

Newsletter

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2015 No 2

WOW! What a huge surprise for everyone! Dale Arvidsson (MRBG Curator) will be leaving Mackay, moving to Brisbane, to take on a new exciting challenge. Congratulations Dale. Enjoy the latest from 'The Botanic Gardens'...

Let's start with... **In the Botanic Gardens, Dale reports...**

SUMMER IN THE MRBG

The first part of summer months... Staff and SGAP volunteers watered 2014 plantings by hand to keep the living collection alive in the second year of unseasonably dry and hot early summer weather. Short, sharp deluges in January have greened up the gardens and much of the living collection and taken the sting out of the heat and dry, but most heavy falls were felt in other catchments around Mackay so no flooding has occurred.

The 'new' practice of Curator's Day – where MRBG Garden staff spend 1 day per week has made a large difference to date to the visual appeal of the Gardens and we are much more on top of the usual summer weed problems experienced each 'growing season'. Rhondda now oversees the area from the Regional Forest to the Water Treatment Plant, Maria from the Bamboo Collection to the Eungella Cloud Garden, Kerri from Orientation Garden to Whitsunday and Kellie from Heritage to Geology and Coastal Lowlands. The position recently vacated by Ashley (see below) looks after the Meadowlands sector which just leaves us short one staff member to oversee the Australian Regional Flora Terraces, Torres Strait and the PlayGarden, so this area is captured only every 4 months by rotational maintenance.

The drill bit donated to the botanic gardens from Artspace Mackay's gallery foyer was finally installed opposite the entrance of the Coal Garden, next to the Palaeobotany Walls where it further tells the story of the formation of coal and the continuing importance of this resource industry to Mackay.

Botanic Gardens staff changes

Staff member Ashley Coyne left the botanic gardens just prior to Christmas. The vacant Gardener position will be interviewed and filled in February with much interest in the position (55 applications were received).



After 11½ years in Mackay, Curator Dale Arvidsson will be relocating to the Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mount Coot-tha to manage this - and the City Botanic Gardens, commencing on March 2. Dale is rapidly planning final works to hand over to Ross Demuth who will fill the acting role and take over the coordinating of upcoming capital works and operational program including the installation of 4 new pathways, the first stages of 2015 plantings and the commencement of the Detailed Design project with Lawrie Smith and the newly formed Advisory Board.

We haven't lost him totally to Brisbane...

Dale however will continue as both a Garden Friend and also with the Eungella Biodiversity Monitoring Study project as coordinator for the new book on the Eungella Highlands being sponsored by Mackay Regional Council and produced by the Queensland Museum.

What have the Friends of the Gardens been up to?

Saturday February 14th > **“BIRD and the BEES” Guided Walk and Welcome BBQ.**



Friends of the Gardens members were joined by members of BirdLife Mackay. With over 100 different species of birds making their home in the Botanic Gardens, we were sure to spot a few with binoculars, scopes or just with our eyes. The elusive Bush Hen was not spotted, but some birdwatchers were thrilled to see two Little Kingfishers in their new habitat near the Eulamere shelter.

Walking along the lagoon edge path gave us lots of opportunities to see wetland birds and some small bush birds like the Scarlet Backed Wren.



Bees also featured on the day with some information about different native bees, which are often seen among the flowers.

Did you know that Australia has 10 major groups of native bees?



Lots of bees were visible in the Dysentery Bush *Grewia latifolia* and Blush Plum *Grewia oxyphylla* in the Ethnobotany -Medicinal Plants bed planted by the Friends. Large Carpenter Bees are often called a Bumble bee, but there are no Bumble bees in Australia except for in Tasmania. They are introduced bees. So, too, are the European Honey bees that we know from its honey making antics.

Little did we know that our welcome BBQ would also be our farewell event for Dale Arvidsson.

Around 60 people came to spend time enjoying the guided walk, the BBQ and to witness the farewell gift giving from Friend's groups. Just as Dale surprised us, we also had a surprise for him regarding his gift! He couldn't keep it! (CSIRO had sent the incorrect collector's edition book – twice!)



Bill McWhinney and Maya Harrison present Dale with his very 'temporary' gift, as everyone looks on.



Thelma Farmer from The Botanical Art Interest Group also thanked Dale for all his encouragement and assistance over the years and presented him with a book he could keep... "Australia's Remarkable Trees".

Daryl Barnes from BirdLife Mackay congratulated Dale and thanked him for his enthusiasm and inclusion of birdlife habitat in the Botanic Gardens.

A photograph of all the friends in their bright yellow shirts was taken and we hope it finds a place in Dale's new office.

Wow! What a great beginning!

Our new venture where the Botanic Gardens Meeting Room is the “Friends Meeting Place” is proving to be a great success already.



