

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare



December 2019– Januarv 2020

www.whitsundaylandcare.org.au

Find us on Facebook



Central QLD Coast Landcare Network

A partnership for the natural resource management of catchments in the Central QLD Coast Bioregions.

#### CATCHMENT COORDINATOR:

Cath Campbell Ph.: 0408 187 944 coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au

#### **PROJECT OFFICER:**

Peter Alden Ph.: 0488 768 567

#### **CONTACT US FOR INFORMATION:**

- Natural Resource Management
- Land management Plans
- Native plants
- Environmental weeds
- Volunteer activities

#### **BECOME A VOLUNTEER:**

Come seed collecting; learn to identify native plants; how to propagate them; improve your environment; enjoy the outdoors in a fun, social setting.

If your interested in any of the above to do your bit for the environment and socialise with like-minded people? We have coordinated activities on Tuesday & Thursday mornings and more. Contact us!

#### WCL Management Committee:

Graham Armstrong, Chair Scott Hardy, Deputy Chair Jacquie Sheils, Secretary Glenda Hodgson, Treasurer Dale Mengel John Casey Cr Ron Petterson

#### WCL is a community not-for-profit group, relying on grants & donations. We are a registered charity; donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. To make

a donation please contact us or go to our Make a page:



www.givenow.com.au



WCL receives support from the following organizations:













Coming Up in December 2019 - January 2020 **COMMUNITY NURSERY OPEN FOR PLANT SALES (CASH ONLY)** 9am-12noon Tuesday, Thursday & the 1st Saturday of each month-Next Saturday opening—7TH DECEMBER 2019

#### Christmas Closure–

Nursery closes after the volunteer morning on the 19th December 2019 & will re-open on the 7th January, 2020 WCL Office will closes at 4pm on the 19th December & reopens on the 7th **January**, 2020

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At the Community Nursery & Volunteer Activities in **December:** 33 Kelsey Creek Rd Proserpine Tuesday & Thursday 9am—12.30pm. For enquiries please Ph. 0408 187 944 or email: coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au

Tuesday	Thursday	
<b>3rd:</b> Nursery Maintenance & propagation activities	5th: Nursery CLOSED- Volunteer Christmas Party	
<b>10th:</b> Nursery Maintenance & propagation activities	<b>12th:</b> Propagation, Seed processing, Potting, Record keeping etc. at the nursery.	
<b>17th:</b> Nursery Maintenance & propagation activities	<b>19th:</b> Propagation, Seed processing, Potting, Record keeping etc. at the nursery	
24th: Nursery CLOSED	26th: Nursery CLOSED	
2nd January 2020 Nursery Closed	<b>7th January 2020-OPEN</b> Propagation, Seed processing, Potting, Record keeping etc. at the nursery.	



Santalum acuminatum- Desert Quandong- Photo: Australian National Botanic Gardens

On behalf to the WCL Management Committee & myself, Pete, Nicole and Leigh we would like to wish our members, volunteers and all our newsletter recipients:

A very Merry Christmas,

A safe & relaxing holiday season and fantastic 2020.

Thank you for all your support during 2019 and we hope you & your family have a lovely time.

#### Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Annual General meeting.

WCL held is AGM on the 26th of November at the Metropole Hotel in Proserpine. Some of attendees of the AGM had dinner prior to the meeting where we took the opportunity to thank our retiring Project Officer– Peter Alden. Peter has decided to withdraw from active on-ground activities to focus on more cerebral contributions to the Landcare cause. During his working life, Pete has undertaken many roles relating to natural resource management, working with local councils, Biosecurity, Reef Catchments, & other Landcare groups. His vast knowledge of the local areas native plants, weed species & their controls as well as sustainable land management has been of great benefit to our local community whilst employed with WCL over the last 3 years. So we thank you Pete and wish you all the best for the future.

A new management committee was elected on the night– with some familiar faces remaining & one new face– Dale Mengel taking up a member representative position. So welcome Dale & here's to an exciting year for Whitsunday Catchment Landcare. The following members Where elected: Graham Armstrong– Chairperson; Jacquie Sheils– Secretary; Glenda Hodgson– Treasurer; General member representatives- Scott Hardy, Dale Mengel; Organisation Representative– Councillor Ron Petterson (WRC) & John Casey (Canegrowers, Proserpine). Thank you all for taking on these vital Management Committee roles that keep our organisation functioning.

