dew