

SLCMA Catchment News



December 2019

Office: 101 Sarina Beach Rd
Postal: PO Box 682
Sarina QLD 4737
Phone: (07) 4956 1388
www.sarinalandcare.org.au
Email:
admin@sarinalandcare.org.au

**Office
opening times:**
Monday to Friday
9-2pm
**(other times by
appointment only)**

Staff

Administration Officer

Kristy Thomsett

Coordinator

Saskia von Fahland

Nursery Officer

Davina Wain

Project Officer

Morgan Thomas

Call us for information:

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

Volunteer opportunities:

SLCMA Community
Volunteer Program,
Wednesday 9-12 noon

**Native plants available
for purchase \$3 each.**

SLCMA Executive 19/20

Chair: Mark Evans

Vice-chair: Karen May

Treasurer: Kevin Plumb

Secretary: Grace Tipping

Executive members:

Sandy Evan

Lachlan McBride



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

On behalf of SLCMA staff and Management Committee we would like to wish you, our volunteers, members and project partners a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year!

It has been a wonderfully successful year and we could not have done it without everyone's help and support, no matter how big or small. We are all looking forward to what 2020 will bring for us and the community.

Changing our ways - by Daryl Barnes (2019)

When man learnt to make plastic
It was nothing short of fantastic
It was light, it was strong and before very long
It had uses everywhere, and it seemed to belong

But problems arose when it came time to dispose
What to do with a product, that wouldn't decompose
So we started to recycle and help to reduce the landfill
But it continued to appear and today it does still

Litter may start on the land, then gets washed out to sea
Ocean currents then carry it, to places we can't see
Out of sight out of mind, accumulating as it floats
Some ends up in bays around harbours and moored boats

These carpets of plastic, continue to expand over years
The more we look and discover, it confirms our worst fears
Whilst plastic will break up, after a long period of time
It compounds the problem and near borders on a crime

As the pieces become smaller, this increases their appeal
To a wider range of sea life, that view it a tempting meal
A seafaring bird, or a turtle or a whale
May unknowingly consume plastic, as they feed and inhale

Today this problem is immense, so we encourage everyone attend
Start by changing our ways, to start reversing the trend
It's time we thought more of the future and not slacken or quit
This mess we've created, it's time we cleaned up every bit

© Daryl Barnes 2019

SLCMA Christmas Holiday Period

Christmas Closure

Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association Inc wish to advise we will be closing at **2pm Thursday December 18th** and will reopen **9am Monday January 6th**

We thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you in 2020.

SLCMA Community Volunteer Program *by Davina Wain*

Its that time of the year again where we start wrapping up the year as a whole, my time at the nursery has been a great adventure since starting with SLCMA this year.

Thank you to all volunteers for their dedication and hard work with seed collecting, sowing seed, propagation and all the reorganising and rearranging of the nursery. Thank you to Peter for looking after the Sarina Community Native Garden and the sustainable food gardens.

Our Volunteer Christmas party was held on the 11th December, our last volunteer day, with lots of fun and laughs. We truly can't thank you enough for you support and look forward to seeing you all again on the 15th January 2020.

We wish all a wonderful and safe Christmas break and a Happy (Hic) New Year.



L-R: Margaret , Sue and Margaret weeding plants

2019 Health Soil Symposium

On the 27th and 28th of November our Project Officer Morgan attended the 2019 Healthy Soil Symposium held by Reef Catchments. The soil symposium provided the opportunity for landholders, natural resource management groups and any other interested parties to learn about sustainable regenerative farming.

The keynote speaker of the event was Dr Christine Jones who has a wealth of experience and knowledge working to implement regenerative land management practices that enhance biodiversity, increase biological activity, sequester carbon, activate soil nutrient cycles, restore water balance, improve productivity and create new topsoil. Dr Jones presented about three key topics: The symbiotic relationships that take place in the soil microbiome, the extraordinary power of plant diversity and bio-stimulants for regenerative agriculture.

One of the key themes that re-occurred throughout each of the presentations was about the necessity for higher plant diversity in agricultural systems. By increasing plant diversity, landholders can reduce their reliance on synthetic fertilisers which can damage the microbiome of the soil; which can have adverse effects on the land and plants by interfering with the means of communication between microbes. Landholders can increase plant diversity by aiming to have 12 or more plant families present. This will allow for a diverse range of root systems, functional groups and roles within the landscape.

