



Whitsunday
Catchment
Landcare

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Annual Report

2019 –20 Financial Year

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare - Vision and Goal

To promote the planned and sustainable management of the O'Connell/Andromache, Proserpine and Gregory River catchments in a constructive and balanced way by actions such as promoting ecologically sustainable development, developing catchment management strategies, involving the community in NRM decision making, and promoting of the value of a coordinated catchment-wide approach for managing natural resources.

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Inc. is:

- An Incorporated and Registered Environmental Organisation
- Registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and is afforded Tax Deductible Gift recipient status from the Australian Taxation Office. WCL reports annually to the ACNC and the QLD Office of Fair Trading.
- A Not-for-profit Community based organisation that has been operating in the Whitsunday region since 1998.
- In 2019-20 WCL had 54 members and over 42 registered volunteers and 260 people receive our monthly newsletter.
- WCL has a Management Committee of 7 members, which include community, local council and industry representatives.
- WCL also has a Public Fund that is administered by a Public Fund Committee of 5 members, acting independently of the WCL Management Committee

WCL is a member of the Central Qld Coast Landcare Network, a partnership for the natural resource management of catchments in the Central Qld Coast bioregion: Pioneer, Sarina and Whitsunday Catchments.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Graham Armstrong- Chair;
Jacquie Sheils- Secretary
Glenda Hodgson- Treasurer;
Jim Dickens; Scott Hardy;
John Casey; CR. Ron Petterson

2019-20 STAFF:

Coordinator (P/T): Cath Campbell
Landcare Officer (P/T) Peter Alden/ Chris Barbeler
Nursery/Volunteer Coordinator (P/T): Nicole Murphy
Admin. Officer (P/T): Leigh Donkers

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Chairperson's Report 2019-2020

Graham Armstrong Chair -Whitsunday Catchment Landcare



I would first like to thank all the volunteers, members, and staff of WCL. You all continue to be the foundation of our organisation, enabling WCL to deliver on the wide range of projects and activities in which we were involved during the year. These on-ground projects and activities help to ensure that our special region will have a healthy and productive landscape well into the future. I do hope that, despite the intervention of COVID restrictions for several months, everyone had an enjoyable year of volunteer-based activities. I find it always an enriching experience to spend time with other volunteers at the nursery and out on the land planting out tube stock or collecting seeds or just enjoying the outdoors together.

Special thanks to our Coordinator, Cath Campbell, whose efforts saw WCL keep its employees and volunteers COVID safe, and still ensure that we received a number of grants and contracts that has kept our staff fully occupied & our volunteer program operating during the year. Cath is also responsible for our monthly newsletter helping keep us all informed and educated about our region. Thank you also to Steve and Alison Pearson for their regular contributions to this endeavour.

The management committee of 2019/20 was comprised of Scott Hardy, Jacquie Sheils, Glenda Hodgson, John Casey, Dale Mengel, CR Ron Petterson and myself. Meetings were held bimonthly and were well attended with the committee dealing with a variety of business and operational items. These included budgeting and financial issues related to the ongoing development of the WCL plant nursery, the continued employment of our staff, obtaining grant funding and resourcing the successful delivery of a range of contracts, grant funded projects and community activities. WCL is indeed well served by this committed group and I thank them for their invaluable service.

I would like to express our appreciation to a growing number of organisations and companies that have supported our efforts over the year especially, North Queensland Dry Tropics, Reef Catchments, Whitsunday Regional Council, Cane Growers & Sugar Services and Queensland Water and Landcarers. Kapow has overseen the development of our "new- look", upgraded Website. For a full list of all the organisations & businesses that have supported WCL during 2019-2020 (please see page 8 of this report). We greatly appreciate your ongoing support.

Our Community Nursery, with assistance from the Whitsunday Regional Council has expanded its footprint and remains a hive of activity with 42 registered volunteers actively engaged with plant propagation & revegetation project maintenance.

Improving the health of our waterways, large and small, especially with

regard to enhancing vegetation cover, remains one of the main objectives for WCL. WCL's participation in the Mackay, Whitsunday, Isaac Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership during 2019/20 is one example of how, with your support, we are working to improve our environment. Meanwhile, in our neighbouring region of the triple B (the Bowen, Bogie & Broken River region) the Landholders Driving Change Project is driving improved agricultural and grazing practices designed to increase productivity and minimise environmental impacts.

