

# Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

September 2023

Join Our Journey  
Riparian Area Revegetation  
at Melba House

- ◆ Janes Creek Rejuvenated
- ◆ Native Bonsai Workshop Success
- ◆ Salt Couch Propagation Experiments

National Tree Day  
with Mackay Regional Council

Plant of the Month -  
Powderpuff Lilly Pilly



Pest Spotting -  
Balloon Vine



Welcome -  
Cadet Elijah



Ocean Pollution Talk  
at C&K Marian



## Our Mission

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

## Join Our Journey: Riparian Area Rehabilitation at Melba House

Through funding provided by the Department of Environment and Science's Community Sustainability Action Grants—Round 7, PCL has commenced the rehabilitation of the riparian area adjacent to the locally significant historical building, Melba House in Marian. Previously infested with *Leucaena* (*Leucaena leucocephala*), the site was first cleared of invasive weeds, opening up the access point to the Pioneer River at Edward Lloyd Park. The purpose of the project is to revegetate the area with native riparian species to create shade, biodiversity and a refuge for native wildlife, while preventing the return of invasive weeds.

This project also aims to encourage local community empowerment through an engaging and inclusive approach to rehabilitation of this site, by inviting community members, groups and volunteers to become a part of the journey.

The first community planting day was held on Tuesday 8th August in which 500 native plants were put in the ground thanks to the 13 PCL volunteers and 100 students and teachers from Marian State School.

Big shout out to Vintage Kiss at Melba House for keeping everyone well nourished and caffeinated for the day, as well as generously providing a \$25 voucher for one lucky volunteer!

Special mention to our PCL field officers for drilling the holes, setting out the plants, and helping all the volunteers and students to make it a successful, enjoyable, educational and fun day. We look forward to future meet-ups, events and inspired action taking place at this locally significant site beside the Pioneer River, as together we transform this area into a beautiful nature refuge for the whole community to enjoy.



*PCL Officer, Taleah Virgona, with newly installed signage at the Edward Lloyd Park Revegetation Site*



## Native Plant of the Month

### Powderpuff Lilly-pilly *Syzygium wilsonii*

Family: Myrtaceae

Small shrub growing 1 to 3m tall with very attractive red fluffy flowers, clusters of edible fruit and weeping branches. Versatile plant that can be easily incorporated into your garden. Wildlife attracting.

**Leaves:** Lanceolate new foliage reddish brown in colour. Stiff narrow leaves 180mm by 50mm, dark green, dull on upper surface and paler on underneath side of leaf.

**Flowers:** Only species of lilly-pilly with red flowers. Large, fluffy heads, flowering from spring to summer.

**Seeds/Fruit:** White clusters of ovoid-shaped fleshy edible fruits.

**Habitat:** Endemic to North Queensland rainforests.

**Growing Notes:** Easily propagated from seed. Keep moist and plant in sheltered position. Can also grow from cuttings.



Sources: <https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/interns-2004/syzygium-wilsonii.html>

Image: Miss Tree online

## Pest Spotting

### Balloon Vine *Cardiospermum grandiflorum*

Family: Sapindaceae

Perennial climber that can completely cover trees and is common along creeks, rainforest margins, and moist gullies. Classed in Queensland as Category 3 restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*.

**Leaves/stems:** Stems ribbed lengthwise, usually covered with stiff hairs, particularly when young. Compound leaves with leaflets in three groups of three, and often with a tendril in their forks. Leaflets (20-80mm long, 10-50mm wide) have coarsely toothed margins.

**Flowers:** Small white flowers borne in clusters at end of stalks that have two small curved tendrils near their tips.

**Seeds/Fruit:** Distinctive large, balloon-shaped, papery capsules (45-65mm long, 30-45mm wide) with three compartments, each containing a single hard seed.

**Spread by:** Seeds most commonly dispersed by wind and water, or dumped garden waste.

**Control:** See [www.maps.org.au/files/ugd/b67c08\\_33c4ea88941a47cabd39d03d767e849b.pdf](http://www.maps.org.au/files/ugd/b67c08_33c4ea88941a47cabd39d03d767e849b.pdf)



Sources: [https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/cardiospermum\\_grandiflorum.htm](https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/cardiospermum_grandiflorum.htm)

Image: Sheldon Navie

## Ocean pollution education at C&K Marian

PCL officers enjoyed visiting C&K Marian Community Kindergarten last month to discuss the issue of ocean pollution caused by rubbish. Following discussions with the children, we organised two engaging activities. In the first one, the children had an ocean-themed tub filled with rubbish, and they enthusiastically picked and sorted the trash into the appropriate bins. The second activity involved the kids using recycled clothing for seaweed and other recyclable materials to create their vision of an ideal ocean on paper plates, where no rubbish could be found. It was a creative and inspiring session!



## Janes Creek Reveg Site Rejuvenated

In March 2023, PCL took over the maintenance of Janes Creek, which was remodelled by TMR as part of the bypass works. The area was interplanted with native species such as Blue Flax Lily (*Dianella caerulea*), Weeping Bottlebrush (*Melaleuca viminalis*), Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citiodora*), Creek Cherry (*Syzygiun australe*) and Narrow Leaf Honey Myrtle (*Melaleuca trichostachya*). Since March, PCL field officers have conducted weed control, watering, mulching, and monitoring of plant growth, which has been good with the warmer winter and extra rain. The planting is visible from the road on the left-hand side of the bridge crossing Janes Creek as you head towards Mackay along the Bruce Highway. Well done to the staff at PCL for the ongoing care and maintenance that has led to the successful revegetation of this important riparian environment.



