



Whitsunday  
Catchment  
**Landcare**

# Newsletter

March 2023. Editor: C. Campbell

[www.whitsundaylandcare.org.au](http://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.*

#### COORDINATOR:

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#### 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 you're interested in doing your bit for the environment and socialising with like-minded people, we offer coordinated activities on Tuesday & Thursday mornings and more. Contact us!*

#### WCL Management Committee:

Frank Millar, Chair

Jacque Sheils, Secretary

Cath Campbell, Treasurer

Dale Mengel

Canegrowers rep. John Casey

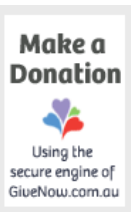
WRC rep. CR. Gary Simpson

*WCL is a community not-for-profit group, relying on grants & donations to assist with works such as revegetation.*



We are a registered charity; donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. To make a donation please contact us or go to our page:

[www.givewow.com.au](http://www.givewow.com.au)



## Coming Up

### Nursery Volunteer Activities:

Tuesday & Thursday morning 9am to 12 noon at the Community Nursery. 33 Kelsey Creek Road Proserpine

### Weed Walkers in the National Park: Thursday 16th March.

9am till 12noon.

Meet in the shelter shed near the carpark.

Conway National Park Picnic area. Turn right off Shute Harbor approx. 0.5 km past the Whitsunday Airport

Mosquitos will be an issue so please wear appropriate clothing, Closed in shoes, bring a hat & your water bottle. Refills station will be available. Morning tea provided.

### Landcare Nursery Open for Plant Sales (33 Kelsey Creek Rd)

**When:** Every Tues and Thurs and 1st Sat. of each month (3rd December) 9 am to 12 noon. Cash payments or EFTPOS available.

## Native Plant Seeds Wanted

We are currently seeking seed of the following species. If you can help please contact us or bring some in. Remember, we need local provenance i.e. the parent tree is growing in the Whitsundays naturally rather than planted from nursery stock elsewhere.



Casuarina cunninghamiana

Casuarina equisetifolia

Clerodendrum floribundum

Cryptocarya triplinervis

Eugenia reinwardtiana

Euroschinus falcata

Falcataria toona

Flueggia virosa

Glycosmis trifoliata

Guioa lasioneura

Hibiscus tiliaceus

Homalanthus nutans - fruiting now

Larsenaikia jardinei - fruiting now

Lomandra longifolia

Macaranga tanarius - fruiting now

Maytenus disperma

Lophostemon suaveolens

Micromelum minutum

Murraya ovatifoliolata (or cuttings)

Planchonia careya - Summer fruiting

Scolopia braunii

Syzygium australe - Summer fruiting

Tabernaemontana orientalis

Terminalia sericocarpa

Trema orientalis

*Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum* (yes that's a real name), pictured above, isn't on this list, but we'll take these too!

WCL receives support from the following:



Australian Government  
Department of the Environment



## Grants Available via Reef Catchments

Grants are available for eligible landholders to assist them with stock and pest animal control so they can improve and maintain healthy riparian zones within their properties.



**The Preparing Australian Communities: Nature Based Solutions to Build Regional Resilience project** is offering grants for fencing and off-stream watering points to landholders who:

- live in the Reef Catchments Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Natural Resource Management region
- have a stream or creek within their properties
- have cattle with uncontrolled access to creeks
- wish to manage pest animals.

### Funding available

- Riparian fencing for stock control (up to 40% of total cost to a maximum of \$6,000/km)
- Riparian fencing for pest exclusion (up to 40% of total cost to a maximum of \$7,200/km)
- Off stream watering points (up to 40% of total cost to a maximum of \$7,000, or \$11,000 if a new bore is required for the first watering point; and a maximum of \$2000 for each additional watering point).

### Increasing resilience to severe weather events

Creeks and streams that have good vegetation coverage on banks and adjacent riparian land have greater resistance to the effects of severe events such as floods and cyclones.

Disturbance from stock and pest animals can damage stream bank vegetation, leading to significant erosion damage and often loss of productive agricultural land.

We can be proactive in maintaining and

enhancing the resilience of our streambanks and riparian areas by installing fencing and associated off-stream watering points to control stock access and exclude pest animals.

### Benefits of riparian fencing

- improve stock management
- protect crops by removing safe havens for pest animals
- improve property values and aesthetics
- increase biodiversity
- prevents loss of productive agricultural land.

### How to apply:

For further information or to submit an Expression of interest:

[michael.boland@reefcatchments.com](mailto:michael.boland@reefcatchments.com)

**07 4968 4200**

*This project has received grant funding from the Australian Government*

## Critter Feature

### Moth Butterfly (*Liphyra brassolis*)

The larvae of this species live inside Green Tree Ant nests and feed on the eggs and larvae of the ants.



