

# Pioneer Catchment & Landcare News

## January 2025

Volume 1



Plant of the Month



Pest of the Month



Training Courses



Landcare School Support



Image: Orange-thighed Frog (*Ranoidea xanthomera*) Marian, QLD



**Our Mission**

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



## Re-election of Chair

Pioneer Catchment Landcare is delighted to announce the re-election of Kirili Lamb as Chair of our organisation. Kirili's leadership, passion for sustainability, and dedication to our mission have been instrumental in driving impactful projects and fostering strong community connections. We look forward to another successful term with Kirili, continuing our shared journey to protect and regenerate our precious environment. Congratulations, Kirili!



**Image:** Senior Field Officer Donna Jackson, Chair Kirili Lamb, Coordinator Nancy Pratt.

## Chair's Message

Dear PCL members and friends,

Thanks to all who shared in the AGM held at Note Park in November. It was great to see such strong attendance from members and guests in support of PCL.

We look forward to holding a number of member activities over the coming year, including social events and workshops, and hope to see you there. We encourage anyone with areas of interest in any possible workshops to get in touch with their ideas!

As we move in to 2025, we will be continuing with our variety of projects and fee-for-service contracts. Corporate and individual membership is one way of making sure Pioneer Catchment Landcare is financially sustainable, but the team's professional services in site revegetation, land management, flora and fauna surveys and assessments, and bushland maintenance will be important in keeping the organisation financially viable and ride the peaks and troughs of project grants and funding cycles. It's **not** a shift to a for-profit model. PCL remains a member driven association committed to volunteer opportunities around landcare activities, and maintaining a grassroots membership is still a critical driver for our direction.

With the marvellous Dr Judith Wake stepping away from a formal committee role, we have vacancies on the management committee: Deputy Chair and general Committee Member. Please get in touch if you have ideas and energy for these roles. Importantly, there is not a massive time commitment—we meet on the last Thursday of the month at Mackay Natural Environment Centre in North Mackay in the late afternoon to discuss projects and operations. The PCL team of outstanding professional conservation and land management staff take care of operations, administration and marketing. We'd love your input as we develop exciting nature positive projects!

*Kirili Lamb*



## 2024 Annual General Meeting

Pioneer Catchment Landcare recently hosted our Annual General Meeting, and what an incredible event it was! With a fantastic turnout of members, community supporters, and representatives from other organisations, the day was a true testament to the power of collaboration.

A highlight of the event was presenting our very first corporate membership certificate—a milestone that marks the beginning of an exciting journey. We look forward to expanding this initiative even further in 2025!

We were also delighted to welcome Kylie Harris as our guest speaker. Kylie delivered an engaging presentation on the vital role of nature refuges in conserving Queensland's unique biodiversity and the opportunities they present. Read more about Kylie's inspiring talk on the next page.

A special thanks to Cherry & Tina's Café and Catering for the delicious food and to Note Park Grazing Co for providing the beautiful location.



Image: Note Park Grazing Co

## Thank you Judith

Pioneer Catchment Landcare bids a heartfelt thank you to Judith Wake, who has officially retired from her role as Secretary following the recent 2024 AGM. Judith's years of service have been marked by her calm leadership, deep knowledge of ecology and conservation, and expertise in non-profit governance, all of which have significantly shaped the organisation.

Judith graciously stepped into the Acting Chair role during a critical transition period while continuing to fulfill her duties as Secretary, exemplifying her commitment and adaptability. Her steady guidance has been a cornerstone of PCL's success in recent years.

While Judith steps back from formal responsibilities, we are delighted that she will remain involved in a consultative capacity on the PCL management committee. Her legacy and wisdom will continue to inspire and guide us. Thank you, Judith!



Image: AGM Attendees

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Congratulations to the executive committee members appointed at the 2024 AGM.



**Kirili Lamb**  
*Chair*

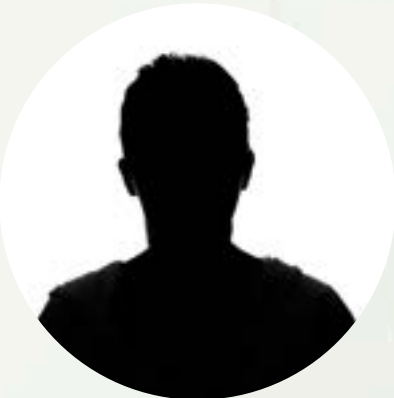


**Claire Stribbles**  
*Treasurer*



**Jessica Turchet**  
*Secretary*

## COMMITTEE



**Position Open**  
*Deputy Chair*



**Earl Neilsen**  
*Committee*



**Paul Tippett**  
*Committee*

## Deputy Chair Position Now Open

This is a fantastic opportunity for individuals passionate about conservation and natural resource management to make a meaningful impact in our community.