Starting on February 4th 2015, 12 people came along to the inaugural gathering and 9 people to the second gathering. Maya explained about a variety of activities that could occur during these regular gatherings.

Friends both long-time members and brand new ones are embracing how they can assist the Botanic Gardens.

Not only were they meeting new people and socialising, but helping out with label making, photography, front counter duties in The Garden’s Shop, merchandise / stock arrangements, mini guided walks to familiarise themselves with the subtle features within the Gardens which even included bug hunts!

Anne took to the idea of photographing what is flowering in the Botanic Gardens to assist with a “flowering diary” and create a fantastic and accurate DATA BASE!



The bug hunt / guided walk gave Moyea, Clare and Rebecca a up close view of some of the creatures which live the Botanic Gardens habitats while assisting Maya to collect creatures to conduct a Plant-ed Elsewhere education session the following day at a local childcare centre.

The “Friends Meeting Place” will continue on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month throughout the year (except school holidays... unless the volunteers want to work with Maya and young children.)

Friends of the Gardens... 'Heritage Gardens Working Bees'

Starting March 4th... Then every month on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday
Join in at 7.00am - 9.00am or at 10.00am - 12.00 noon ...or both?



Meet Kellie (MRBG Gardener) at the Heritage Gardens at 7.00am or later at 10am.

Garden Friends need to be prompt as the sign on process takes a while.

Heritage Gardens Working Bees is a special project where our Volunteer Garden Friends can assist the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens staff to give this area of the Botanic Gardens (Heritage Gardens) some special care, but also the Garden Friends can benefit too... learning some gardening skills.

Working bees include planting lots of annuals, de-heading spent flowers and planting vegetables and much more. It is a fantastic opportunity for those who wish to volunteer their time and get their hands dirty during the week rather than weekends.

Remember to slip slop slap, wear a hat and closed in shoes and bring a water bottle too.



RSVP your attendance either by email to botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au or by calling 49527300

Friends who attend the Heritage Gardens Working Bees might like to refresh with a cuppa after their morning toil, cool down in the air-conditioning (muddy boots are welcome) and catch up with others in the "Friends Meeting Place... (On 1st and 3rd Wednesdays too)

Some of the flora in the Heritage Gardens...



Feel like joining the Friends of the Gardens and volunteering too? Visit the Botanic Gardens website under the tab of Get Involved. Download the Garden Friends brochure and fill out the membership form and come and join us.

http://www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au/get_involved/friends_of_the_gardens

Have you seen it yet?

'SUNDAY PAINTER' Exhibition by Uta Wild

Lagoons Gallery: Wednesday January 21st - Sunday 1st March 2015



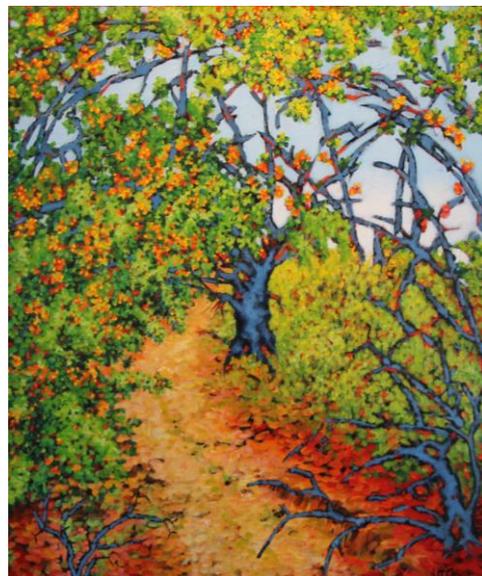
Local artist, Uta Wild is a well-known painter in traditional and figurative abstraction images. Born in Ravensburg, Germany, Uta has won many art prizes and has sold her works both nationally and overseas.

← Image:
Whose Egg is It Now?

Image:
Lantana Country →

Uta has been classed as a natural colourist and her exhibition includes acrylic paintings of landscapes, animal and/or figures in landscapes, birds and flower images. Come and view these very colourful artworks. The exhibition is complemented with a display of different bird's nests.

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Lagoons Gallery is open Wednesday to Friday 10 am - 3pm and Weekends 9am - 4pm.
Cost: Free



The following exhibition will be very colourful one too.

'BEYOND WORDS' Exhibition by Karima Dieleman

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Lagoons Gallery;
Wednesday 3rd – Sunday 29th March 2015



“**Beyond Words**” Exhibition is a series of paintings representing Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens flora. Within larger than life representation of the garden's plants and flowers, viewers will be stunned by the brilliant colours, arcs and shapes that make each flower unique.

