

SLCMA Catchment News



February 2018

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**SLCMA Office is OPEN
every weekday,
9-12noon
(afternoon by prior
arrangement)**

Coordinator

Saskia von Fahland

Administration Officer

Nadine Hamill

Nursery Officer

Sandy Whittington—Shaw

Call us for information:

- ◇ Weed management
- ◇ Plant identification
- ◇ Land management
- ◇ Local projects
- ◇ FREE property visits
- ◇ Land for Wildlife

Volunteer opportunities:

SLCMA Community

Volunteer Program:

- ◇ Wednesday 9-12noon:
Seed collecting, native
plant propagation at the
SLCMA Community
Nursery

SLCMA Executive 17/18

Chair:

Gloria Murray

Vice-chair:

Greg Melvin

Treasurer:

Jenny Price

Secretary:

Chris Brown



Happy New Year.....we're off and running!

The year is certainly underway and we have hit the ground running with lots of planning and organizing of current and new projects. We are very excited to have been notified of three successful projects recently — Most of which will provide opportunities for our local community to participate in hands-on activities, receive land management support to undertake onground works to help improve our local environment. The three projects include:



⇒ *'Raising awareness of Landcare within the Community'* funded through Sarina Community Bank Branch Bendigo Bank Engagement Program. The project will allow us to design, purchase and install roadside signage to raise the profile of the Sarina Community Native Gardens and of SLCMA by defining the northern and southern boundaries of the Sarina Catchment area, in which we operate.

⇒ *'Riparian Rehabilitation after Cyclone Debbie'* funded through Queensland Government Community Sustainability Grants. This project seeks to address damage to riparian areas (creekbanks/waterways) within the Sarina Catchment. The project will provide support to landholders to rehabilitate riparian areas on their property as well as rehabilitate the Plane Creek Revegetation Site. This 3 year project will include opportunities for landholders, volunteers and other groups to become involved in and learn about the importance of and options for creekbank protection and rehabilitation.

⇒ *'Stabilising Willie Creek'* funded through Aurizon Community Giving Fund. This 12 month project will undertake revegetation and weed control works along a section of Willie Creek, with the aim to stabilize the creekbank. The project will provide a demonstration to local landholders and include a community planting event.

We would like to welcome back our SLCMA Community Volunteer team, who after a nice break over Christmas and New Year, have jumped straight back in to helping Sandy to grow and care for our native plants in the SLCMA Community Nursery. If you are interested in native plants (and like to have a cuppa and chat with other friendly volunteers) feel free to come along to our volunteer mornings, every Wednesday 9-12noon. Thankyou to Mackay Regional Council for your ongoing support towards this valuable program.

A big thankyou to our volunteer Management Committee, who like our nursery volunteers, a back in full swing—keeping us all on track and working towards an exciting 2018.

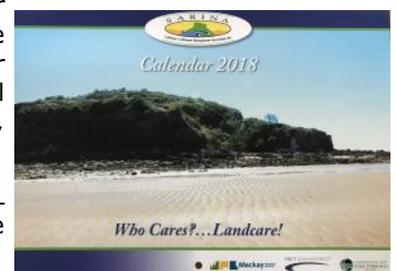
Nadine, Sandy and Saskia are all back on deck and ready to help you out with any Landcare questions. Even though they are all part-time, they are dedicated to keeping the office doors (and phones) open, weekdays 9am-12noon; and other times by appointment. So feel free to drop in or give us a call.

We hope that 2018 is a good one for all.

2018 SLCMA Calendar—available now!

The 2018 SLCMA Calendars are now in and ready for pick up. Members are eligible to receive one free calendar, with subsequent copies available for purchase for \$10. The calendar showcases our local landscapes, Sarina and Nebo Cattle Sales, environmental awareness dates and tips.

A big thankyou to Mackay Regional Council, DBCT PL and DBCT Management for their support towards the printing of the calendar.