Sadly, one of our long term Committee members, Jim Dickens, has decided to retire from the Management Committee. Jim has been a dedicated & active member/volunteer of WCL since 2013. Jim has undertaken the Treasurers role (2014-2017) and regularly attends our volunteer mornings at the community nursery & to undertake maintenance of our revegetation sites– especially at Galbraith Park.

On behalf of the WCL staff & members, we **thank you Jim** and we are very glad that you will still be volunteering with us.

Thank you also to the Metropole Hotel & staff for their support for Landcare by providing the meeting room at no cost & the food was great.



Whitsunday Catchment Landcare 2018—2019 Annual Report.

The 2018-19 Annual Report was presented to the AGM on the 26th November, 2019 and accepted by members. If you would like to read the report along with the annual audited statement will be uploaded to the Whitsunday Catchment Landcare webpage early in December.





#### Brush Turkeys: Learning to love these feathered friends.....

The determined "scritch-scratch" shuffling of leaves is a sound that causes many a backyard garden enthusiast' eye to twitch; the sound of an Australian brush turkey hard at work building a nest mound.

Love them or loathe them, there's no denying the brush turkey's success. Once found all along the east coast, brush turkeys were nearly hunted to extinction during the Great Depression in the 1930s when their meat and eggs provided a valuable food source.

However, brush turkeys are making a major come back. While many animals are struggling with urbanisation, brush turkey numbers are actually on the rise in many suburban areas.

Although they can sometimes make a bit of a mess, these native birds are actually quite remarkable.

#### Let's start with their fascinating family structure -



In the brush turkey world, it's the dads that put in most of the effort. Male brush turkeys work tirelessly to scrape together mounds of soil and leaf litter into a massive pile about 4m in diameter and 1m high.

Once the male has achieved the perfect pile, he allows a female to access the mound where she will lay an egg that has been previously fertilised by a different male.

Multiple females will visit and lay the eggs of different males in the pile, which are incubated by the heat given off by the decomposing material.

The male brush turkey is responsible for protecting the mound and keeping the internal temperature at roughly 33 degrees, which he does by using his beak as a thermometer and adding or removing leaf litter.

#### But that's just the beginning. Let's talk about the chicks -

Brush turkey parents take a very hands-off approach to raising kids. After hatching, the new-born chicks have to dig their way out through roughly 1m of dirt and debris and once they make it to the surface, they're completely on their own. They can even fly a few hours after hatching, and immediately go off on their own in search of food.

Brush turkeys play an important role in controlling insect populations and dispersing seeds in their droppings. Once the chicks have all hatched, their unused mounds can also make fantastic compost.

If you do want to discourage turkeys from nesting in your garden, try to limit the availability of leaf litter and act quickly to remove the early signs of a mound forming (only very early stages).

Lastly, it's important to remember that brush turkeys are a native species and are protected by law. There are serious penalties for harming brush turkeys or their eggs/nests.

The best thing we can do is embrace and appreciate these fastidious feathered friends and learn to live with them, like a somewhat messy, yet endearing, roommate.

#### Yellow crazy Ant infestation update

The yellow crazy ant (YCA) is listed as one of the top 100 worst invasive species by the IUCN and the Global Invasive Species Database. They are a category three restricted pest under the Biosecurity Act 2014. As such, all citizens have a general biosecurity obligation to minimise the risk of further infestation by informing the Queensland Government of potential yellow crazy ant sightings. Identifying yellow crazy ants:

- Yellow crazy ants are named after their distinctive erratic, frantic, movements when disturbed.
- Identifying features:
- Slender body, usually 4mm long (about half the size of a green ant)
- Long skinny legs
- Long antennae, equal to or exceeding the length of the body (11 segments in total)
- Head is distinctly longer than broad
- Golden-brown body, with a darker brown abdomen, sometimes striped
- Day and night time foraging (they are less active in intense heat and heavy rain)
- Spray formic acid (do not bite or sting)
- Tend to be found in large numbers rather than by themselves.