Of course, many challenges remain. Two new invasive species have recently entered the Mackay/Whitsunday area. Yellow Crazy Ants have established a foothold on the coast at Shute Harbour and the Indian Myna has finally reached our region thus completing its invasion of entire east coast of Australia. Combating invasive species is a time-consuming challenge and requires relentless management actions. In all these battles WCL and its partners have the potential to play an important part in tackling these problems across our landscape and I look forward to seeing increased action on the ground through the development of the many partnerships that as the chair of WCL I have continued to promote.

Now – where would you like these trees planted??

Coordinators Report- Cath Campbell

The 2019-20 financial year has been a tricky one for Whitsunday Catchment Landcare (WCL) and I would like to express my sincere appreciation of and respect for the WCL staff, for their dedication and professionalism whilst undertaking their roles, especially during the second half of the year, when we all had to adapt to the Covid 19 impacts. We successfully managed to keep working throughout by adjusting our working conditions, implementing processes that kept us communicating and we were able to fulfil our contract and grant obligations. I would also like to thank the WCL Management Committee for their support and confidence in the WCL staff.

Our Staff members have remained pretty constant, except for the retirement of Peter Alden. We were very sad to see Peter have to make the decision that it was time to move onto more cerebral contributions to the Landcare & conservation cause. He is still in the region and living the dream at his mountain hideaway– always available for advice & caring for his local patch.

To WCL's great benefit:

Chris Barbeler became our Landcare Officer in January 2020. Chris's youthful exuberance, qualifications and extensive experience, have enabled WCL to continue to undertake a variety of projects and contracts; model best practice revegetation and weed control and make persistent inroads into the implementation & management of these issues in our local area.

Continued over page....

Coordinators Report– continued:

Nicole Murphy commenced in the Nursery Coordinator role in January 2019 and has grown into the position. Nicole juggles volunteers, school groups and the management of the nursery, admirably. Nicole has overseen the production of over 20,000 native tube stock this year which have sold to NRM groups, local government agencies and the general public. Thank you Nicole for all you do for WCL.

WCL's Admin Officer, Leigh Donkers continues to provide her wealth of knowledge, experience, dedication & enthusiasm whilst undertaking her administrative role which she does with efficiency, accuracy, a great sense of humour– thank you Leigh for another interesting year.

I would also like thank our Casual Staff Wayne Oakley, Denise Hemingway for the hard work they have contributed during the 2019-20 contract works.

WCL continues to receive the substantial support of Reef Catchments (RC) and we are grateful for their ongoing provision of the office space and IT support. RC Staff continued to work in collaboration with WCL, which has seen some great environmental outcomes for the local area. WCL has been able to provide RC with contract services for revegetation, revegetation maintenance, and weed control projects. The money received from contracts & grants contributes to the ongoing employment of WCL staff and the undertaking of community/volunteer based activities and events. WCL has also engaged in contract work with North Queensland Dry Tropic undertaking a revegetation project at Whitsunday Paradise near Bowen. We are looking forward to strengthening our relationships with both NRM organisations.

This year saw a change to our relationship with Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) when our organisations signed a formal 10 year lease for the Community Nursery site at Kelsey Creek Road, Proserpine. Whilst the lease arrangement makes our organisation financially responsible for the operational costs, WRC still provides a rebate on our water use & donates the site rental. WCL now has security of tenure, which is reassuring to grant providers when applications are made for capital investments at the site. WRC also provides irrigation water and free mulch for our grant funded local revegetation sites. WRC staff have provided support and assistance, where they are able to and I would like to express our sincere appreciation for all their efforts.

I would also like to thank Cane Growers, Sugar Services Proserpine & National Parks for the generous provision of their boardroom/meeting room for our General meetings, at no charge.

Most importantly, a whole hearted thankyou is offered our 54 members and generous Volunteers. This year WCL had 42 registered & active volunteers who either attend our community nursery mornings, community plantings, seed collecting expeditions or site visits.

It has been a mixed bag this year as we had to suspend volunteer activities for a couple of months due to covid restrictions. So overall our volunteer hours were down compared to last years numbers.