The adults have a very short lifespan so they may not be seen very often. This specimen was alive during the night, but deceased the next morning.



Photos: Graham Armstrong.



## Cape Gloucester– Nelly Bay, Dingo Beach & Hideaway Bay

WCL has acquitted our QLD State Government **Community Sustainability Action Grant – Gloucester Beach Scrub Project** This project invested a little over \$31,000 into the project, which funded weed control & site preparation for the replanting of endemic seedlings, establishment watering & ongoing maintenance. The Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets– known as “beach scrub” species seedling’s were propagated and on-grown at the WCL Community Nursery from seed collected from the sites.

WCL volunteers & staff have been tending the sites for many years now and during the grant duration visited the sites to undertake seed collection, supplementary planting, watering and weed control.

There were a few occasions during this grant period round, where vandalism has been an issue with planted areas being poisoned or seedlings pulled out and on one occasion illegal vehicle access onto the beach cut a swath through plantings. But persistence pays off and WCL as well as the local volunteers, have kept on with the project objectives by replanting and holding beach scrub walk & talks to increase local knowledge & community values for the importance of the plant community, as well as local eyes on the ground information.

A big thank you to the QLD State Government for providing these grants, Whitsunday Regional Council & Reef Catchments have also assisted with funding & on-ground installation of physical protections of the vegetated areas.

The Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia ecological community is found on the east coast of Australia, typically within two kilometres of the coast, or adjacent to a large body of salt water (such as an estuary), or on offshore islands. This ecosystem is currently listed nationally, under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) as a critically endangered plant community. Threats to this ecosystem are mainly due to the impacts of coastal development, illegal clearing which make it vulnerable to impacts of severe weather events.

The Beach Scrub plays a vital roll in protecting the coast from the impacts on severe weather events. The vegetation community, growing

predominantly in the sand or sandy soils, has a wide variety of species. Dense layered vegetation that form a dense barrier behind the frontline dune plant species of *Casuarina equisetifolia*, *Sophora tomentosa*, *Ipomea littoralis*, *Canavalia rosea*, *Caesalpinia bonduc*, *Clerodendrum inerme* & *Vitex trifolia* .

Just a few of the plants that you will be able to find at Nelly Bay Beach Scrub include:

*Alphitonia excelsa*, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Arytera divaricata*, *Brachychiton australis*, *Capparis sp.*, *Celtis paniculata*, *Celtis philippinensis*, *Diospyros geminata*, *Drypetes deplanchei*. *Eugenia reinwardtiana*, *Ficus opposita*, *Ficus rubignosa*, *Ganophyllum falcatum*, *Geigeria salicifolia*, *Grewia oxyphylla*, *Jasminum didymium*, *Mallotus philippensis*, *Melia azedarach*, *Micromelum minutum*, *Millettia pinnata*, *Mimusops elengi*, *Olea paniculata*, *pariserianthes toona*, *Phyllanthus novae-hollandiae*, *Polyalthia nitidissima*, *Sterculia quadrifida*, *Terminalia muelleri*.

[www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/publications/littoral-rainforest](http://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/publications/littoral-rainforest)

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=littoral+rainforest+and+coastal+vine+thickets#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:54853691,vid:uaYB9rb>



Photo above: Revegetation area in November 2020. Photo: C. Barbeler



Photo above: Revegetation area in May 2022  
Photo: C. Barbeler

## What's Showing



Commersonia bartramia  
Photo: David Peplinkhouse

**Scientific name:** *Commersonia bartramia*

**Family:** Byttneriaceae (prev. Sterculiaceae)

**Description:** A small spreading tree with layered branches, 5-12/20mm



Commersonia bartramia leaves  
Photo: Christine Peterson

**Leaves:** Ovate to broad ovate, dull green above, whitish beneath, margins irregularly toothed, 6-15cm long and 4-10cm wide. Margins entire to toothed with 4-6 teeth per cm. Lower surface tomentosa, yellowish to greenish grey. Petiole 10.20mm long

**Flowers:** Cream, 0.4-0.6cm diameter, massed together in sprays above the leaves, looking like snow on the branches.

**Fruit:** Rounded, grey-brown, 5 valves capsules 2-2.5cm in diameter covered in soft bristles. Each contains 5 seeds.

**Bark:** White to grey, mottled with conspicuous lenticels.

**Propagation:** Propagate from seed or stem cuttings. Seeds can be extracted from the pods by putting them in a calico bag and crushing the pods with a hammer.