Whitsunday Regional Council & other National parks & Wildlife has been actively managing the control of these devastating pests located in the Shute Harbour precinct. During July—October 2019 the following actions that have been implemented :

- Synergy-Pro pesticide delivered to 5 locations covering 4000m2 in the Shute harbour precinct.
- Stakeholder meetings undertaken to discuss coordinated control actions.
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- Baited areas surveyed to determine effectiveness of chemical control. Initial results indicate low activity at the nest sites.
- Survey of the infestation edge conducted using transects to detect the YCA infestation boundary.
- August saw a second bating treatment of Synergy-Pro over 9ha of Council land.
- Information letter sent to all Shute harbour residents within the infestation & buffer zone.
- Application made for a permit to undertake aerial distribution by helicopter of ANTOFF. Council has commenced seeking quotes for the aerial application of ANTOFF.
- Inspection of properties within the infestation zone.
- Yellow Crazy Ant signs installed in Shute Harbour area.
- End of October: Monitoring program commenced.
- Council has engaged a contractor to treat remaining YCA nests in the Shute Harbour Lower car park with Termidor prior to Shute Harbour re-construction activities.





*Right: Map 1. Approximate YCA infestation area and 200m buffer Photo: WRC* 



## **Coastal Planning** Community Consultation

## Join us for a coastal conversation!

Get involved and provide feedback on how you would like to see your coastline managed into the future.

Council officers and coastal management experts will be in your area to discuss the future management of our coastlines and how they may affect you.

Please join us in December to:

- Explore the coastal processes shaping our coastlines;
- See what coastal hazards are impacting us now and into the future;
- Provide feedback on coastal management and adaptation options for the future.

#### Come along to have your say!

### Airlie Beach & Cannonvale

Date | Tuesday 3 December 2019

Time | 9am - 11am

**Location |** Meet at the seating area in front of Fat Frog Cafe, Cannonvale Foreshore

Please note we will be providing tea, coffee and nibbles on the day

Find out more about this project at yoursay.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au



#### Getting to Know Our Whitsunday Wildlife & Plants

Steve Pearson is a local dedicated nature photographer. Steve is a retired QP&WS ranger who spent a large part of his career at Eungella and in the Whitsundays. Assisted by his wife Alison, Steve has accumulated a comprehensive photographic reference of plants and also, the less understood and under-appreciated elements of our region's ecology such as invertebrates and fungi. To view more of his photos go to - steveandalison1@flickr

This month we feature Plexippus petersi jumping spider of spider family Salticidae, Class: Arachnida.

It is a new addition to our local species list as I have never seen them here before. A couple of weeks ago one was hunting moths at our night lights. It was a young male still in the camouflage stage – hairy, black and speckled -like a tabby cat that blends into the natural environment. It was not a mature season male, standing out, fully grown with seasonally mature shape and the colours of a dominant male.

It is so hard to see females and young males in the bush as they are so well camouflaged, that blends into the



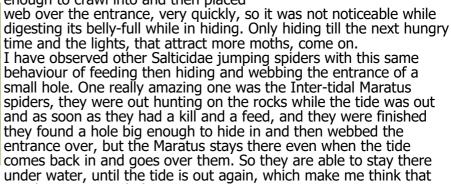
Above & below: Young male Photo: Steve & Alison Pearson



natural environment, which is quite likely why very few have ever been found in Australia. I have not been able to find them in the bush even with my colour blindness. I only found this little spider when it was hunting moths at my night light as it stood out against a painted background. It was so quick when it saw a moth it wanted and then, just like a hairy black speckled tabby cat, just pounced and had it for dinner. Maybe they should be called pouncing spiders in preference to jumping spider and

maybe that is why they are called Plexip " pus ". BUT this spider didn't play Plexippus petersi hunting moths with its food. When it finished feeding it went off into hiding, finding a hole big

enough to crawl into and then placed



the web must be a waterproof water-tight cap over it hiding spot.

Many Salticidae spiders have great variation in appearance between male and female. Some spider families have very large females and very small males and they look really different, some families have male and female the same size and almost identical in appearance and stay that way, even at full maturity. Then some are like these Plexippus Salticids, where the immature male is almost identical to the female. The main visual difference is the size and shape of the abdomen - the female abdomen grows bigger and the male shrinks a little, but that difference is more noticeable when they reach maturity. Salticidae jumping spider males often change colours. Most striking is the Maratus group of peacock spiders which undergo amazing colour changes and 2 legs have extra growths. The 3rd sets of legs grows bigger and are shaped like paddles, which they wave about to get the attention of the females in mating season. I suppose there is no point looking special and waving the legs about until the right season.

