



Vision and Goals

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.

Acknowledgement of Country

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare acknowledges the Gia and Ngaro people, Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past and present and emerging.

Staff (all part-time):

Coordinator: Christine Peterson
Admin Officer: Leigh Donkers
Nursery Manager: Nicole Murphy
Field Officers: Kayla Simpson and Rory Richards

Management Committee:

Dale Mengel, Chair
Jacquie Sheils, Secretary
Cath Campbell, Treasurer
John Casey (Canegrowers Proserpine)
Jan Armstrong
Gary Simpson (WRC)



A Word from the Chair

It has only been seven months since I stepped into the position of Chairperson for WCL after the resignation of Frank Millar in February 2024. A big thanks to Frank for his dedication and work with WCL while in the position. I also have not nominated for the role moving forward; my work requires too much travel for me to be able to devote the time to this role it deserves. I'd like to offer a special thanks to our Treasurer Cath Campbell, who has also made the decision to not continue on the Executive Committee. Her work has helped ensure we are able to meet our budgetary requirements and continue in our current capacity for this financial year. It would also be remiss of me to not thank Jacquie Sheils who has gone above and beyond her role as Secretary. I thank you both ladies for their guidance and assistance this year. I wish to extend my thanks to the rest of the Management Committee, John, Gary and Jan, our staff Christine, Leigh, Nicole, Kayla and Rory, and of course our wonderful volunteers whom without, we simply could not continue to provide such contributions to our community. Many members already know me. However, I apologise for not catching up with you all nearly as much as I would wish. Please be assured that your efforts do not go unnoticed. As a small organisation, we are nothing without our team of dedicated staff and volunteers.



I also wish to acknowledge and thank our various sponsors, grant bodies and project partners such as Whitsunday Regional Council, Reef Catchments and the State and Federal Governments.

As with all not-for-profit organisations, especially in our sector, the year has been challenging as funding opportunities have dried up or the conditions to meet funding requirements narrow. Whilst the next 12 months will continue to bring financial challenges, through some strategic planning, teamwork and continued support from our volunteers, we have the tools to navigate the turbulent waters and continue to provide a vital contribution to our local environment and community. Whilst I am stepping away as Chairperson, I will still be involved with WCL as much as my capacity allows and pass on my best wishes and support to the next Chairperson, as well as the Management Committee, staff and volunteers. I will no doubt continue to see you all around and look forward to the future of WCL.

Dale Mengel

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare:

- Is a not-for-profit community based Incorporated Association that has been operating in the Whitsunday region since 1998.
- Is a registered Charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
- Has Deductible Gift Recipient status afforded by the Australian Taxation Office and operates a Gift Fund independently of our other operations
- Has 57 members, over 35 registered volunteers and 330 newsletter subscribers.

Community Nursery & Bushcare Volunteers

The nursery continued to have regular and sometimes busy attendance on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Just over 2,000 volunteer hours were logged at the nursery this last year. What an achievement. If we use the figure of \$43.27 per hour as recommended by peak volunteering bodies, this equates to approximately \$87,000 worth of labour contributed toward provision of local provenance plants for our region. However, this does not capture the social and other benefits gained by our volunteers and the community members who visit our nursery. 10,365 plants were sold to the public, to revegetation projects or donated this last year.

A number of new volunteers were welcomed and all have enjoyed the opportunity to learn about our local flora as well as the many other relevant topics that may come up on any given day at the nursery. We have continued to provide support to students from Proserpine State High School, with plant propagation materials and information as part of their course work and have been able to donate plants to schools for Schools Tree Day. Plant sales have continued to increase, with many happy home gardeners leaving our nursery with local provenance plants, and plenty of handy information from our volunteers and staff from the nursery.

Our Bushcare volunteers logged 223 hours for weed control in bushland and coastal areas, revegetation, site preparation, planning, irrigation installation, community engagement and ReefClean marine debris works; \$9,600 labour value. Our works have expanded along Galbraith Creek, with plantings of 800 more local native trees. Over 1,600 plants have been planted at Galbraith Creek and Twin Creeks in Cannonvale.



WCL Volunteer Contributions for 2023/24		
Hours	Tasks	Value
2016	Nursery - seed collection and sorting, plant propagation, nursery maintenance, sales.	\$ 87,232
223	Bushcare - tree planting, including site preparation, bush regeneration, coastal weed control, marine debris collection.	\$ 9,649
720	Galbraith Creek - revegetation maintenance, bush regeneration in establishing forest, pruning/thinning, edge trimming.	\$ 31,154
2959	Total volunteer hours and labour value for 2023/24 Based on \$43.27/hr from NSW Centre for Volunteering	\$ 128,036

Galbraith Creek Restoration Project

Galbraith Creek revegetation was extended with a small planting of 340 trees on National Tree Day. This planting received support from the Reef Assist Program funded by Reef Catchments. An additional 720 hours valued at \$31,000 were logged on site at Galbraith Park for revegetation maintenance, bush regeneration, arboriculture work and mowing. Whitsunday Regional Council continues to support these works with provision of mulch free of charge and access to irrigation water.