SLCMA Community Volunteer Program *by Sandy Whittington—Shaw*

Image: S Whittington-Shaw



There was a large volunteer team in attendance for our first session of 2018, with a few volleys waiting at the gate to get in. Talk about dedication! It was great to see that the nursery stock withstood the extreme heat conditions we all suffered through over the break. Thanks must be given to Nadine, Jenny & Chris who popped in over the break period to check upon the nursery and do extra watering. I'm sure without your help we would have had a few casualties.

We are planning to try and get out and about more in 2018 and hope to have an outing at least once a month, weather permitting! So far we have been to Grasstree Beach and collected a range of seeds to

propagate in the coming weeks. It was a very hot morning, but the refreshing breeze and spectacular views made it much more bearable. It was disappointing however to see so much dumping of garden and household waste in otherwise beautiful surroundings.

If you would like to volunteer in your local community and meet new people while learning about local native plants and their propagation, come along to the SLCMA Community Volunteer morning, every Wednesday, 9am to 12noon. The SLCMA Community Volunteer Program is proudly supported by Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Levy. For more details contact SLCMA on 4956 1388.

Land for Wildlife Program—Stick insects friend of foe?

Stick insects (known as phasmids) are herbivorous (feed on plants) insects and are masters of camouflage. Australia has approximately 200 species of these amazing animals, which come in all colours, shapes and sizes. Some are long and twig-like, some are knobbly and others look just like leaves. All of these appearances have been developed to make stick insects look like, or to help them blend into, leaves or branches. Some species, like the Spiny Leaf Insect, have reached an expert level in the art of disguise.

These intriguing insects are our friend and have an important role in the ecosystem, feeding on new and dead foliage - allowing for new plant growth and of course, being prey for a number of other animals such as birds, small reptiles and rodents. Stick insects are vulnerable from human encroachment, pesticides and habitat destruction.

The female's body is much larger than the male's and both have wings - but the males' wings are larger. Females don't travel around much and emit a hormonal perfume (called a pheromone) to attract the males to them for breeding. The males have larger wings to enable them to fly longer distances in search of females.

All phasmids begin life as an egg which is dropped from the end of the females abdomen and falls to the ground at the base of the tree or shrub. Thousands of eggs are laid during the females life. The eggs of the Spiny Leaf Insect, *Extatosoma tiaratum*, have a knob, called a capitulum, which is attractive to ants. Ants carry the eggs back to their underground nests, eat only the knob, and leave the rest of the egg in the nest, protected from other animals that might eat it. The young phasmids (also known as nymphs) hatch after one to three years underground and look

and behave like red-headed black ants. They emerge from the ant nest and climb rapidly upwards, looking for soft green leaves.

Many female phasmids do not need to mate in order to produce fertile eggs. This form of reproduction is called parthenogenesis and all the eggs produced will hatch into females. If the females do mate with a male before producing eggs, the nymphs (babies) may be male or female.

Once the young phasmid have reached the leaves of a food tree, they moult into a green or brown, slow-moving leaf mimic. Moulting involves a new skin forming under the old skin, which will split along the back, while hanging from a branch the young stick insect needs to carefully pull it's body and legs out of the old skin. Once free of the old skin, the new skin will be soft and over a period of time will expand and harden. Most females live for about 18 months, while the males are only short-lived, surviving for around 6-8 months.

Stick insects love:

- Eucalyptus leaves - that they will spend all night eating
- Dancing - like a stick swaying in the breeze
- Solitude - they keep to themselves except when looking for a mate
- Ants - who think that they're eggs are seeds and carry them into their nests and protect them until they hatch

But they don't like:

- Insecticides - which poison them when they eat the chemicals on leaves
- Birds and bats - who prey on stick insects
- Getting stuck - in the ants' nest where they hatch. You'll never see a stick insect move as fast as when it's leaving the nest



Image: S von Fahland

Land for Wildlife Program—Stick insects friend of foe?

How to look after stick insects in your backyard:

Try to:

- have a variety of eucalyptus trees in your garden.
- keep pets away from any areas that you know have some stick insects living there.