In the Plexippus group the male has maturity changes, colours become more defined (no longer tabby cat like), they grow bigger, longer front legs which may be to enable him to hold the females at a safe distance or wrestle with other males for dominance. The other noticeable difference in Plexippus and some other Salticidae spiders I have seen, happens when maturity hormones take over and the male grows quickly to be much more bulky with a bigger thorax and head. Normally mature males have body about 10mm long but our visitor was only 8mm, hopefully he will be around again when fully mature with his strikingly long front legs, big head and thorax and outstanding black patches on his abdomen.



Above: Plexippus petersi Photo: Steve & Alison Pearson



Above: Young male Plexippus petersi in its camouflage colours Photo: Steve & Alison Pearson

#### Getting to Know Our Whitsunday Wildlife & Plants- Plexippus petersi continued:



The male Plexippus petersi I found was a little small and still at camouflaged stage camouflaged to blend into the environment. Now that we have sighted them here at Airlie Beach we can put them on our list. It has been so rewarding having the night light over a board and being able to monitor all the bugs that turn up night after night. Plexippus have also been recorded in Asia and are listed as introduced to Africa and Pacific islands. The records state that Plexippus may bite if held against the skin but the usual result of this is local and temporary pain and inflammation at the bite site but nothing worse than this—unless you have an allergy.

Left: Plexippus petersi Photo: Steve & Alison Pearson

## Citizen Science Workshop

Potential Alignments – Outstanding Achievements



A workshop to bring together citizen science groups relevant to reef health in the Mackay-Whitsunday region with partners from the Whitsunday water quality tourism blueprint project and scientists who are using data collected by these groups

#### DETAILS

#### FREE WORKSHOP

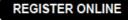
DATE: 12th December, 2019 TIME: 9am to 5pm LOCATION: Mantra Club Croc, 240 Shute Harbour Rd, Cannonvale QLD 4802 REGISTRATIONS CLOSE: 5th December, 2019

#### WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Intended outcomes:

- Recognise where needs align across citizen science groups and scientists and identify future opportunities
- Share with citizen scientists the outcomes of their efforts in the region

Together, citizen science groups will identify key priorities, challenges, enablers and barriers that their groups face. The intent behind this is to identify commonalities across different groups, facilitate connections with project partners and scientists and identify future opportunities. In particular, identifying if there is alignment in barriers for citizen scientists with impediments that prevent the regional report card from using more citizen science data. The workshop will also provide the opportunity for citizen science groups and their volunteers to hear how their data is used and the results of their data collection. This offers the opportunity to celebrate volunteer efforts and motivate them to continue their great work, knowing that the data is being used and contributes to the improvement of reef knowledge.



For more information, contact Cass Hayward at Reef Catchments 0429 155 841



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Above: Atalaya rigida emerging from the forest canopy.

This month our feature plant is one that flowered in our patch a few weeks ago. An obvious survivor in what was left in the rainforest after cyclone Debbie. Atalaya rigida of plant family Sapindaceae, with the common name Whipstick whitewood, is an elite emergent of the cyclone forest at our place. It has the common name- whipstick whitewood -because of one of its main features, its whippy-ness and is a member to the Sapindaceae (whitewood )genus. We have seen it 15 metres tall sticking out of the canopy of the cyclone forest, the tallest emergent, with a very clumpy top, big leaves and no branches below the canopy line yet its stem is so thin, with only about 15cm diameter trunk at 1.2m above ground.

The rainforest around it protects the lower section of trunk from strong winds so it does not need to be thick and strong, but the top is exposed to the winds and being whippy, it bends in the slightest breezes. It really whipped about in the cyclone but survived. It is so flexible that when it has a heavy flowering it even bends over with just the weight of its own large panicles of white flowers, up to 30cm long.