**Notes:** Commersonia bartramia is a fast growing pioneer species found in disturbed areas, clearings adjacent to forest and along creek banks. Grows in well developed rainforest on a variety of sites and is favored by disturbance and is characteristic of rainforest regrowth. It's summer flowering makes it very conspicuous, with a very Christmassy 'snow in summer' effect. The twig & inner bark produces a strong fibre that Aboriginals used to make nets. Cattle eat the foliage and the wood burns well.

Found from central NSW to Cape York and through PNG to SE Asia.

### Sources:

[http://ntbg.org/plants/plant\\_details.php?](http://ntbg.org/plants/plant_details.php?plantid=11923)

[plantid=11923](http://ntbg.org/plants/plant_details.php?plantid=11923)

[http://keys.trin.org.au/key-server/data/0e0f0504-0103-430d-8004-060d07080d04/media/Html/taxon/Commersonia\\_bartramia.htm](http://keys.trin.org.au/key-server/data/0e0f0504-0103-430d-8004-060d07080d04/media/Html/taxon/Commersonia_bartramia.htm)

<http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?>

[page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Commersonia~bartramia](http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=sp&name=Commersonia~bartramia)



Commersonia bartramia flowers & seed capsule  
Photo: Peter Alden

### NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED

WCL members & volunteers are invited to submit articles for the monthly newsletter. We are especially keen to hear about your success, learnings or problems that relate to revegetation projects that you have undertaken in cooperation with WCL. If you would like to submit please forward your items identified as: "Newsletter contribution" to [coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au](mailto:coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au)

## Pest hall of Fame.

**Family:** Agavaceae

**Common name:** Giant Cabuya, Green-aloë or Mauritius-hemp, Cuban hemp, false agave, giant false agave, giant cabuya, giant lily, green aloë, maguey, Mauritian hemp, Mauritius hemp, sisal

**Scientific Name:** *Furcraea foetida* syn. *Agave foetida*, *Agave gigantea*  
*Furcraea gigantea*

**Description:** A large, rosette succulent from northern South America, widely cultivated for fibre. This species is commonly naturalised in the coastal districts of eastern Australia (i.e. in south-eastern and central Queensland and the coastal districts of central and northern New South Wales). It has also occasionally become naturalised in south-western Western Australia, on Lord Howe Island and on Norfolk Island. A cultivar "Mediopicta" has variegated cream and pale green foliage. Used extensively by the landscape industry & promoted by the nursery trade. Mauritius hemp has very fleshy leaves and it forms a large rosette of leaves up to 2m tall and can get up to 3.5m wide. The main stem or trunk at the base of the plant is quite short (i.e. less than 1 m tall and often only 20-30 cm tall) and is usually hidden below the leaves. The large flowering stems are green, hairless (i.e. glabrous), and very robust. Cuban hemp (*Furcraea foetida*) is very similar to variegated false agave (*Furcraea selloa*) and relatively similar to century plant (*Agave americana*), Caribbean agave (*Agave angustifolia*) and the sisals (*Agave sisalana* and *Agave vivipara*).

**Leaves:** The leaves are sword-shaped, 1-2 m long and 10-15 cm broad at their widest point, narrowing to 6-7 cm broad at the leaf base, and to a sharp spine tip at the apex; the margins are entire or with a few hooked spines

**Flowers:** It will produce an upright inflorescence up to 7.5m tall that has 4cm long greenish to creamy white flowers. Strongly scented. Flowers are borne in a drooping position and are whitish or greenish-white in colour & produced during autumn and winter. Flowering usually only occurs once, with the whole plant dying about 1 year after the onset of flowering.

**Fruit:** It doesn't produce capsules, instead developing numerous plantlets on the branches of its flower clusters.

**Reproduction & dispersal** This species reproduces by plantlets (i.e. bulbils), which are formed by the thousands on the branches of the massive flower clusters.

Gravity is the main natural means of dispersal, and dense thickets often form around individual plants. These plantlets may also be spread larger distances by animals, in soil, or in dumped garden waste.

**Control:** Is regarded as an environmental weed in Western Australia and Queensland. It is known to invade coastal sites and cliffs, gullies, hillsides and open woodlands where it crowds out native species. Tolerant of aqueous sprays of glyphosate.

See Agave Fact sheet for recommended control methods within specific landscape contexts:

<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity/invasive-plants-animals/fact-sheets>



Photo above: *Furcraea foetida*. Flower spikes. Source: Lucidcentral.org



Photo above: *Furcraea foetida*. Plantlets germinating from bulbils. Source: C. Peterson



Photo above: *Furcraea foetida*. Plant form. Source: C. Peterson



Photo above: *Furcraea foetida*. Flower detail. Source: Lucidcentral.org

### Sources:

<https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/species-search/details/?id=11724>

[https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/furcraea\\_foetida.htm](https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/furcraea_foetida.htm)

and Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region. Mackay Regional Pest Management Group.

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