

Newsletter

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2016 No.2

Botanic Gardens are an ever changing place ... and there have been more changes in our Botanic Gardens. Ross DeMuth our Team Leader of Horticulture will be leaving on April 1st and that is not an April Fools' Joke! Enjoy the latest from 'The Botanic Gardens.

Have you seen these colourful artworks?

The two mates Roy Huff and Merv Nairn have been at it again...Painting that is... Their acrylic paintings are once again a colourful collection and they are on show in their fourth Exhibition in the Botanic Gardens Lagoons Gallery.... "The Mates Exhibition No. 4"



There is a wide range of local buildings, landscapes, birds and flowers for you to enjoy.

This exhibition is available for viewing from Wednesday 2nd March to Sunday April 3rd 2016

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



Roy Huff and Merv Nairn had a "Meet the Artists" session on Saturday 12th March.

Many people came to see their exhibition, watch Roy in "painting" mode and sample the tasty nibbles Clifford Stocks (Café manager) provided for the event.



We are sad to see them go... Much loved trees.



Council staff members have been monitoring the Pink Trumpet or Pink Tabby tree *Tabebuia pallida* near the Tamarind toilets since cyclones moved through the site in previous years. It sustained quite a bit of damage and that damage is now causing decay and deterioration so much that the tree had diminished ability to hold up its branches. This made the tree unsafe and thus had to be removed.



We will miss the large fig trees near the Under the Banyan PlayGarden too.



UNAVOIDABLY THESE FIG TREES HAD TO BE REMOVED

Due to an infestation of Brown Root Rot (*Phellinus noxius*) the large fig trees (*Ficus hillii*) adjacent to the Under the Banyan Playgarden have been removed.

Phellinus noxius attacks tree roots causing decay, which cuts off water and nutrient supply to the crown resulting in the wood losing its structure (turning to sponge) and eventually tree death.

The infestation was found when a very large limb from one of the fig trees came down across a path, luckily during night-time.

They had to be removed as they were a major safety risk to the public.

As Brown Root Rot is most commonly spread via root to root contact it is important they are removed before it spreads further throughout the Botanic Gardens.

This was not a planned removal and at this time we are unsure what will replace these trees.

This type of pathogen can remain viable in the soil for up to 60 years!

Re-planting this area may not be an option.

For further information on Brown Root Rot (*Phellinus noxius*) please read the fact sheet using this link. https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/51211/phellinus_noxius_web.pdf

Trees are not the only things that we will be missing...

One of our original Botanic Gardens Staff members, Ross Demuth, will be leaving the Botanic Gardens and Mackay on April 1st. We wish it was an April Fools' joke, but alas it isn't. Ross began at the Botanic Gardens back in 2004 as one of two Gardeners and the only other outdoor staff was a Mower operator. Within the year he became the Team leader of Horticulture. Ross is a man of many skills and knowledge and a lot of that will go with him. He will be seriously and sorely missed by the Botanic Gardens team, Friends of the Gardens and all the people of the community he has shared his knowledge and skills with over the years. Just today a gentleman was given some expert knowledge about different plants that would make a good hedge and that would grow successfully in Mackay. A huge **THANK YOU** Ross from the bottom of our plant pots for your contribution in creating the Botanic Gardens we enjoy today, your friendship, your calm and pleasant style in dealing with whatever botanical problems came your way. We will miss you greatly!



School Holiday activities... Rabbit in the Gardens Facebook Quiz:



Win a Rabbit or two???

A school holiday quiz with a difference!

Starting just before Easter when rabbits are known to be around, photos of “Lop” the Rabbit will appear daily on the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Facebook page.

Pick up a Quiz sheet or download a quiz off the website and fill in the **places and dates** where the rabbit “Lop” has appeared in the Gardens. You might have to visit the Gardens to find the places “Lop” has been spotted in.

Just use one of the Garden Guides to help you find the site’s name.

Quizzes are available from Thursday 24th March at the Botanic Gardens or online on the Botanic Gardens website.

www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au

Completed quizzes need to be returned to Botanic Gardens Administration.

Drawn: Thursday 7th April... The most correctly filled out quiz sheet.

Do you know where “Lop” the Rabbit is in this photo? →



School Holiday Activities...

“Seeds or Eggs... How to get away from the parents in a time capsule...?”

Meeting Room; Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. 10am -12noon.

Tuesday 29th, Wednesday 30th, Thursday 31st March and Wednesday 6th and Thursday 7th April 2016.



Find out how.... Seeds either float on the breeze, hitch a ride on someone’s hide, cruise the waters of oceans and creeks, explode like a cracker, travel incognito in a birds belly, get catered off and hoarded by a hungry marsupial or just drop, plopp and roll to a new location away from the parent plants!

Find out about... Eggs in the Gardens, which creatures have laid some and what will come out.

During the 2 hour session, Children will go on a walk through the Gardens and check out some of seeds amazing ways of travel and also look for some eggs hidden in the Gardens. Back in the meeting room the children will plant

some seeds, decorate a plant pot and look at some eggs or seeds using magnifying glasses or a microscope.