We have found that the caterpillar of one

*canopy. Photo: Steve & Alison Pearson* of the Lycaenidae blue butterflies eat the flowers and feed on the soft sappy new growing tip. These caterpillars have a nipple gland on one end sticking up. They are friendly with the Jungle green ants or weaver ants, Decophylla smaragdina, and when the ants touch that nipple gland it



Above: Atalaya rigida veiny compound leaves with alternating pinnate leaflets Photos: Steve & Alison Pearson



Above: Atalaya rigida flower detail Photos: Steve & Alison Pearson

exudes liquid that the ants love to consume and they hang around milking the grub gland very often. By having these farmer ants around all the time, it keeps all the other pests away and so the grub is protected. Amazingly we monitored a couple Lycaenidae chrysalis and found the ants stay around guarding and protecting them until they hatched. A lucky healthy butterfly emerged and was very quick to dry and fly, but we saw one that had problems and its wings were not fully formed – quick as a flash the ants grabbed it and took it away, "friends" to the end.

away, "friends" to the end. When the fruits of Atalaya develop, called a schizocarp, they are interesting and look like a 3 blade propeller of an aeroplane, sometimes the only have 2 blades and occasionally only 1 blade shaped like a tadpole as in the photos. When they are ripe, individual blades/tadpoles break away from the other 2 and flutter down like a rotating propeller, drifting away from the parent tree to land and

germinate, somewhere new to continue the species and be near others for cross pollination which ensures genetic diversity and survival capacity. Isn't it amazing?

The whippy whitewood tree has big thick and leathery compound leaves that are quite veiny and sometimes it is called Veiny whitewood. In a cyclone the leaves tatter and tear but remain on the tree. The leaves are pinnate and alternate, with up to 10 pairs of leaflets but have no terminal leaflet.



stipules. Photos: Steve & Alison Pearson

The Australian Tropical rainforest fact sheet states that:

"Flowers are white, functionally unisexual and monoecious, however variously described in literature as: polygamous (with unisexual and bisexual flowers present); falsely polygamous (with male flowers and apparently bisexual but functionally female flowers present); and dioecious. Flowers regular or slightly zygomorphic; sepals (4) 5, 3-3.5 mm long, 2-5 mm wide, thin and hoary outside; petals (4) 5, 7-8 mm long, 3-4 mm wide, obovate, hairy outside, inner surface with bilobed scale at base without crests; disc annular; male flowers: stamens 8 with rudimentary ovary; female flowers ovary superior, 3 locular with staminodes.

Above: Atalaya rigida distinctive axillary Leaves compound, pinnate, alternate, with 2, 4-8 or rarely 10 pairs of leaflets and no terminal leaflet; leaflet stalks 0-2 mm long, enlarged into a prominent basal

#### Getting to Know Our Whitsunday Wildlife & Plants- Atalaya rigida continued......



**Fruit** -dry, a schizocarp, 3-lobed, indehiscent but splitting into winged single-seeded samara-like mericarps. Each complete wing + basal seed part about 3.5-3.8 cm long. Seeds testa are soft and leathery.

Left: Atalaya rigida –early stage schizocarp (winged seed) Photos: Steve & Alison Pearson



Above: Atalaya rigida veiny compound leaves with alternating pinnate leaflets Photos: Steve & Alison Pearson

Atalaya rigida occurs in NEQ near Cairns, and CEQ and southwards to south eastern Queensland. Altitudinal range from sea level to 500 m. Grows in open forest, dry rainforest, and semi deciduous vine thickets.

Atalaya rigida is an interesting feature plant that occurs from Cairns to South Queensland and does well in our Whitsundays and host to pretty blue butterflies and other wildlife.

*Right: Young Atalaya rigida on the edge of remnant vegetation Photos: Christine Peterson* 

**Leaves** compound, pinnate, alternate, with 2, 4-8 or rarely 10 pairs of leaflets and no terminal leaflet; leaflet stalks 0-2 mm long, enlarged into a prominent basal pulvinule. Leaflet blades about 10-14.5 cm long, 4-7.5 cm wide leaflets broadly ovate to elliptic, glabrous, thick and leathery, shiny above, paler below; apex obtuse; base oblique; venation pinnate and prominent on both surfaces, 8-12 pairs of secondary veins; minor veins conspicuous.



