



Whitsunday
Catchment
Landcare

Newsletter

February 2024. Editor: C. Campbell

www.whitsundaylandcare.org.au | 0483 811 229 |



Central QLD Coast
Landcare
Network

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

COORDINATOR:

Christine Peterson

coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au

FIELD OFFICER:

Kayla Simpson

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

One Community position vacant

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.givenow.com.au



Make a Donation



Using the secure engine of
GiveNow.com.au

Coming Up

When: Thursday 15th February; 9.00 am to 12 noon
Where: Landcare Nursery
What: Nursery Activities—no external excursions this third Thursday of the month due to the ongoing heat and humidity.

Community Nursery Volunteer Activities

Where: 33 Kelsey Creek Rd
When: Tuesday & Thursday mornings 9am to 12 noon.
What: Plant propagation, native seed sowing & preparation, nursery maintenance tasks and a great morning tea with a fantastic bunch of volunteers.

Landcare Nursery Open for Plant Sales

EFTPOS available. 33 Kelsey Creek Rd. Tuesday & Thursday mornings 9am to 12 noon and the 1st Saturday of each month. Gift vouchers available for a gardener you know. Open Saturday 02.03.24.



The Reef Assist Team Grows - and Assists Crofton/Brandy Creek Landholders

We would like to welcome Rory, the newest member of our Reef Assist team. Rory comes to us with loads of enthusiasm to continue working in bush regeneration and the great Whitsunday outdoors.

Rory has joined Kayla to continue revegetation works at Galbraith, Twin and Waite Creeks in Cannonvale as well as with revegetation and weed control works with eligible land managers; works which contribute to better water quality and aquatic habitat. Landholders may be eligible for assistance (on land directly adjacent to waterways) with control of declared weeds such as lantana and Leucaena and with revegetation, including labour to assist with site preparation, planting, and some maintenance. Landholders will be required to source and supply appropriate plant species from a list developed and provided by WCL for their site. Landholders will also be required to maintain the sites after project staff have conducted their final maintenance visit. For more information please call Christine on 0483 811 229 or email coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au.



This component of the Reef Assist Program 2.0 Mackay Whitsunday Streambank Stewardship Program is funded by Reef Catchments through the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program

WCL receives support from the following organizations:



Australian Government
Department of the Environment





Hoop Pine – Monarch of the Forest (By Ernie Rider, Gympie Landcare, contributed by Jim Dickens)

When one thinks of hoop pine the following spring immediately to mind: Monarch of the Forest, lofty, majestic. This species (*Araucaria cunninghamii*) is self-evident on the range tops of coastal and sub-coastal Queensland and New South Wales, even reaching PNG. How did this tree of geological times, so susceptible to fire, survive into the modern era so well?

Ecologically, hoop pine, can be both a pioneer and/or a climax species. On deep soils it sends down deep taproots, but on poorer soils or amongst rocks, its roots spread laterally to capture a site and out-compete neighbouring vegetation. Successful plantations require fertile deep soils because of inter-tree competition on poorer soils. Even grass can hold the tree back for many years; tree establishment can be speeded up by suppression of grasses. Frost can kill young trees, but they can survive under more frost-tolerant species to triumph eventually. In rainforest it is usually an emergent, towering well above the canopy below, whereas amongst eucalypts its ultimate height is much reduced and it becomes a mere companion, in the absence of its mortal enemy, fire. In fact, these timber towers can constitute most of the biomass of a rainforest community, the evidence for this can disappear for many years after logging since the timber rots quickly in the ground.

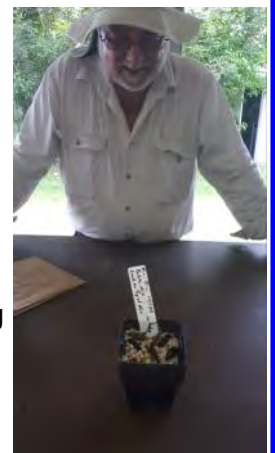
Once established, hoop pine withstands the rigours of drought, sleet and occasional light snow. It produces female cones after about 14-18 years, but male conelets (containing pollen) take 18 to 25 years to arise. Time means nothing to this survivor from the ancient eras of plant evolution and it possesses modes of growth peculiar to fossil plant families. Stem buds always grow upwards as stems, but branch buds only grow laterally as branches. Cone production usually follows a four-year cycle unless promoted by excessively wet years. Although pollination may occur between winter and summer depending on local genetics, seeds almost always fall at about Christmas.