Contact Kirili at: [chair@pioneercatchment.org.au](mailto:chair@pioneercatchment.org.au)



## Guest speaker Kylie Harris

The Pioneer Catchment Landcare group was privileged to welcome Kylie Harris, Senior Program Officer from the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, as a guest speaker at this year's Annual General Meeting. Kylie's engaging presentation focused on the role of nature refuges in conserving Queensland's unique biodiversity and the opportunities available for property owners to make a meaningful impact through environmental stewardship on private land.

A nature refuge is a perpetual voluntary agreement between landholders and the Queensland Government, established to protect the significant natural and cultural resources of privately managed land. Once declared, a nature refuge becomes a protected area under the Nature Conservation Act 1992. This ensures the land is managed to:

- Conserve its significant cultural and natural resources.
- Allow for sustainable use of its resources.
- Respect the interests of the landholders involved.

Kylie highlighted the numerous benefits of declaring a property as a nature refuge. Landholders can play a crucial role in protecting endangered ecosystems and species, preserving natural landscapes, and contributing to the long-term health of their local environment. Additionally, the program supports landholders with resources, advice, and potential funding opportunities to manage and enhance these areas.

### How Can Landholders Get Involved?

If you're passionate about conservation and own a property with significant conservation values, you can get involved. Learn more about the significant conservation values on your property by downloading your environmental reports <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/management/environmental/environmental-reports-online>.

By becoming part of the Private Protected Area Program, you can:

- Receive expert guidance on managing your land sustainably.
- Access funding opportunities for activities such as weed control, habitat restoration, and fencing to protect native wildlife.
- Join a community of like-minded individuals working towards a greener future.

Interested landholders can find more information about the program and its benefits by visiting the Queensland Government's Private Protected Area Program website at:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/parks/protected-areas/private/program>.

## Landcare School Support

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group (PCL) proudly supports schools across the Mackay region in achieving their landcare goals and engaging students in hands-on environmental projects.

Funded by: Mackay Regional Council

## Essence Early Learning

Essence Early Learning recently added 50 native plants to their toddler and kindy outdoor area. The children eagerly joined in, learning about the role of native plants in supporting wildlife and creating greener spaces.

We're excited to see this garden grow and inspire future environmental stewards!



