



Whitsunday
Catchment
Landcare

Newsletter

May/June 2023. Editor: C. Campbell

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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Vacant

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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

Jacquie Sheils, Secretary

Cath Campbell, Treasurer

Dale Mengel

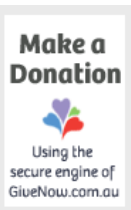
Canegrowers rep. John Casey

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.givewell.com.au



Coming Up

Community Nursery 33 Kelsey Creek Rd

Volunteer Activities:

Tuesday & Thursday mornings 9am to 12 noon.

Volunteer activities include Plant Propagation, Native seed sowing & preparation, nursery maintenance tasks and a great morning tea.

When: **Wednesday 24th May, Saturday 27th May and Friday 2nd June**

8 am start

Where: **Nelly Bay** (meet at the first car park)

What: **Littoral Rainforest Rehabilitation**; assist in the rehabilitation of our endangered beach scrub. Bush regeneration – careful removal of weeds. Learning identification of our native plants as well as weeds.

When: **Thursday 25th May**

8 am start

Where: **Dingo Beach** (meet at the end of Olive Street)

What: **Littoral Rainforest Rehabilitation**

When: **Thursday 1st June**

8 am start

Where: **Don River Mouth, Bowen**

What: **ReefClean Marine Debris Monitoring** - Setting up transects and collecting/recording marine debris. General beach clean-up.

When: **Monday 12th and Tuesday 13th June**

8 am start

Where: **Wilson's Beach and Conway Beach**

What: **ReefClean Marine Debris Monitoring** - Setting up transects and collecting/recording marine debris. General beach clean-up.

Please contact us at coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au for more detail, to let us know you are coming along (so that we can contact you if there are changes or cancellations), or if you require a lift to the sites as there may be room in the WCL vehicle or carpooling opportunities with other volunteers. For all our field activities please wear closed in shoes, sun safe clothing, hat, and sunscreen. BYO gloves if you have them, water bottle and snacks. WCL will provide water refills and light morning tea.

**Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Community Nursery
21st Birthday Celebration.
Saturday 15th of July. 9am - 11am**

See page 2 for more information

The Landcare Community Nursery is open for Plant Sales every Tuesday and Thursday and the 1st Saturday of each month from 9.00 am to 12 noon. Next open Saturday is 3rd June. Cash or EFTPOS available.

WCL receives support from the following:



Australian Government
Department of the Environment



National Volunteer Week 15th - 21st May 2023

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL THE
FANTASTIC VOLUNTEERS
that contribute to the success of
Whitsunday Catchment Landcare projects.

We really appreciate all the hard work you do
at the nursery, at revegetation plots, in our
bushland, on our management committee and
in the office. WCL would not be what it is
without YOU.

WCL Community Nursery 21st Birthday Celebration

The Community Nursery has been operating
at the Kelsey Creek Road site **for 21 years!**

To celebrate, we are having a special birthday
morning tea on the **15th of July – 9am to
11pm.**

**All past and present members and
volunteers are invited to attend and share
in celebrating our achievements. Come
along and see the many improvements to
facilities over the years.**

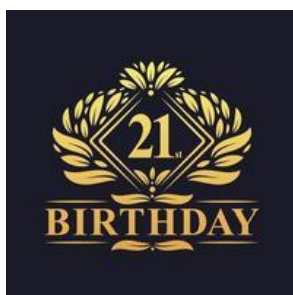
Staff and experienced volunteers will be on
hand to provide guided nursery tours as well
as information on:

- Native plants for the garden
- Revegetation establishment
- Weed identification and control
- Various weed control equipment

Native plants will also be available for
purchase.

**Plus we'd like to share our Birthday cake
and a tea or coffee with you.**

**Don't forget to collect your
lucky door prize ticket on the way in!**



Gliding Free

Jan Armstrong

This year Graham and I decided to purchase two Habitech modular nest boxes to replace tree hollows that had come down in recent storms. The boxes were specifically ordered to suit our local gliders (Krefft's and Squirrel). It soon became apparent how physically taxing the installation of the boxes would be. It required the help of our friend and another enthusiastic Landcare volunteer (Dave) who provided the second ladder and the chainsaw to cut away the bark for the backing plate. We could not have done it without his help. We also required lots of rope.



Photo above: Habitat: Habitech modular nest box installed in *Corymbia tessellaris*.