Using large canvases, 'Beyond Words' paintings will have an impressive impact on their viewers and fill the Lagoons Gallery and Café with a colourful and welcoming atmosphere.

Karima Dieleman is an artist who now resides in Moranbah, but who has participated in many group exhibitions in London, Ontario and also Toronto, Ontario. Beyond Words in the Lagoons Gallery will be her first solo exhibition in Australia.

**Meet the Artist: Saturday March 7th
2.00 – 4.00pm in Lagoons Gallery.**

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Lagoons Gallery is open Wednesday to Friday 10 am - 3pm and Weekends from 9am - 4pm Cost: Free

What's on... in the Botanic Gardens?

Small Explorers: First session for the Year.

“Wildlife in the Gardens” Tuesday March 17th: 9.30 am – 11.00am



Fun and educational opportunities for toddlers and kindergarten aged children 18 months to 5 years held monthly or by appointment. Let the Botanic Gardens Visitors Services Officer, Maya Harrison, take you and your small children to special areas of the Botanic Gardens to explore ... ‘Wildlife in the Gardens’ Tuesday 17th March at 9.30 – 11.00.

Meet at the Meeting Room (opposite the Café on the Lagoon, closed Mondays) and get fascinated by the creatures that help our Botanic Gardens thrive. The session includes story reading, information books, displays of creatures, artistic

activities and a small walk in the Gardens. Let us know if you wish to come along by contacting the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 and booking the date with us. Tell a friend so they can join in too.

Weed and Feed Guided Walk Saturday 21st March 3.00pm



Weeding: Dale hated them in our Botanic Gardens! Weeds that is...

Garden Friends will learn some Weed Identification and help pull out any weeds found during the walk through the Regional Flora Terraces and Torres Strait Islanders areas of the Botanic Gardens. I wonder how many weeds we will collect? You might like to bring your favourite gloves or borrow some of ours.

Maya will also talk about the signage in the Torres Strait Islands Gardens.

Park at the Tamarind car-park and meet at the Torres Strait Islands shelter to start at 3.00pm

Feeding: After all that hard work, some feeding of the masses will be on the agenda.

We will host a BBQ at the Tamarind shelter (this shelter has lights) near the children’s ‘Under the Banyan PlayGarden’ (with its colourful mosaics). BBQ meat, bread rolls and light drinks will be provided. We ask that Friends please bring along a salad or sweets to share.

Please RSVP to Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au by Wednesday 18th March, to assist us with catering.

Will we find this weed? *Ipomoea triloba* – Pink Convolvulus

Pink Convolvulus is a species of morning glory known by several common names. It is native to the tropical Americas but is widespread in warm areas of the world where it is an introduced species and often a noxious weed. This is a fast-growing vine producing long, thin stems with ivy-like, heart-shaped leaves 3 to 6 centimeters long. The leaves sometimes, but not always, have three lobes and often look like a simple heart. The vines produce tubular bell-shaped flowers each about two centimeters long. They are quite variable in color, in shades of pink, red or lavender with or without white markings.

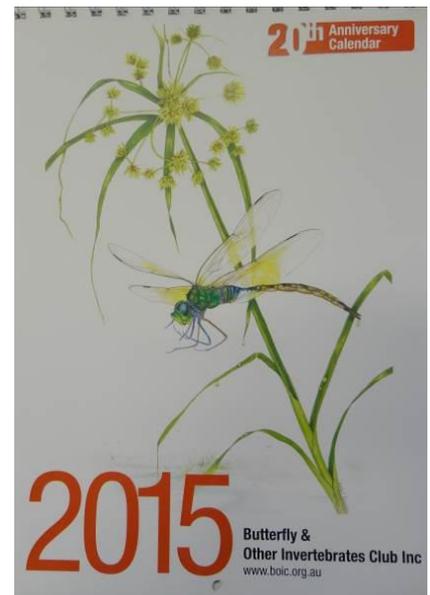


Why is it a weed? This plant sets copious amounts of seeds and is very fast growing. It smothers shrubs and trees with many leaves, reducing sunlight to the plant. Pull this weed out if you see it!

Forgotten to get a calendar for 2015... and the year is flashing by!

**Jeremy Boot
Birds of Australia
Calendar \$20
Only 3 left!**

**If you are into small
creatures, this
calendar is for you.
Butterflies and Other
Invertebrates 2015
Calendar \$15**



Do you want to know the dates for future friend's events...?

Check out the Friends event calendar on the Botanic Gardens website
Look under the 'Get Involved' tab.

http://www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au/get_involved/calendar_of_events

You can get lots more information from...

Regular updates by Subscribing to Council's ENews >

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/about_council/newsletters

OR...Contact the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

Stop press!

Dale receives his farewell gifts and these he gets to keep!