Left: Photos of volunteers and staff at Galbraith Creek after planting in July 2023 and in the same location with most of the same group of fantastic volunteers in May 2024. Photos: D. Young.



Clockwise from top left: Irrigation and mulching, lots of mulching has to happen before the planting. National Tree Day volunteers hard at work. Fence installed to break the water velocity to protect plants planted April 2023; photo taken November 2023. The same location, immediately before removal of the fence in May 2024. Photos: D. Young, K. Simpson, C. Peterson.

Twin Creeks Restoration Project

Revegetation was continued at Twin Creeks, Cannonvale with 1,600 trees and shrubs planted. This planting was made possible by the Reef Assist Program and our regular volunteers on planting days. Unfortunately by the end of the year, feral pigs had begun to wreak havoc at these revegetation sites, deeming the mulch to be a smorgasbord of earthworm yumminess. Unfortunately, quite a few trees have been lost to this activity and the site will require new plantings and additional mulch.

The Reef Assist Program 2.0 - Mackay Whitsunday Streambank Stewardship Program project is funded by Reef Catchments through the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program and delivered in the Whitsunday region by Whitsunday Catchment Landcare.



Far left: Kayla and Leigh planting at Twin Creeks in November 2023. Left: Pig damage evident in the establishing trees. Photo taken July 2024. Photos: C. Peterson and K. Simpson.

Littoral Rainforest Rehabilitation - Looking After our Beach Scrub

Two volunteer trips were organised to Nelly Bay beach scrub with a focus on the Mother of Millions back from the dune and encroaching into the beach scrub. The focus may have been Mother of Millions, but that didn't stop some lantana from being in our sights also. 180 kg of Mother of Millions were collected and taken to landfill and 2 large stands of lantana were treated and more identified for later visits.



Left: Volunteers with just a few of the bags of Mother of Millions removed from Nelly Bay. Photos: D. Young and C.

Citizen Science and a Property Bioblitz

In late 2023 we again participated in the Great Southern Bioblitz, this time having an overnight camp at Ben Lomond Station north of Proserpine. The station includes a number of regional ecosystems from mangrove forests, samphire open forblands on salt pans, to riparian forests and woodlands. Plenty of plants and birds and some other critters were recorded in iNaturalist. The managers of the station were wonderful hosts and were impressed with the number of flora and fauna identified.



Clockwise from top: Australasian darter. Horsfield's Bushlark. WCL volunteers exploring mangrove forest. Ben Lomond across the intertidal wetland. Field cricket.
Photos: C. Peterson.

Marine Debris

WCL continues quarterly marine debris monitoring and clean ups at Conway, Wilson's, Queens Beach and the Don River mouth as part of the ReefClean project. This also includes microplastics surveys at six monthly intervals. Approximately 90 volunteer hours have been invested. ReefClean is funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust and is delivered by Tangaroa Blue Foundation in partnership with Whitsunday Catchment Landcare.



Left to right: Rory and volunteers with a collection of marine debris from Conway Beach. A hard earned break for staff and volunteers at Queens Beach. Collecting sand for microplastics sampling at Conway beach.
Photos: K. Simpson and J. Armstrong.

Grants

Queensland Government Community Sustainability Action Grant (\$41,810) to May 2026 - Revegetation and weed control in coastal vegetation adjacent to Coral Esplanade; works yet to commence.

Australian Government Department of Social Services Volunteer Grant (\$4,118) to June 2025. Purchase of equipment such as defibrillator, trolley, ladder.

Great Barrier Reef Foundation Community Action Planning (\$25,070) - Monitoring turtle nesting activity at Cape Gloucester Beaches to assist with raising community awareness of impacts of lighting and beach use on turtles. Completed.

Working Groups/ Committees/ Affiliations

- Central Qld Coast Landcare Network, a partnership for the natural resource management of catchments in the Central Qld Coast Bioregion: Pioneer, Sarina & Whitsunday Catchments
- Whitsunday Pest Management Committee
- Mackay Regional Pest Management Group
- Queensland Water and Landcare Carers
- Native Plants Queensland. Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc. Mackay Branch