Photo: J. Armstrong

It is a dream come true having the animals gliding wild in our backyard. There is nothing like feeling the dense soft fur of a Sugar glider sitting in the palm of your hand and having its tail wrapped gently around your fingers. Such was



Photo above: Squirrel glider in our Strathdiekie front garden sitting in a *Euroschinus falcatus* (Ribbonwood)

my experience 34 years ago when working in Adelaide for the South Australian Museum. I bred them, raised them and loved them. The gliders were also a test of Graham's commitment because when we were dating, he never even complained when one launched from the curtain rail and landed on his face in the middle of the night.

The photos show the results of our hard work. Hopefully our wildlife camera will pick up future comings and goings.

Photo right: Two unit model showing backing plate, customized entrance for gliders, made from moulded UV-stabilised polypropylene, drainage slots, double walled with timber inserts for temperature and humidity control



Photo: J. Armstrong

Weed Walkers at the Whitsunday Great Walk – Brandy Creek

Cath Campbell

On the 20th April a crew of 5 volunteers and WCL staff ventured along the old forestry road at the Brandy Creek end of the Great Walk in the Conway National Park. It was a lovely day-cooler & the lower humidity making the walking, even nicer. We met in the carpark at 9am to spray up for mossies and decide upon the target weed for this visit.

Solanum seafortianum (Brazilian Nightshade) was to be our weed of choice - with a great example adorning one of the trees alongside the carpark. Solanum is an obvious target at this time of the year, as the large clusters of fruit are turning bright red, advertising their presence to all the fruit eating birds. We managed to get almost to the Wompoo Walk turn off, with lots of plant species identification along the way and taking of photos for the ones we couldn't be certain of, for later research. Then on our way back to the carpark we pulled out & bagged all the Solanum plants we had seen on the way in. No point in carrying the filling weed bags further than you need too.

One of our group was very keen to find the local *Melicope bonwickii*, known to occur in the Conway NP and yes we found 2 specimens just by the track. Other species we saw included *Canophyllum australianum* (Alligator Bark) and *Rubus moluccanus* var. *trilobus* and a lovely little Cordyline with an orange coloured fruit- most likely *C. murchisoniae*. Many thanks to Penny Taylor for her follow up research.

A couple of groups of morning walkers passed us, asking what we were up to and then laughed at the extent of our progress, on their return journey to the carpark.

We observed & heard lots of birds, a small snake (to quick to identify) and a goanna sunning itself in warming sunlight, streaming through a break in the canopy onto the track. Sadly the feral pigs had been busy along the edges of the track. It is amazing how much damage they cause digging up the *Alpinia caerulea* (native ginger) rhizomes and the other piggy delicacies they find.

Once we got back to the carpark we did our best to remove the Solanum adorning the trees along the forest edge, paying particular attention to collecting and bagging the fruits/seeds for disposal, and tracing the vine back to its point of origin at the soil level. This was then cut & carefully painted with herbicide by staff member Kayla Simpson.

Thank you to the volunteers that attended, for your time & efforts. All our bush regeneration weed removal activities make an impact on the improving the botanical integrity of the national park. We walk the most used paths/ tracks as this is a significant entry point for weeds-seeds can be brought in on clothes, bags, shoes & wheels, as well as birds & animals that may have eaten the weeds' fruit or have it stuck to their fur.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page and newsletter, or contact us directly if you are interested in attending. This work is conducted under our Volunteer Deed with Department of Environment and Science.



Whitsunday Catchment Landcare volunteers & staff - Intrepid Weed Walkers - at the Whitsunday Great Walk in April.
Photo: Cath Campbell

What's Showing

Scientific name: *Melicope bonwickii*

Family: Rutaceae

Description: *Melicope bonwickii* grows up to 40 metres (130 ft) tall.

Distribution and habitat:

Melicope bonwickii occurs naturally in Java and the Philippines, and southward to New Guinea and north-eastern Australia. It grows in rainforest from sea level to an altitude of 900 m (3,000 ft). In Australia it is found from the Atherton Tableland to near Proserpine in northern Queensland. Grows in well developed lowland and upland rain forest but probably reaching its best development on soils derived from basalt. This species is favoured by disturbance and as it is a fast growing species it can compete quite successfully with the regrowth species. Also occurs in Malesia (the Philippines, Borneo, Java and New Guinea).

Leaves: The leaves are trifoliate on a petiole 30–95 mm (1.2–3.7 in) long, the end leaflet egg-shaped with the narrower end towards the base, sessile, 100–300 mm (3.9–11.8 in) long and 50–150 mm (2.0–5.9 in) wide.