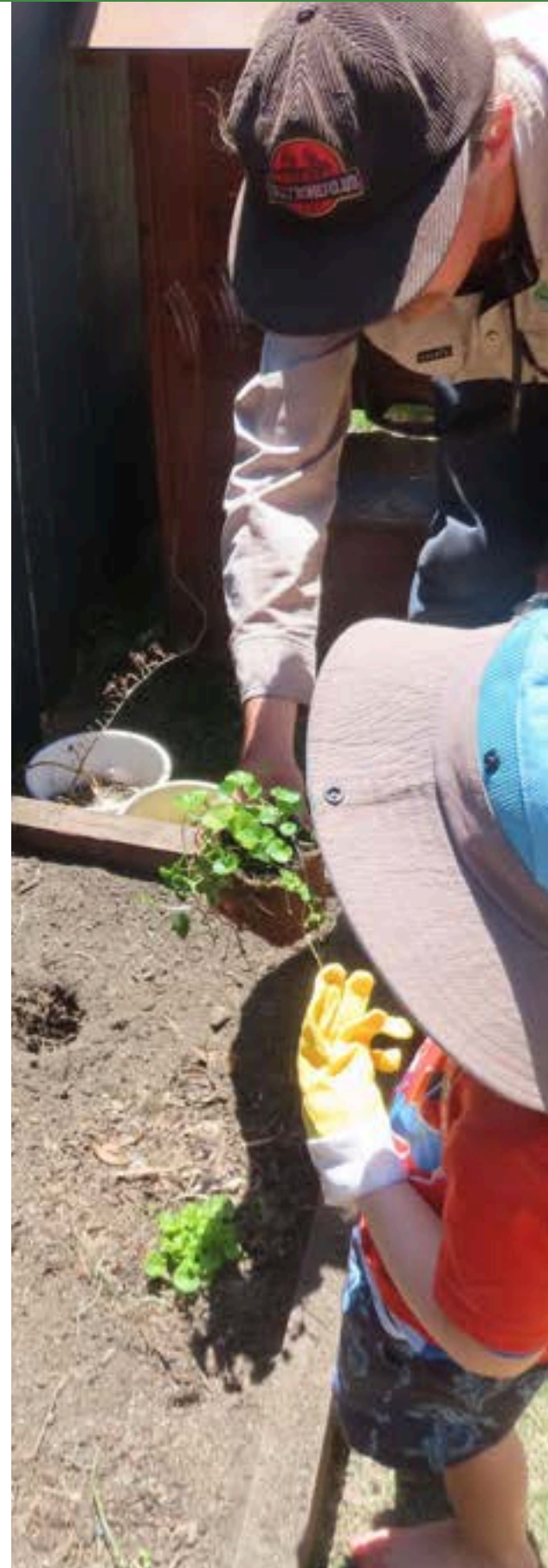
## St Joseph's

Students at St Joseph's recently explored soil health using samples from four different sites. They conducted sediment, pH, and soil sausage/type tests, comparing how soil types vary between areas.

The hands-on activity sparked curiosity and helped students better understand the environment around them.

## Carlisle Adventist College

PCL assisted with an M-W Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership *STEM in Schools* workshop in November 2024: an engaging full day of practical tasks related to science, technology, engineering and maths. PCL presented to the students their personal pathways to employment in the science industry, showcasing how different journeys can be and how broad a subject science is.



## Fauna Spotter/Catcher Training Course

Delivered by Euan Edwards from Elapid Environmental Services.

We are pleased to announce that five of our team members have successfully completed a Fauna Spotter/Catcher Training Course, delivered by the knowledgeable Euan Edwards from Elapid Environmental Services!

This hands-on, two-day course equipped us with invaluable skills to:

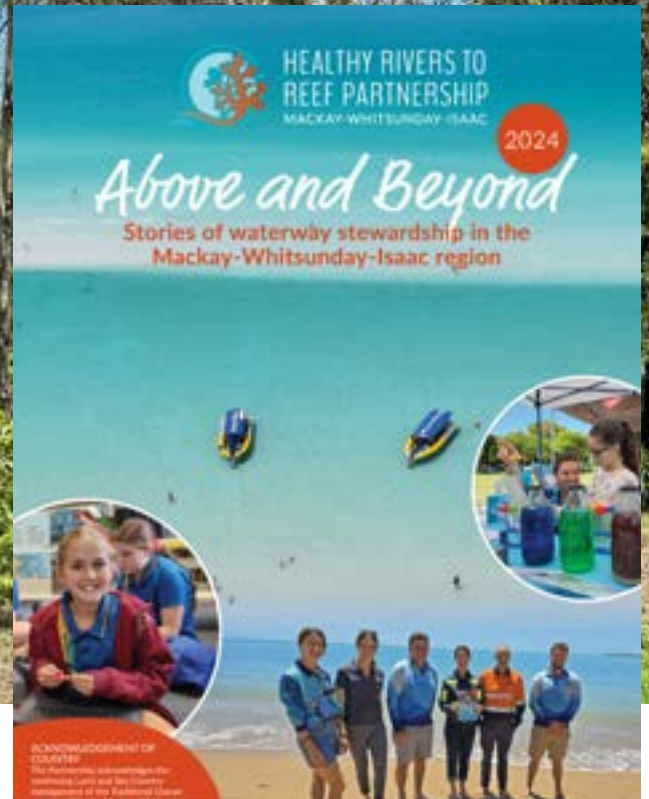
- Locate and safely relocate fauna during environmental disturbances and construction activities.
- Manage fauna safely while adhering to safety standards and legislative requirements.
- Handle wild fauna with care and professionalism.
- Apply techniques for effective fauna surveying.

With this training under our belts, we are now one step closer to securing both a Rehabilitation (Spotter/Catcher) Permit and a Damage Mitigation Permit. These qualifications will further enable us to support wildlife conservation efforts in our region.

A huge thank you goes to Zeb and Jack from Bredl's Wildlife Farm for providing a venue for this incredible course and also sharing their expertise.

Stay tuned as we continue to expand our services to safeguard wildlife and ecosystems.





2024 Stewardship Report

## Pioneer River Conservation In Action At Melba House

The 2024 Above and Beyond Stewardship Report, published by Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership, highlights incredible efforts in protecting and enhancing the natural environment across the region. We're proud to announce that Pioneer Catchment Landcare is featured in this year's report!

Our work is showcased in the article "Pioneer River Conservation in Action at Melba House" (page 38). This piece highlights our collaborative efforts to restore and preserve vital riparian zones along the Pioneer River.

The project, which combines native vegetation restoration and weed control, is a fantastic example of how partnerships between local organisations and landholders are improving water quality and biodiversity in the region.