Records were destroyed in a disastrous fire in the archives of the Queensland Department of Forestry, but it appears that the first successful attempts at domestication began soon after WW1 in Amamoor when overseer Murphy and his co-workers were encouraged to try planting the tree in the forest. At first, a line of rainforest was cleared and planted with hoop pine seedlings. After a few years it was seen that they grew well, so successively wider swathes of rainforest were cleared until they dared to attempt to try establishment on a completely cleared paddock, which also worked. Forestry management realized that supplies of virgin pine were diminishing as the native resource was harvested and a strategy was devised to replace the resource of this valuable and versatile timber with plantations.

Over the years the best practices in all phases of cultivation were codified in a 'Bible' called The Hoop Pine Technique. This included seed collection, drying and storage; nursery practices including sowing, shading, watering, root pruning, insect control, tubing (originally this involved potting in rolled metal clipped together into a tube, a process replaced only after substantial research), hardening up (droughting before planting); plantation espacement (stocking rates), planting after 10-15mm rain (without need for watering), early plantation tending (weed control) and even cover-cropping with eucalypts in frost hollows. All of these operations were carried out by men using hand-tools such as grubbers, axes and brush hooks as prescribed by the 'Bible' and between four and a dozen or so tends per year were carried in the first few years depending on weather conditions and consequent weed growth, with cover crops lopped in the frost hollows for the summer growth period. Green firebreaks of rainforest were left around groups of compartments each usually surrounds by roads/tracks and excessive dead material was burnt in heaps to lessen the risk of fire damage to the plantations.

To provide the best seed possible a program of tree improvement was begun. At first seed was merely harvested from the very best trees in the forest at an intensive selection rate. These were grafted into clone banks or seed orchards, mated and their progeny tested so that, by the time seed was being produced, proven inferior clones had been removed from production. Later the very best trees tested were left in the old seed orchards to pollinate selections made from the best families, which were grafted onto trees within the orchard to short-cut the long wait for seedlings to produce pollen. Because of the big difference in "flowering" times, early and late "flowering" orchards needed to be established. Of our native plants used commercially, probably only macadamia, Duboisia and tea-tree oil species have had such intensive development work done on them and certainly this is the only native timber species to have been at least partly domesticated. The hard work of many researchers and experimentalists work was coordinated to produce this wonderful timber resource. It is something for Queenslanders to be proud of and we can easily grow our own as a living Christmas tree.

Editor's note: Jim has recently germinated some Hoop pine seedlings at the WCL Community nursery, so next year's Christmas trees are on their way!



Galbraith Park- urban riparian forest revegetation project. An oasis in the making

If you haven't been to Galbraith Park for a while it is worth braving the heat and paying a visit. To the right of the entrance near the BBQs the Whitsunday bottle trees (*Brachychiton compactus*) are covered in pods full of yellow seeds.

Up behind the cricket nets there are lovely pools where you might see turtles, and massive cluster figs (*Ficus racemosa*) dripping with ripe fruit. On the opposite side of the road, up along the creek to the right of the community garden, are the most recent plantings which are looking amazing.

Give yourself a bit of a treat and go explore.



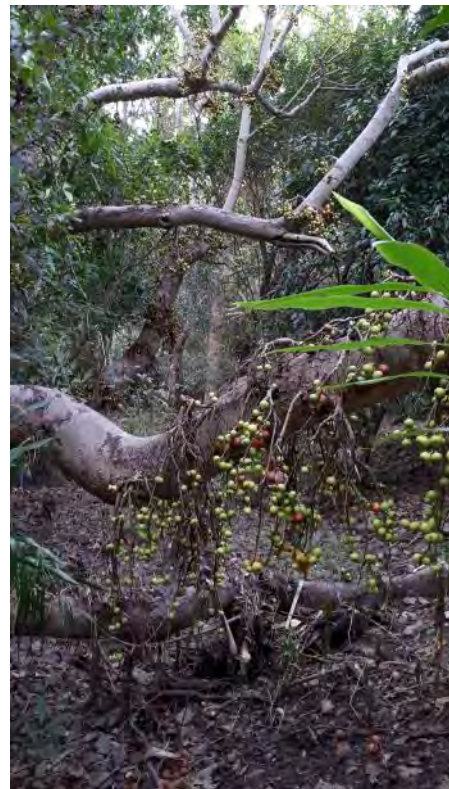
Above: Shady riparian vegetation & weed free clear shallow pools PHOTO: Jacquie Sheils



Above; Centre of photo- July 2023 National Tree Day Revegetation project. Photo: Jacquie Sheils



Left_ the Canopy of and *Elaeocarpus grandis*. Above: *Ficus racemosa* dripping with fruit PHOTO: J. Sheils



Above; Regent Bower Bird Bower- displaying his wares Photo: Jacquie Sheils



Above; *Brachychiton compactus*– Whitsunday bottle Tree seed pods. Photo: Jacquie Sheils

What's Showing

Common name:

Brown Currajong

Scientific name:

Commersonia bartramia

Family: Sterculiaceae

Height: 5-12m



Above: *Commersonia bartramia* leaves
PHOTO: CPeterson

Leaves: Egg shaped, dull green above, whitish beneath, margins irregularly toothed, 6-15cm long and 2-5cm wide.