WCL Community Nur Needs Seeds The WCL Nursery is very k endemic seed so please ke flowering native trees, shr volunteer nursery. Some o are: Acacia– all local species Archontophoenix alexandrae Aidia racemosa Atalaya rigida Breynia oblongifolia Cajanus reticulatus Calophyllum inophyllum Carallia brachiata Casuarina cunninghamiana Chionanthus ramiflorus Cordia subcordata Corymbia clarksoniana Corymbia intermedia Corymbia tessellaris Cryptocarya hypospodia Cupaniopsis anacardioides Elaeocarpus grandis Eucalyptus crebra Eucalyptus crebra Eucalyptus tereticornis Eucalyptus tessellaris Ficus racemosa Hymenosporum flavum Ganophyllum falcatum	een to source eep an eye on your ubs & grasses for the f the species we need Alexander Palm Archer Cherry Veiny Whitewood Coffee Bush Native Pigeon Pea Beauty leaf Freshwater mangrove River oak Native Olive Sea Trumpet Pink Bloodwood Morton Bay Ash Large leafed Laurel Tuckeroo Blue Quandang Narrow-leafed Ironbark QLD Peppermint QLD Peppermint QLD Blue Gum Morton Bay Ash Ribbonwood Cluster fig Native frangipani Scaly Ash	Melaleuca dealbata Melaleuca leucadendra Melaleuca viminalis Melicope elleryana Memecylon pauciflorum var. Micromelum minutum Pandanus sp. Ptychosperma elegans Sterculia quadrifida Syzygium australe Timonius timon Trema tomentosa var. aspen Vitex trifolia Guidelines for seed collect • Only collect seed from y with written permission • Source plants must hav from the Whitsunday Re • Collect ripe, mature see of the seed from any on • Collect from several par the middle & upper brar • Use paper bags (not pla & keep them in a cool p • Label the bag with the s and your name. Not sur tion? Include a stem wit take a photo. You can drop seed of Tuesday or Thursda	Native Lime Berry Solitaire palm Peanut Tree River cherry Tim Tam Tree ra Peach-leafed Poison Bush Vitex ting: your own property or re grown from seed egion ed & no more than 10% he plant rts of the plant, mainly nches astic ) to store the seed place species, location, date re of your identifica- th some leaves & /or f at the nursery on y mornings, or at
Ganophyllum falcatum Lophostemon confertus Lophostemon grandiflorus Lysiphyllum hookeri			y mornings, or at nments, oserpine, or
INTERESTING WEB SITES Native Animals, Insects, Birds		Media/Html/index_rfk.htm http://sgaptownsville.org.au/	

Native Animals, Insects, Birds: www.whitsundaylandcare.org.au http://www.wildlife.org.au/magazine/ http://www.aussiebee.com.au www.birdsinbackyards.net www.australianmuseum.net.au/reptiles http://birdlife.org.au/locations/birdlife-mackay/activitiesmac

Native plants:

http://ausgrass2.myspecies.info/content/oplismenus https://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/rfk/ http://www.canbr.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/RFK7/key/RFK7/ Media/Html/index\_rfk.htm http://sgaptownsville.org.au/ www.facebook.com.au/sgapmackay Wetlands

http://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/wetlands/ecology/ components/flora/mangroves/mangrove-moreton.html Feral Animals: feralflyer@invasiveanimals.com https://alumni.uq.edu.au/cane-toad-baits

Feral plants:

www.weeds.org.au www.environment.gov.au >Biodiversity >Invasive species > weeds www.iewf.org/weedid/index\_by\_reserve.htm

You can make a tax deductable donation to the Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Fund at any time. Just go to <u>http://www.givenow.com.au/whitsundaycatchmentlandcare</u> All donors will receive a receipt from Givenow at the time of the do-

> If you would like to receive this e-newsletter please email <u>coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au</u> with your request. Or you can phone Cath on mbl:0408-187-944 to request one.

Make a Donation

GiveNow.com.au

Disclaimer: Information in this newsletter is offered as a guide only and while every care is taken to ensure its accuracy, Whitsunday Catchment Landcare does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

#### **Thank You Everyone!**

Thank you to so many of you who have generously and kindly donated your container refunds to WCL. To date we have had **\$ 236.60 donated**. Please find below our Containers for Change ID number to conveniently cut off and include in your bags. Your contributions are allocated to the WCL Public Fund which allows WCL to take on various projects for the ongoing education of our members and the wider community. Thank You again!

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