From the **6th July 2019 to June 2020 WCL recorded a total 2130 volunteer hours which have been donated by WCL's generous and committed volunteers. The total dollar value of this equates to \$53,250.00 for this financial year.**

An extra special thank you is offered to the core of dedicated volunteers, (who still prefer to remain nameless) for their commitment to revegetation maintenance works at the Galbraith Creek Riparian project and at the Community nursery site.

A very special thank you also goes to Alison & Steve Pearson for their intriguing contributions to our monthly newsletter about local fauna and flora. I would also like to express my gratitude to all that have contributed to the upgrade of the website and keeping our Instagram & Facebook page up-to-date.

WCL continued to work in partnership with the Central Queensland Landcare Network (CQLN) improving the website and on contract works. Thank you to Sarina Landcare & Pioneer Landcare.

Our largest grant for the 19-20 & 20-21 financial years was provided by the QLD Government's Community Sustainability grants program—Protecting Threatened Species. This has provided funds (\$31,444.00 ex GST) for WCL to undertake weed control & revegetation planting and maintenance within the endangered littoral rainforest plant communities at Nelly Bay, Dingo Beach & Hydeaway Bay.

Our Community Nursery continues to be a significant contributor to our organisation through plant sales to the local community, agency revegetation projects & Whitsunday Regional Council projects. Donations of plants for National Tree Day were offered to all local schools. Proserpine State High School Students attended practical propagation skills sessions 8 times during the year.

WCL continues to offer a range of fee for service Land Management Advice, Weed Control Services & Equipment hire to local landholders. I continue to apply for grants from a variety of sources, but there is always a lot of competing applications & we explore every opportunity to increase our funding sources.

Thank you again to all of WCL supporters for their generosity, hard work and dedication to Whitsunday Catchment Landcare.

*Yours Sincerely,
Cath Campbell– WCL Coordinator.*

Program Area		Activities	Funded by
Community Program	Revegetation and Seed Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor, Nelly Bay, Cannonvale Botanic Gardens. Undertake regular site visits by volunteers for endemic seed collection and planting. 	WCL-Operating reserves
	Public Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCL website upgraded. Broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information available at events as well as at the WCL Community Nursery Monthly Newsletter, Facebook Page and Website. Fielding land management questions over the phone, by email, in person, at the nursery and at the WCL office Social media pages– Facebook & Instagram 	WCL– Operating Reserves. NRM Information sourced from various Govt. organisations
	School and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proserpine High School– Student visits to the nursery for 8 practical sessions in plant propagation. National Tree Day- Community event cancelled due to Covid but plant donations were offered to all schools. 	WCL Operating Reserves. Proserpine High School.
	Weed control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular covid safe site visits by volunteers to undertake bush regeneration activities through the removal of weeds and rubbish from Galbraith Park (143 hours in total) Weed control at 2 remnant Littoral rainforest site at Dingo Beach & Nelly Bay 	State Government Grant, WCL Operating Reserves.
Volunteer Program	Community Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propagation of a wide variety of endemic plants for supply to the community and WCL revegetation projects. A total of 16,805 plants were sold this year with well over 20,000 plants propagated at the nursery. Broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information is available. At the Community Nursery. 1464 Plants donated to Local schools, National Tree day events& community groups. 	WCL Operating Reserves.
	Volunteer Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twice weekly events at the community nursery–plant propagation, seed processing & revegetation site maintenance– a total of 1987 volunteer hours dedicated to the Community Nursery. Site visits to public reserves to collect seed, undertake revegetation projects and maintenance of visits to Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor –seed collecting, Site visit to undertake planting on one of our volunteers property. Annual Christmas Lunch at Whitsunday Coffee Cafe National Tree Day– WCL site at Galbraith Park (35 attendants for 140 volunteer hours) WHS– all new volunteers undertake a workplace safety induction when volunteering with WCL 	WCL-Operating Reserves.
Self-generated funding	Contract works and Plant sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endemic Plant supply– 16805 tube stock cash sales WCL– Land Management Advice & weed control Equipment hire Weed control, revegetation & site maintenance contracts– Whitsunday Paradise Revegetation & site Maintenance, Littoral Rainforest Revegetation– Nelly Bay, NDRAA –4 sites at ST. Helens Creek & O'Connell River revegetation & ongoing maintenance, Gregory River Weed Control, Myrtle Creek Revegetation, Lantana control on grazing property, Twin Creeks revegetation. 	Reef Catchments - NRM , NQDT Whitsunday Regional Council projects. Private Sales.