Program Area		Activities Summary	Funded by
Community	Revegetation and Seed Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance and extension of Galbraith Creek Riparian Corridor and Twin Creeks. Site visits undertaken by volunteers for endemic seed collection and planting. 	Old Government Reef Assist Program, WCL -Operating Reserves
	Public Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weed identification, control advice available at the events as well as at the WCL Community Nursery. Horse owners land management workshop—funded by Reef Catchments through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. Newsletter, Facebook Page, Instagram and Website. Providing land management advice over the phone, by email, and in person at the nursery or on property 	WCL – Operating Reserves.
	School and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proserpine High School— Student visits to the nursery and provision of materials for school based follow-up of practical propagation. Donations of plants to Schools for NTD and School fetes (St Catherines, Proserpine State School, Cannonvale State School) 	WCL Operating Reserves. Proserpine High School.
	Weed control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular site visits by volunteers to undertake bush regeneration activities through the removal of weeds and rubbish, managing irrigation, mowing edges of revegetation plots at Galbraith Park (720 + hours) Weed control at remnant Littoral rainforest sites at Dingo Beach and Nelly Bay 	WCL Operating Reserves.
Volunteer	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 10,240 plants were sold or used in revegetation works this year. Broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information is available at the Community Nursery. 160 Plants donated to Local schools for National Tree Day events. 	WCL Operating Reserves. Nursery sales.
	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 2,016 volunteer hours dedicated to the Community Nursery. Site visits to: public reserves to collect seed, undertake revegetation projects and weed control - Galbraith Park and Twin Creeks riparian corridors; Beach scrubs at Cape Gloucester -Dingo Beach & Nelly Bay Property walks - Jim Muller's property at the Gregory River 	WCL-Operating Reserves.
Funding Obtained	Contract works and Plant sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reef Assist Program 2.0 – Reef Catchments contract enabling the employ of 2 part-time field staff to October 2024. Revegetation and weed control sites include - Galbraith Creek, Twin Creeks Cannonvale, Brandy Creek and Crofton Creek Catchments. Revegetation & site maintenance contracts— revegetation at Waite Creek, Cannonvale; Whitsunday Regional Council Plant Sales– 10 240 plants sold from the WCL Community Nursery. ReefClean– Beach monitoring and cleans at Conway, Wilsons and Queens Beaches and the Don River Mouth – Tangaroa Blue Foundation. 	Reef Catchments, Qld Government Reef Assist Program, Whitsunday Regional Council, Nursery Sales.

Acknowledgments

- Federal and State Governments Grants programs that support Environmental projects and Volunteer support grants.
- The Reef Assist Program 2.0 - Mackay Whitsunday Streambank Stewardship Program project is funded by Reef Catchments through the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program and delivered in the Whitsunday region by Whitsunday Catchment Landcare. This program provides funding for employment of our field staff and well as some of our on-ground works.
- Whitsunday Regional Council for: provision of irrigation and mulch at our revegetation sites; a donation toward our fees for dumping noxious weeds and marine debris at the landfill; and support of our community nursery and volunteer base via discounted rates.
- Reef Catchments for continued support toward works via the Reef Assist Program.
- Canegrowers Proserpine for their continuing support via provision of their boardroom for our meetings.
- Kapow Interactive for their ongoing support for the Central Queensland Landcare Network and WCL websites.
- Irrigear Whitsundays for their generous advice, assistance and discounts with equipment, and irrigation at the nursery and revegetation sites.
- Cannonvale Fire Protection for generous donation of fire extinguishers services and discounts on purchases.
- The many members of the public that donate to our Public Fund via GiveNow or Containers for Change
- Jim and Dave for the incredible amount of work you put in at Galbraith Creek, your knowledge and expertise you share so readily and for your mentoring of our field team.
- Filby's Motors for continued support of local National Tree Day events.

Organisational Objectives

The objects of Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Inc. are -

To promote the planned and sustainable management of the O'Connell, Andromache, Proserpine and Gregory River catchments in a constructive and balanced way in order to protect and enhance the natural environment by actions such as:

1. Fostering coordination between landholder, community actions groups and government agencies in their land, water and vegetation management activities.
2. Promotion of community and government understanding of the interactions between land usage, waters, soils, vegetation and wildlife of the catchment.
3. Promotion of the value of a coordinated catchment wide approach for managing these resources.
4. Identification and prioritisation of interrelated land and water resource issues in the catchment.
5. Promotion of solutions and actions through public and government participation as part of catchment management strategies.
6. Provision of a forum for community and government discussions on catchment management issues for resolving conflicting demands on natural resources.
7. To encourage the conservation of native flora and fauna by integrating nature conservation practices with rural and residential land uses for the benefit of the countryside and the community.
8. To establish and maintain a public fund to be called the "Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Fund" for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objects/purposes of Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Inc. The fund is established to receive all gifts of money or property for this purpose and any money received because of such gifts must be credited to its bank account. The fund must not receive any other money or property into its account and it must comply with subdivision 30-E of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.



Central QLD Coast
Landcare
Network



CANEGROWERS
PROSERPINE