Avoid:

- using pesticides and chemicals in your garden because stick insects are very sensitive to these.
- worrying about these insects because they're completely harmless and won't cause any problems for you or your garden.

- picking these buddies up because they have very delicate wings and limbs which you could accidentally damage.

Don't be surprised if:

- you see a stick insect as big as your forearm. The Goliath Stick insect can grow to a whopping 25 cm.
- they rear their back towards you when you get too close. They're not trying to sting you, just letting you know that you're a bit too close.

Information was sourced from: www.wettropics.gov.au, www.backyardbuddies.org.au, www.australianmuseum.net.au



Image: M. Sant

Aerial Feral Pig Control Program update

Forty landholders across the Carmila and Rocky Dam Creek Catchments participated in the annual Aerial Feral Pig Control Program in December last year. This year, the aerial component of the program involved the initial event and a follow up event one week later, resulting in 179 feral pigs and 5 wild dogs being controlled.

In the lead up to the aerial control, a meeting was held with visiting Whitsunday Regional Council Pest Officer, Bren Fuller; SLCMA and key landholder contacts to discuss aspects of the program and find out how a similar program is delivered in the Whitsunday area. It was a good opportunity to reflect on the program and it was agreed that ongoing, sustained long term pressure on the feral pig populations was needed to keep the populations at a manageable level.

The program began in 2008 through a partnership between SLCMA, Mackay Regional Council, Reef Catchments and local landholders, all keen to see on-ground action and a reduction in pig damage to productive farmland and the natural environment. The program has continued to grow over the years with more landholders participating and increased land area being covered. The program encourages the use of a range of control methods including trapping and baiting in conjunction with the aerial control.

Landholders across the catchments have seen a drastic improvement in the health of useable farming land in the catchments as well as improvements in the surrounding mangrove and wetland environments. If your property is located within the Carmila or Rocky Dam Creek Catchments and you would like to participate or find out more about the program, please contact SLCMA on 4956 1388.

SLCMA Community Nursery “Plant of the Month”

This month's 'Plant of the Month' is *Melicope elleryana* **Pink Euodia**

Family: Rutaceae

What is in a name? *Melicope* Greek *mel* nectar and *kope* notched—referring to the notched glands on the flower. *Elleryana* after Robert Lewis Ellery, a Victorian astronomer.

Form: Small to medium tree, 12-20m high with distinctive corky white bark and open canopy

Leaves: Glossy green, opposite, compound with three leaflets.

Flower: Dense, clusters of pink flowers along the branches on older wood, occurring summer and autumn.

Fruit: Small, dry, brown capsule with two or four segments, each segment splitting down one side to reveal a single glossy, black seed.

Habitat: Rainforests and along creekbanks.

Distribution: North eastern QLD to north eastern NSW, Northern NT and Northern WA.



Image: M & S Evans

Notes: Hardy, fast growing tree requiring well drained soil and regular watering. Fruit and nectar eaten by various birds. Larval food plant for the Ulysses butterfly.

The "Plant of the Month" is currently available from the SLCMA Community Nursery. Landcare members are eligible to receive 1 free "Plant of the Month" throughout that month. Please contact SLCMA for more information.

Information sourced from: Melzer and Plumb (2007) *Plants of Capricornia*; Townsend (1994) *Across the Top*