The report is a reminder of the importance of stewardship in creating a healthier and more sustainable future for our waterways and surrounding ecosystems. Download a copy of the Above and Beyond stewardship report at [healthyrivertoreef.org.au/report-card/above-and-beyond-stewardship-report](https://healthyrivertoreef.org.au/report-card/above-and-beyond-stewardship-report).



Before



April 2024



November 2024



## Land Condition Assessment Tool

Cadet Jayde and Senior Field Officer Rhys have completed their Land Condition Assessment Tool (LCAT) training!

The Land Condition Assessment Tool (LCAT) is a tool designed to evaluate the current state of the land and support sustainable land management decisions.

A big thank you to Robert Hassett (Department of Primary Industries) for delivering this insightful training and to Farmacist for organising the session. Your expertise and coordination are greatly appreciated.

Learn more here: <https://www.stateoftheenvironment.des.qld.gov.au/liveability/case-studies/case-study-2>



Image: LCAT field training.



### Welcome Jayde

We're thrilled to introduce Jayde, our newest Cadet at Pioneer Catchment Landcare! Jayde is passionate about nature and brings a fresh perspective to our team.

Favourite Colour: Dark green

Favourite Animal: Curlew

Favourite Tree: Bottlebrush

Favourite Place in Mackay: The stunning Lamberts Beach

Jayde is excited to contribute to protecting the biodiversity of our region. Say hi when you see her out in the field!



Image: [weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/dutchmans-pipe](https://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/dutchmans-pipe)

## **Pest of the Month** **Dutchman's pipe – *Aristolochia elegans*** **Family: Aristolochiaceae**

**Distribution and Habitat:** Coastal districts of southern and central Queensland, scattered in the coastal areas of northern Queensland. Primarily a weed of rainforests, closed forests, urban bushland, disturbed sites, roadsides, waste areas, waterway and forest margins in tropical and sub-tropical regions.

**Description:** A climbing plant with slender twining stems and simple, alternate, broadly heart-shaped leaves 30-80mm long. Crushed leaves have an unpleasant smell. Its unusual flowers are reddish-purple with white and yellow markings, flared pipe shaped, around 100mm in diameter, with a broad heart-shaped opening. They are borne singly in leaf axils. Oblong, cylindrical ribbed capsules (40-60mm long) have a short projection at their tips and split open from the top when mature. They contain numerous tear-shaped seeds spread by wind and in garden waste.

**History:** Introduced as a garden ornamental into South East Queensland from Brazil, Dutchman's Pipe has become a serious problem in dry rainforest

**Threats to Australia:** Dutchman's pipe (*Aristolochia elegans*) competes with, and replaces native plants by its smothering growth. It readily invades dry rainforests, lowland rainforests and riparian vegetation, replacing native vines and preventing the growth and regeneration of other native plants.

More of a problem, is its impact on the Cairns Birdwing Butterfly (*Ornithoptera euphorion*) that feeds on a number of native Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia* and *Pararistolochia*) vines. The presence of the introduced Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia elegans*) makes it harder for the adult female butterflies to find the native vines and because the exotic vine is so similar, the female butterflies are fooled into laying their eggs on it. However, Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia elegans*) is toxic to the larvae and when they hatch they are unable to feed and eventually perish. The larvae of other native butterflies are also known to perish on Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia elegans*), including the Big Greasy (*Cressida cressida*) and the Red-bodied Swallowtail (*Pachliopta polydorus*)



Image: Donna Jackson

## Plant of the Month

**Common name:** Common Blue Vitex **Family -** Lamiaceae

**Botanical name:** *Vitex trifolia* var. *trifolia*

Large coastal shrub or small tree less than 5m height.

**Leaves:** Mostly trifoliate, opposite, centre leaflet largest, margins entire. Upper surface is green, lower is greyish-green, aromatic when crushed.

**Flowers:** Purple to violet, tubular with 2-lipped corollas, tube 4–6mm long with 2 pairs of stamens, borne on terminal or axillary panicles up to 180mm in length.

**Fruit:** Drupe, 4–6mm diameter, turning from green to yellowish-red then blue-black. Seeds enclosed in a hard stone (endocarp) about 4.5 x 3mm.

**Growing Notes:** Salt spray resistant, bee attractant, useful secondary dune sand stabilising plant. In Samoa, dried leaves are burned to repel mosquitos.

**Name origin:** *Vitex* is thought to be derived from the Latin *vitis* meaning made by plaiting, as branches of the tree were used to construct plaited fences; *trifolia* means 3-leafed.

**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

Join as a member:



Your membership fees are an investment in our region's environment!

## Contact Us

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