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

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

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: A small spreading tree with layered branches, it is a fast growing pioneer species found in clearings and on creek banks. It's summer flowering makes it very conspicuous, with a very Christmassy 'snow in summer' effect. The 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.

References:

Across the Top– Gardening with Australian Plant in the Tropics. Compiled by Keith Townsend for Society for Growing Australian Plants Townsville Branch Inc.



Above: *Commersonia bartramia* leaves and flowers

PHOTO: Peter Alden

INTERESTING WEB SITES:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/>

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/activities-mac>

Native plants:

<http://ausgrass2.myspecies.info/content/oplismenus>

<https://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/cd-keys/rfk/>

<https://www.eucalyptaustralia.org.au/>

<http://sgaptownsville.org.au/>

www.facebook.com/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:

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

www.weeds.org.au

[www.environment.gov.au >Biodiversity >Invasive species > weeds](http://www.environment.gov.au/Biodiversity/Invasive%20species/weeds)

www.iewf.org/weedid/index_by_reserve.htm

www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/herbarium/

<https://www.vision6.com.au/em/mail/view.php?id=1769275019&a=17056&k=a87f8df>

Plant Pest Hall of Fame

With all this rain you can expect to see lots of weeds coming up. So there will be lots of work ahead for all the landholders – especially the Sporobolus grasses like Rats Tail grasses.

The best time to act is as soon as you see weeds germinating or growing. A small infestation can be removed manually and it's a good method to implement especially when you **first notice** small weed infestations.

WCL is available to help– see below for our Sustainable Land Management Advice & Assistance Schedule which we provide on a Fee for Service basis. For more information please contact the WCL Coordinator at coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au or 0483 811 229.





Sustainable Land Management Services

*Please email - coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au
or call 0483 811 229 to discuss our services & fees.*

SERVICES OFFERED		PRODUCT
1	Site visit & property management advice. (Verbal)	Site visit with property owner to discuss specific issues and provide verbal advice on weed control, native vegetation and potential actions to address any issues. Owner to take notes. 1 - 2 hours; hourly rate plus travel.
2	Land Management Plan (LMP)	Comprehensive 3 year Land Management Plan covering site specific weed species identification & management techniques, endemic vegetation type/classification & plant species found on site, revegetation plan & ongoing management advice. Plus 40 native tube stock.
3	Weed control undertaken on behalf of the landholder by qualified & licenced WCL Staff.	<p>Initial Site visit: To discuss landholder requirements, site access, topography, water availability, weed type & appropriate control method.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective/ targeted weed species as determined by landholder i.e. Lantana, guinea grass. • Revegetation site preparation - targeting weed control within a specific area as determined by landholder. • Biological control of specific weed species - hourly rate plus cost of biological controls Madeira vine, prickly pear. • Manual control of selected weed species (cut & paint, basal bark - i.e. cats claw, prickly pear, pond apple, rats tail grass).

NOTES:

- Under Queensland Government Legislation, anyone conducting ground distribution (using ground based machines) of herbicides on land they do not own or are not directly related to the owner, must operate under a Commercial Operator's Licence (the licence number will begin with "G"). An organisation or individual contractor in the business of ground distribution must hold a ground distribution contractor's licence (the licence number will begin with "GCD").
- Each site requires site specific recommendations for best practice land management advice in the context of current Local, State & Federal Governments Environmental regulations.
- Recommended management practices are developed in consideration of Landholder long term intended use for the site and the best way of achieving these outcomes.
- WCL will not be complicit in the deliberate destruction of endangered vegetation types, habitats or illegal vegetation clearing and will advise the client of any potential conflict in the initial project discussion phase.