## National Tree Day Weekend

### Schools Tree Day



PCL staff and volunteers attended the NTD site at Finch Hatton on a wet and windy morning on the 28th of July 2023. The clouds were low, and the drizzle just kept coming, interspersed with periods of heavier rain. Despite the wet weather most of the booked schools brought scores of children to help plant over 3000 trees – what an amazing effort by all! The event was really well organised by Mackay Regional Council, with buses bringing the schools in at intervals throughout the day. The primary school aged children came in groups of 15 to 48! Students planted and then mulched their trees, with some children even affectionately naming their new tree companions. A big shout out to our volunteers who braved the cold and wet conditions to help out with planting with the local school children, we couldn't have done it without you!

### Community National Tree Day



PCL staff attended the community tree planting at Sandfly Creek, Mackay on a bright and sunny Sunday morning on the 30th July. The event was well attended with over 750 trees being planted before 10am! A good representation of the community attended with children through to the elderly coming to join in the fun and plant trees to improve our regions biodiversity and habitat. Did you know since National Tree Day started in 1996 over 26 million trees have been planted in Australia? This is fantastic news for our regions' improved shade, our native plants and wildlife that use trees for food and shelter, and for our carbon sequestering; all helping to improve the health of our environment.

## Welcome our Youth Cadet - Elijah



Welcome to our newest recruit, Elijah Davidson, joining PCL as a Youth Cadet for the next 12 months as a part of the Reef Assist Program 2.0, in partnership with Reef Catchments, Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association and Whitsunday Catchment Landcare and funded by DES.

Elijah has entered into our work with enthusiasm. Pictured here (left) learning pruning techniques, he is shaping the arches of Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*) at the MNEC in preparation for the Free Plant Giveaway Day. We look forward to seeing how Elijah

learns and grows in his new role over the next year!



## Native Bonsai Workshop Success

PCL ran the first ever Native Plant Bonsai Workshop open to the public on Saturday 29th July in support of National Tree Day. The workshop booked out quickly as the numbers were capped at 20. The afternoon was bright and clear. We gathered at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens nursery which has an amazing shaded area with excellent facilities for playing with plants. Each participant had a choice of 4 native plants – *Melaleuca hemisticta* (Gold dusted bottle brush), *Ficus virens* (Strangler fig), *Casuarina cunninghamiana* (She-oak), *Syzygium australe* (Lilly pilly). Each tree had an information sheet attached giving a little bit of information on what the botanical name means and where it is found.



Michael Watts (an experienced and passionate Bonsai grower) facilitated the workshop and his passion for native plants was obvious. He took us all on a journey of creativity, passion, knowledge and fun, sharing his tools and his experience with us so all participants took home a Bonsai they had created. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with everyone expressing how much they had enjoyed the experience and taken something from it. This event was run in association with Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens.



## Experimenting with Salt Couch Propagation

Part of the current Mackay Port Access Project (MPAP) encompasses intertidal areas and communities including mangroves and salt marsh. It is likely that rehabilitation will be required for these areas impacted as part of the development and PCL was approached to assist in trials to establish best practice rehabilitation. Salt couch is a protected marine plant and was harvested from the old tip site on Harbour Road. Harvested plant material was propagated in tiles to see growth response to various potting media and fertiliser content. The experiment has half of the plant material in the Swayne Street nursery (propagated by PCL volunteers) and half on PCL's Coordinator Nancy's farm. The separation of the plant material was due to biosecurity at the nursery and all soil had to be removed from nursery stock. Initial observations are interesting with growth being faster on the farm than in nursery, and tiles with fertiliser not responding well.

*Image: PCL Volunteers propagating Salt Couch samples at the MNEC Nursery*



## Upcoming Community Events

### September 2023

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				<b>1</b> National Wattle Day	<b>2</b> Birdlife Mackay Outing, Padaminka Nature Reserve, meet at old Tourist Office on Nebo Rd at 6:30am.	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.	<b>6</b> PCL Volunteering at Edward Lloyd Park, Marian, 10am.	<b>7</b> Native Plants Queensland (Mackay Branch) meeting, MRBG meeting room, 7:30pm.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> Eungella Bird Week 2023	<b>12</b> Small Engines Workshop, hosted by PCL at MNEC, Swayne Street, 10am to 12pm.	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Orchid Extravaganza, Ken Burgess Orchid House, Queens Park, 8am to 3pm.	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	

#### October

**Tues 3** - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

**Wed 4** - PCL Volunteering at Edward Lloyd Park River Access Site, Marian, meet at Southern side of Melba House at 10am.

**Thurs 5** - Native Plants Queensland (Mackay Branch) meeting 7:30pm at Mackay Regional Botanic gardens meeting room.

**Tues 10** - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

**Tues 17** - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

**Tues 24** - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

**Tues 31** - PCL Volunteering in the nursery, 8am to 12pm.

## Contact Us

### Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc.



07 4944 1979



admin@pioneercatchment.org.au



www.pioneercatchment.org.au

**Coordinator** | Nancy Pratt  
coordinator@pioneercatchment.org.au

**Senior Project Officer** | Donna Jackson  
seniorpo@pioneercatchment.org.au

**Project Officer** | Danny Hudson  
projectofficer@pioneercatchment.org.au

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

**Newsletter** | Hannah Murphy  
communications@pioneercatchment.org.au

### 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



Follow PCL on social media  
to keep up to date with  
recent projects and events

### 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.

Big shout out to our volunteers who have shown their support of PCL by assisting with plant propagation at the MNEC nursery, and for registering their interest in our events and workshops – we couldn't do it without you!

### PCL Membership is Changing

Keep an eye out for upcoming changes to our membership policies and new opportunities coming for PCL members



PCL'S ID:  
C10041933

#### 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 ◦