In 2019– 20 WCL was unable to undertake or participate in the usual wide range of community projects & activities, due to the impacts of Covid 19 restrictions. But we have achieved the following:

Community Program: Funded from: WCL-Operating reserves

Revegetation and Seed collection- Undertake regular site visits by volunteers for endemic seed collection and planting at Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor, Nelly Bay. Cannonvale Botanic Garden.

Public Education: Funded from: WCL-Operating reserves. An extensive selection of Sustainable Land Management, weed control information was made available at the WCL Community Nursery. (NRM Information sourced from various Govt. organisations.)

- Monthly Newsletter, Social Media pages– Facebook & Instagram and Website. Fielding land management questions over the phone, by email, in person, at the nursery and at the WCL office
- 2 General Meetings with guest speakers.

School and Community Engagement: Funded from: WCL-Operating reserves

- Proserpine High School– Student visits to the nursery for 8 practical sessions in plant propagation.
- National Tree Day- July 2019 event at Galbraith Riparian corridor & plant donations to all local schools for their own projects

Weed control & Revegetation: Funded from Queensland Government Grant, WCL Operating Reserves.

Regular site visits by volunteers to undertake bush regeneration activities through the removal of weeds and rubbish from environmentally sensitive areas such as Nelly Bay Beach Scrub, Dingo Beach & Hydeaway Bay and at Galbraith Creek riparian Corridor.

Volunteer Program: Funded from State & Federal grants & WCL Operating Reserves

- Community Nursery- Propagation of a wide variety of endemic plants for supply to the community and WCL revegetation projects. A total of 16,805 plants were sold this year with well over 20,000 plants were propagated at the nursery.
- Broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information is available.
- WH&S WCL provides all new volunteers with safety inductions & training in the use of equipment and resources for volunteer activities.

Volunteer Activities– funded from WCL-Operating Reserves.

Volunteer events at the community nursery -except for the period of March to July- when we ceased volunteer activities due to covid 19 restrictions) –plant propagation, seed processing & site maintenance. WCL had 38 registered volunteers in 2019–20, who attend our regular community nursery mornings, community plantings, seed collecting or site visits. The later half of the financial year saw strict covid safe protocols introduced at the nursery to minimize risks & attendance numbers regulated. All our Volunteers are asked to follow these protocols and new volunteers are inducted in workplace health and safety, nursery practices and safe engagement when going "bush". Twice weekly volunteer events resumed at the WCL Community Nursery and these are well attended, socially distanced and our many regulars have adapted and continued to attend. Activities at the nursery include: propagating of endemic plants, processing seed, recording propagation methods and results, nursery site maintenance, social interaction, great morning teas. Our once per month "off site" alternative activities such as seed collecting and site visits to Landcare friends or volunteers properties where also restricted by covid limitations & constrained by our staffing capacity. Our volunteers have continued to staff the nursery for opening to the public, on the first Saturday of every month, with hand sanitizing and social distancing protocols in place.

- **Site visits to public reserves to collect seed, undertake revegetation projects, site maintenance and visit vegetation communities of interest.** 143 total Volunteer hours invested at Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor, **on weed control, mulching and rubbish removal.**
- Annual Christmas Lunch at the Whitsunday Coffee Plantation in November 2019 (those were the days before covid)
- National Tree Day 28th July 2019– 105 volunteer hours

Grants Received during 2019-20

- QLD Government—Gambling Community Benefit Fund- \$19,348– \$8,300 held over into 2019-20 financial year & used for infrastructure improvements at the Community Nursery.
- QLD Government– Community Sustainability Action Grant Program– Conserving Threatened Species—\$31,444.00.
- Family & Communities Grant Program Volunteer Grants- \$4,990.

Self-generated funding: Contract works and Plant sales.