WCL Community Nursery– Always Needs Seeds

The WCL Nursery is very keen to source endemic seed so please keep an eye on your flowering native trees, shrubs & grasses for the volunteer nursery. Some of the species we need are:

<i>Abutilon auritum</i>		<i>Lagerstroemia archeriana</i>	
<i>Abutilon albescens</i>		<i>Lophostemon confertus</i>	Brush Box
<i>Acacia aulacocarpa</i>		<i>Lophostemon grandiflorus</i>	Nthn Swamp Mahogany
<i>Acacia leptocarpa</i>		<i>Lysiphylum hookeri</i>	Hookers Bauhinia
<i>Acacia leptostachya</i>		<i>Macaranga tanarius</i>	Macaranga
<i>Acacia simsii</i>		<i>Melaleuca dealbata</i>	Blue Tea Tree
<i>Alphitonia excelsa</i>		<i>Melaleuca leucadendra</i>	
<i>Alphitonia petriei</i>		<i>Melaleuca viminalis</i>	Weeping Bottle Brush
<i>Antidesma parviflorum</i>		<i>Melicope elleryana</i>	Corkwood, Euodia
<i>Aphananthe philippinensis</i>		<i>Memecylon pauciflorum</i> var. <i>pauciflorum</i>	
<i>Archontophoenix alexandrae</i>	Alexander Palm	<i>Micromelum minutum</i>	Native Lime Berry
<i>Allocasuarina torulosa</i>	Black she-oak	<i>Omphalea celata</i>	
<i>Allocasuarina luehmannii</i>		<i>Pandanus</i> sp.	
<i>Aidia racemosa</i>	Archer Cherry	<i>Petalostigma pubescens</i>	
<i>Atalaya rigida</i>	Veiny Whitewood	<i>Planchonia careya</i>	Cocky Apple
<i>Breynia oblongifolia</i>	Coffee Bush	<i>Ptychosperma elegans</i>	Solitaire palm
<i>Cajanus reticulatus</i>	Native Pigeon Pea	<i>Phyllanthus novae-hollandiae</i>	
<i>Carallia brachiata</i>	Freshwater mangrove	<i>Sterculia quadrifida</i>	Peanut Tree
<i>Casuarina cunninghamiana</i>	River oak	<i>Syzygium australe</i>	River cherry
<i>Chionanthus ramiflorus</i>	Native Olive	<i>Tabernaemontana orientalis</i>	
<i>Cordia dichotoma</i>		<i>Timonius timon</i>	Tim Tam Tree
<i>Cordia subcordata</i>	Sea Trumpet	<i>Trema tomentosa</i> var. <i>aspera</i>	Peach-leafed Poison Bush
<i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i>		<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
<i>Corymbia intermedia</i>	Pink Bloodwood	<i>Vachellia bidwillii</i> (WAS <i>Acacia bidwillii</i>)	Corkwood
<i>Corymbia tessellaris</i>	Morton Bay Ash	<i>Vitex trifolia</i>	Vitex
<i>Corymbia erythrophloia</i>	Red Bloodwood		
<i>Cryptocarya hypospodia</i>	Large leafed Laurel		
<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>	Tuckeroo		
<i>Diospyros compacta</i>			
<i>Diospyros geminata</i>			
<i>Diospyros hebecarpa</i>			
<i>Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum</i>			
<i>Elaeocarpus grandis</i>	Blue Quandang		
<i>Eucalyptus crebra</i>	Narrow-leafed Ironbark		
<i>Eucalyptus platyphylla</i>			
<i>Eucalyptus exserta</i>	QLD Peppermint		
<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>	QLD Blue Gum		
<i>Euroschinus falcatus</i>	Ribbonwood		
<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	Cluster fig		
<i>Hymenosporum flavum</i>	Native frangipani		
<i>Indigofera pratensis</i>			
<i>Ixora timorensis</i>			
<i>Ganophyllum falcatum</i>	Scaly Ash		

Guidelines for seed collecting:

- Only collect seed from your own property or with written permission
- Source plants must have grown from seed from the Whitsunday Region
- Collect ripe, mature seed & no more than 10% of the seed from any one plant
- Collect from several parts of the plant, mainly the middle & upper branches
- Use paper bags (not plastic) to store the seed & keep them in a cool place
- Label the bag with the species, location, date and your name. Not sure of your plant identification? Include a stem with some leaves & /or take a photo.

You can drop seed off at the nursery on Tuesday or Thursday mornings, at 33 Kelsey Creek Road Proserpine, or call 0483 811 229.

You can make a tax deductible donation to the Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Gift Fund at any time. Just go to <http://www.givenow.com.au/whitsundaycatchmentlandcare>

If you would like to receive this e-newsletter please email coordinator@whitsundaylandcare.org.au with your request.

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.