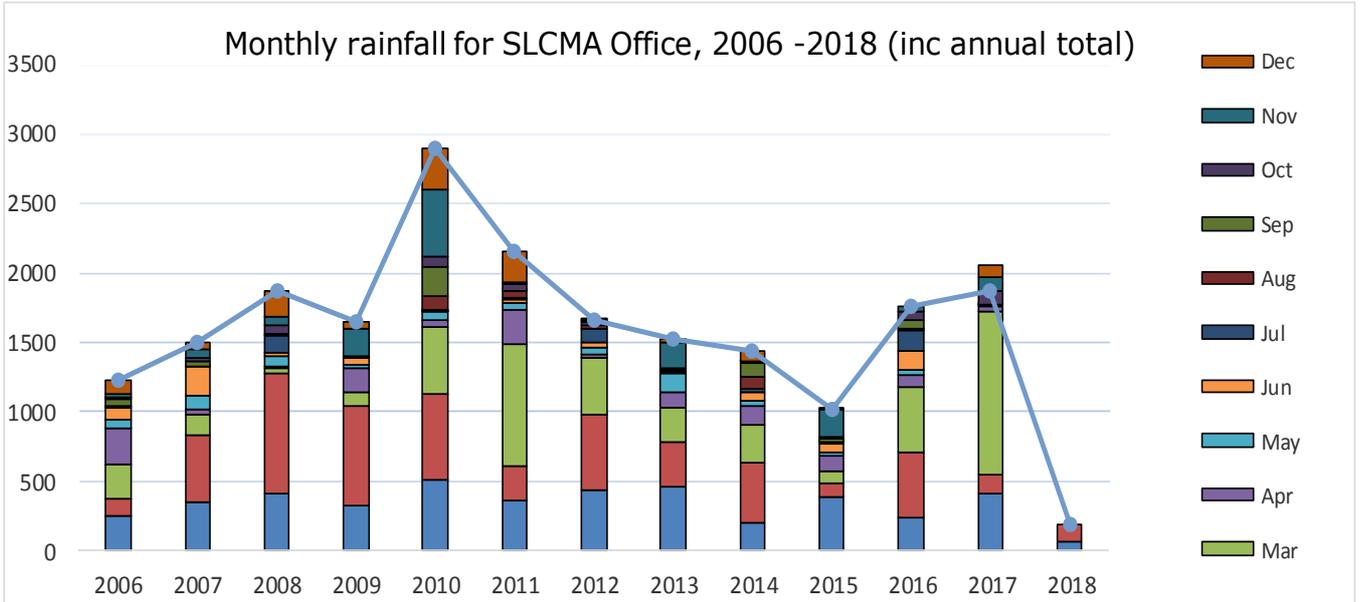


What SLCMA Membership does for you !

A membership with SLCMA has many rewards:

Office: 101 Sarina Beach Rd
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 Fax: (07) 4956 2944
 Email:
 admin@sarinalandcare.org.au

- ◇ Easy access to Natural Resource Management information and extension
- ◇ Monthly newsletter, meeting minutes, progress and project reports
- ◇ A vote on issues in your catchment
- ◇ A say in the types of projects applied for
- ◇ Up to 10 free local native seedlings/year from the SLCMA Community Nursery
- ◇ Invitations to Natural Resource Management field days and workshops
- ◇ Copy of the SLCMA Annual Report
- ◇ Discounts on purchases of books for sale



Just for fun!

You know you're in an Australian Summer When:

- ◆ The best parking space is determined by shade instead of distance.
- ◆ Hot water comes out of both taps.
- ◆ You learn that a seat belt buckle makes a pretty good branding iron.
- ◆ The temperature drops below 35c and you feel a little chilly.
- ◆ You discover that in February it only takes two fingers to steer your car.
- ◆ You discover that you can get sunburnt through your car window.
- ◆ You develop a fear of metal car door handles.
- ◆ You break a sweat the instant you step outside at 7:30am.
- ◆ Your biggest bicycle wreck fear is, "What if I get knocked out and end up lying on the pavement and cook to death?"
- ◆ You realise that asphalt has a liquid state.
- ◆ Farmers are feeding their chickens crushed ice to prevent them from laying hard-boiled eggs.
- ◆ The cows are giving evaporated milk.
- ◆ The trees are whistling for the dogs.



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Central QLD Coas
Landcare
 Network

SLCMA is proudly supported by:

DBCT MANAGEMENT



A partnership for the natural resource management of catchments in the Central Queensland Coast Bioregion: Pioneer, Sarina & Whitsunday Catchments.

This newsletter is printed by:



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