Higher plant diversity can have a range of other beneficial effects for plants and animals such as:

- Produce greater plant yield
- Increase biomass production
- Improve nutrition
- Improve/build new topsoil
- Improve growth rates
- Improve immune system health
- Improve milk production

Recommended plants for agricultural lands to help increase diversity and nutrients:

- Chicory
- Cosmos
- Cowpea
- Sunflowers
- Plantain
- Oats
- Barley

For grazing, these plants can be incorporated into pastures and for croplands incorporated in between and below/ around the crops. These high diversity species mixes can also be used effectively as a cover crop. By increasing plant diversity, farmers can improve nutrient cycling, microbe health (which in turn helps the plants) and water retention.

Dr Jones also stressed the importance of using bio-stimulants instead of the detrimental synthetic nitrogen and phosphorus. Only ~10-40% of synthetic nitrogen and ~10-15% of synthetic phosphorus can be taken up by plants, which means 80-90% is fixed in the soil and unavailable, and therefore is not cost-effective. Instead, Dr Jones suggested using bio-stimulants such as vermicompost on the seed before planting which stimulates both the fungi and seed to form the symbiotic relationships that they to help them succeed.

For more information from Dr Jones, you can visit her website: www.amazingcarbon.com, or visit www.cqshs.farm for additional information and resources on topics such as improving soil health and increasing plant diversity.

Coordinated Feral Pig Control Program



The Annual Aerial Feral Pig Control event will be held in the Rocky Dam and Carmila Catchments the week before Christmas, with a follow up event in the new year. Over 50 landholders and stakeholders within the catchments participate and contribute financially to the event, which has been running since 2008. Those involved agree that **sustained pressure** through ongoing aerial control in conjunction with trapping and baiting is required, to keep the pig numbers and damage to a minimum. If you are in the control area and would like to participate or would like to know more, please contact us on 49561388.

SLCMA Community Nursery “Plant of the Month”

This month’s ‘Plant of the Month’ is **Black She-oak** *Allocasuarina littoralis* **Family:** *Casuarinaceae*

What is in a name? *Allo* from the Greek, *allos* meaning other, simply meaning the other group of *Casuarina*. *Casuarina* from the Latin *casuarius*, the cassowary, as the drooping branches of the tree resembles the plumage of the cassowary.

- Form:** Typically a small tree up to 10m high, but can form low dense shrub when wind swept.
- Leaves:** Six to eight reduced leaves.
- Flowers:** Male flowers solitary flower spikes on branch ends, female flowers reddish-brown and clustered.
- Fruit:** Cylindrical cones 1-3 x 0.8-2.1 cm
- Distribution:** Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania
- Habitat:** Widespread in eucalypt communities and heathlands on hind dunes and sand plains and on headlands.
- Notes:** Seeds eaten by the glossy black cockatoo and crimson rosella. Trees are usually fire sensitive regardless of size, and regenerate from seeds released from the cones.



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. This and other native plant species are also available for purchase at \$3 each. All plants are grown from locally sourced seed in the SLCMA Community Nursery by SLCMA staff and the SLCMA Volunteer team. *Information sourced from: Plants of Capricornia 2007, Rhonda Melzer and Joel Plumb.*

School Activity Day — Coast care Week

On the 3rd and 4th of December, SLCMA with assistance from Mackay & District Turtle Watch Association (MTW) and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA); held our annual school activity days at Campwin Beach. Thankyou to students and teachers from local primary schools, St Anne’s Catholic Primary School, Swayneville and Homebush State Schools who attended the day and joined in the fun.

This year the event was themed ‘Caring for Our Coasts’ and coincided with Coast-care week. Coast care week aims to promote awareness and care of our coastal and marine environments. As such, the students rotated through three different activities associated with our coastal and marine environments. The activities included:

Sustainable fishing activity facilitated by GBRMPA introduced students to the aspects of sustainable fishing along the QLD coast. Students were able to ‘fish’ for various marine fish and crabs throughout the different zone types related to commercial and recreational fishing. This created a lot of discussion, measuring and identification and meant that the students learnt about size limits, bag limits and skills such as how to tell the difference between a male and female crab.

Marine Turtles activity facilitated by MTW involved an information session about marine turtles, especially the Flatback Turtle, which nest on the beaches around Sarina and Mackay. The students were able to gain an understanding of the role that MTW have in collecting data for research purposes and gaining a better understanding of marine turtles in our area. Students were also able to discuss practical ways to protect nesting marine turtles and their habitats. MTW had some interesting photos to share and even brought along a replica of a turtle nest so the students could get a better understanding of how they are structured.