Flowers: The flowers are bisexual and are borne in panicles 35–100 mm (1.4–3.9 in) long, in leaf axils. The sepals are more or less round, 1.5–2 mm (0.059–0.079 in) long and joined at the base. The petals are pink, rarely white, about 4.5 mm (0.18 in) and are hairy with a ridge on the back. There are four stamens. Occurring March to June. When this species flowers, large numbers of birds are attracted and the noise emanating from the assemblage suggests that there may be an ingredient in the nectar which modifies their normal behavior.

Fruit: Individual fruiting carpels about 4-6 mm long. Seeds about 2-3 mm diam. Aril shiny black on the outer surface, completely enclosing the seed. Testa tuberculate rugose. Seed germination time 33 to 67 days

Bark: Lenticels quite large. White, granular, vertical stripes in the outer blaze.

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: This species was first formally described in 1865 by Ferdinand von Mueller who gave it the name *Euodia bonwickii* and published the description in *Fragmenta phytographiae Australiae* from specimens collected by John Dallachy.[5][6] In 1994, Thomas Gordon Hartley changed the name to *Melicope bonwickii* in the journal *Sandakania*. [7] The

specific epithet (*bonwickii*) honours James Bonwick. [6] Found from central NSW to Cape York and through PNG to SE Asia.

Sources:

<https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://id.biodiversity.org.au/node/apni/2905300>

https://apps.lucidcentral.org/rainforest/text/entities/melicope_bonwickii.htm



Melicope bonwickii flowers and fruit.
Images: Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants, CSIRO 2020.



Melicope bonwickii leaves
Photo: Steve & Alison Pearson

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

Pest Hall of Fame

Botanical Name: *Solanum seaforthianum*

Common name: Brazilian Nightshade

Family: Solanaceae

Origin: This species is believed to be native to Mexico, Central America (i.e. Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), the Caribbean (i.e. Trinidad and Tobago), south-eastern USA (i.e. Florida) and tropical South America.

Description: A long-lived scrambling or climbing vine. Its alternately arranged leaves have deeply-lobed margins. Its mauve or purple star-shaped flowers (2-3 cm across) are borne in drooping clusters. Its glossy red berries are 8-12 mm across.

Leaves & Stems: The stems are green and mostly hairless (i.e. glabrous), however there are often a few sticky (i.e. glandular) hairs on the flowering branches. The alternately arranged leaves are borne on stalks (i.e. petioles) 0.5-6 cm long. Their leaf blades (4-13 cm long and 3-11 cm wide) are either deeply incised (i.e. pinnatisect), creating 3-9 lobes each up to 3.5-4.5 cm long and 1-2 cm wide, or appear to be once-compound (i.e. pinnate). Both leaf surfaces are green and hairless (i.e. glabrous), except for a few hairs on their margins and along the veins on either surface. The tips of their lobes may be either rounded or pointed (i.e. they have obtuse to acuminate apices).

Flowers: The star-like flowers (2-3 cm across) are arranged in large branched clusters in the leaf forks (i.e. axils), each cluster containing 10-50 flowers. The main stalk (i.e. peduncle) of these clusters is 1-6 cm long, while each individual flower is borne on a smaller stalk (i.e. pedicel) 8-15 mm long. These flowers have five blue, violet or purple petals that are joined together at the base and have triangular tips (10-15 mm long). They also have five small green sepals (1.5-2.5 mm long), five stamens with yellow anthers (3-4 mm long), and an ovary topped with a style (6.5-8 mm long) and stigma. Flowering occurs mainly during spring and autumn.



Fast growing Solanum seaforthianum leaves
Photo: C Peterson



Fast growing Solanum seaforthianum . Seed – very attractive to birds
Photo: C Peterson

Fruits/Seeds: The shiny globular berries (8-12 mm across) turn from green to bright red as they mature. They contain numerous reddish-brown to black flattened seeds (2-3 mm long).



Solanum seaforthianum flowers – very attractive but.....
Photo: C Peterson

Spread by: This species reproduces mainly by seed, which are most often dispersed by birds and other animals that eat the fleshy fruit.

Problem: A garden escapee. A common weed of untended areas with fertile soils. It is a weed of closed forests, forest margins, urban bushland, waterways (i.e. riparian areas), crops, roadsides, disturbed sites and waste areas.

Control/Prevention: Hand removal of young seedlings and mature plants. Cut Stump for those few that you can't pull out.

Source: *Weeds of the Mackay Whitsunday Region, Mackay Regional Pest Management Group.*

<http://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/brazilian-nightshade>



Emerging seedling of Solanum seaforthianum .
Photo: C Peterson