- Endemic Plant supply– 16805 tube stock sales (excluding plant sales made as part grants & contract funds)
- WCL– Land Management Advice & weed control Equipment hire.
- In the last 6 years WCL has undertaken contract work for local organisations such as Reef Catchments, North Queensland Dry Tropics and Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC). This contract work has enabled WCL to earn small profits, which has in turn, been spent on activities untied to external grant obligations, such as our volunteer, school and community engagement activities. Contract works in 2019-20 have included: Weed control- Gregory River Riparian corridor; Riparian Revegetation Planting & maintenance– St. Helens Creek– 3 separate sites, O’Connell River– 1 site; Revegetation Projects- Whitsunday Paradise– Littoral Rainforest restoration; Prickly Pear Biological Weed Control - Conway Beach. Native Tube stock supply- DNRAA– St. Helens & O’Connell River riparian revegetation, Twin Creek Riparian project; many local landholders.
- WCL has hired out its Quikspray trailer, provided land management advice and undertaken weed control on a fee for service basis to private landholders.

Publications:

Monthly Newsletter, Social media pages and Website. WCL produces a monthly newsletter that we distribute to our members and many other interested people or organisations. A special thank you goes to Steve & Alison Pearson for their terrific contributions to our newsletter– these interesting articles about & photographs of the local fauna & flora, continues to make a valuable contributions to our newsletter. Two General Meetings with guest speakers were held during the year. Six Management Committee meetings were held on alternate months to the General meetings.



Above: WCL Farewelling one of our volunteers March 2020 Photo: D. Young



Left: WCL Volunteers at our Christmas lunch– 05.12.2019 Photo: L. Donkers



Above: WCL Volunteers at the Galbraith mulching party Photo: J Sheils



Above: Young WCL Volunteers at Galbraith Creek Riparian Corridor – Photo: C. Campbell



Above: WCL Volunteers planting at Galbraith Park– National Tree Day 28 July 2019. Photo: C. Campbell



Above: WCL Volunteers planting at Galbraith Park– National Tree Day 28 July 2019. Photo: C. Campbell

Working Groups/ Committees Supported

- Central Qld Coast Landcare Network
- WRC Pest Management Committee
- Mackay Whitsunday Regional Pest Management Group
- WCL Public Fund Committee
- Healthy Rivers to Reef
- Fauna Rescue Whitsundays



*Left: Dingo Beach foreshore reserve
Photo: L. Donkers*

Thank you to all those below for your ongoing support of Whitsunday Catchment Landcare

- Reef Catchments NRM, for hosting the WCL Office during 2019-2020, providing their ongoing support to WCL activities and grant applications and the opportunity to obtain NRM contracts that facilitate the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment in the Whitsunday Region.
- Whitsunday Regional Council– Administrative Staff, Parks and Gardens Department, Waste Management Department, Proserpine and Cannonvale Depot staff , Pest Control and Local Laws Officers. Purchasing plants and partnering in revegetation projects.
- North Queensland Dry Tropics– for providing contract funding for a revegetation project.
- Canegrowers & Sugar Services Proserpine for their continuing support, generous provision of their boardroom for our General meetings
- National Parks & Wildlife– Jubilee Pocket for providing their meeting room for our General meetings
- Kapow Interactive for their ongoing support for the Central Queensland Landcare Network and WCL.
- Bendigo Bank– Cannonvale for their help in the financial management of WCL.
- C.E Smith Accountants– for their Auditing of the WCL financials.
- Irrigear Whitsundays for their generous discounts and assistance with equipment, irrigation at the nursery and revegetation sites.
- Aldabra Nursery for potting soil supply.
- Climate Classics for prompt supply of work shirts.
- Cannonvale Fire Protection for keeping our fire extinguishers up to date– Thank you Nigel.
- Whitsunday Mowers Pty LTD– for servicing our small machinery.

And last but not least-

- Federal and State Governments Grants programs that support Environmental projects and Volunteer support grants.



Above: O'Connell River contract revegetation site planted in May 2019.
Photo: C. Barbeler



Above: O'Connell River contract revegetation site . This photo was taken in September 2019 Photo: C. Barbeler



Above: One of WCL contract Revegetation sites on the O'Connell River
11.12.2019 Photo: L. Donkers



Left: O'Connell River contract Revegetation site
07.05.2020 Photo: C. Barbeler



*WCL Community Nursery 2020
Photo: C. Campbell*