Coastal Dunes activity facilitated by SLCMA, helped students gain an understanding of our coastal dunes, their role, the importance of a healthy dune system and how to protect them. The students also learnt what a healthy dune system is, characteristics of a dune system, and native plants/animals that utilise the dune area. Likewise, students were also able to create their own seed bombs using local native coastal seed, clay, soil and a bit of water, and distribute them (by throwing them!) into the dunes ready for the wet season.

A big thanks to Mackay Regional Council for their continued support for the school activity days.



Containers for Change: Thankyou to those of you who have generously and kindly donated your container refunds to SLCMA. To date we have had **\$46.51** donated. Please consider using SLCMA’s Containers for Change ID number **C10002138**, to include in your bags. Alternatively, you can bring your containers to the SLCMA Office.

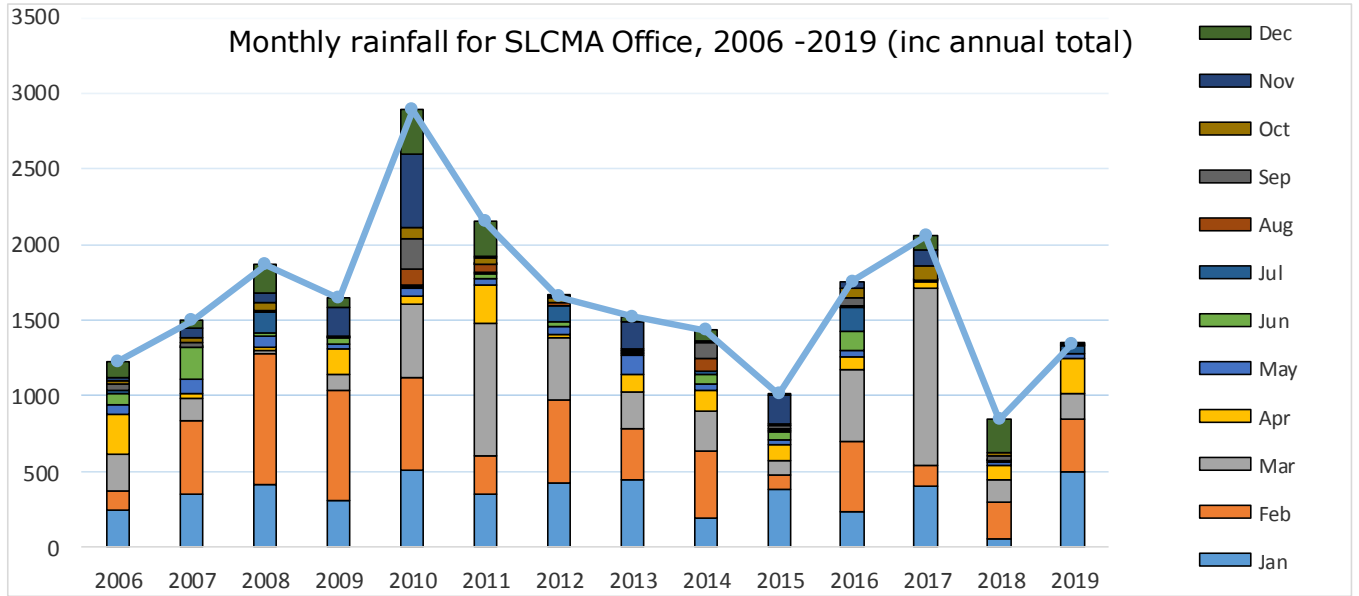


What SLCMA Membership does for you !

A membership with SLCMA has many rewards:

- ◇ 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

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Just for fun!

What kind of flower grows on your face?
Tulips!

Why shouldn't you tell a secret on a farm?
Because the potatoes have eyes and the corn has ears!

What do you give to a sick lemon?
Lemon Aid



What new crop did the farmer plant?
Beets me

What animal keeps the best time?
A watch dog!



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

SLCMA is proudly supported by:



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If you have any issues, don't hesitate to contact my office

Shop 8, Sarina Beach Road Shopping Centre, Sarina 4743
 (07) 4943 2722 www.MichelleLandry.com.au
michelle.landry.mp@aph.gov.au [f](#) MichelleLandryMP
 Authorised by M. Landry, 159 Denison Street, Rockhampton QLD 4700