Payment with Bookings ensures your child attendance. Cost \$5.00 each.

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

Free Friday Guided Walks are back... starting April 1st at 10am.

It is not an April Fools' Joke about the date...



The scenic Lagoons and glorious foliage make perfect backdrops during your informative stroll at the picturesque Botanic Gardens.

Join Maya or Margaret at 10.00am every Friday (April 1st – October 28th) at the Administration Building. Once a month, a Special Themed Free Friday Guided walk is also available. Subscribe to Council's ENewsletters for regular updates.

Free Friday Guided Walks at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens... **Every Friday 10.00am**

Let us know if you wish to come along to any of the walks by contacting the Botanic Gardens and booking the date with us or meet us at the Administration Building / The Garden's Shop just before 10.00am. Cost Free:

For more information... Contact the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email or visit the Botanic Gardens website www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au

In April we will see even more colour in the Lagoons Gallery and Café ...

“Flow” an exhibition by Jodie Connolly



‘Flow’ will be a solo painting and mixed media exhibition. The works will be abstract, bright and colourful. The paintings theme will be about listening to your personal creative energy and letting it flow, just like the medium used. This is a step in a different direction for local artist Jodie Connolly as her preferred medium for the past few years has been digital. In this exhibition she has decided to pick up her paints and canvas and experiment with a new style where mistakes that happen cannot be undone by the click of a button.

Be sure to visit the Lagoon Gallery and Café between Wednesday 6th April – and Sunday 1st May 2016. The Image shown is “Flow” by Jodie Connolly

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

Have you seen it?

There is a huge Mt Blackwood Holly flower now featuring on the Administration building. It is so big you can see it from the car park!

We have taken the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens logo of the *Graptophyllum ilicifolium*, Mt Blackwood Holly ...increased it in size, cut it out of aluminium, painted it and then attached it to the rendered wall to create a stunning sculpture.

Soon it will also be glowing as LED lights are turned on behind it. Can't wait to see what it will look like then...



It's an OPEN and SHUT CASE... at the Botanic Gardens.



The Botanic Gardens are open to the community all day every day...

(excluding the **Tropical Shade Garden** which is closed when Administration staff are not in attendance)

The **MRBG Administration** and **The Garden's Shop** are closed during the Easter period...

Closed Friday 25th March to Monday 28th March reopening on Tuesday 29th March 2016

Lagoon's Cafe and **Lagoons Gallery** will also be closed during the Easter period...

Closed Friday 25th March – Sunday 27th March; reopening on Wednesday 30th March at 10.00am.

More additions to the Lagoons Outlook Deck!

Not only do we have wonderful views from the Lagoons Outlook Deck but thanks to the Friends of the Gardens, Council's graphic designer Kerry McNeill, Visitors Services Officer Maya Harrison, and installers Andrew and Mitch... we now have two new signs for visitors to view and learn a little more about aspects of the Botanic Gardens... existing now and into the future.



The '**Lagoon Life**' sign explains a little of the 'Life' that lives on, under or around our beautiful Lagoons (historically once part of the Pioneer River). This watery environment supports wetland birds, plants (some good guys and other bad guys), loads of small creatures that become food for larger animals, fish and even platypus (who are rather shy and often unseen).

The '**Imagine the Future**' sign will have us painting visions in our minds about what will be developed over the other side of the Lagoons in the Meadowlands sections of the Botanic Gardens. Imagining a bridge crossing the Lagoon so we can go and... Explore the Flora creating habitats for Fauna... participate in events at the Amphi-theatre... walk and jog and ride... discover Art pieces and so much more...Just Imagine...

The next Small Explorers Session will explore -

“Water Features and Creatures” on Wednesday April 13th: 9.30 am – 11.00am



Let the Botanic Gardens Visitors Services Officer, Maya Harrison, take you and your small children to special areas of the Botanic Gardens to explore the creatures that live in our Lagoons and other water places...

Meet at the Meeting Room (opposite the Café) and then we will go for a walk and find all the different places that water occurs in the Botanic Gardens, from fountains, creeks, pools and waterfalls to the lagoon.

Ask the question: Where does all the water come from? We will experiment with evaporation if the sun is out or we will know if it is raining!

This session includes a short walk to the Gymnosperm Deck to see birdlife, water plants and maybe turtles. The session includes story reading, information books and a display of real water creatures. Small Explorers sessions are fun and educational opportunities for toddlers and kindergarten aged children 18 months to 5 years held monthly or by appointment...

Let us know if you are coming... Phone 49527300 or email us on botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

What are the Garden Friends up to?

There is a Weed and Feed!

Saturday April 2nd at 4.00pm, followed by the Feed...a BBQ!

A fantastic opportunity to learn about different weeds and help to remove them from the Botanic Gardens... **...like this ‘Crows foot’ →**



Weeding: We will meet at the Meeting room of the Botanic Gardens at 4.00pm.

Garden Friends and other volunteers will then learn some Weed Identification using a collection of laminated pictures and information on weeds and some matching real life examples. You will also gain information about the growing pattern of weeds, their seeds and ways of using common tools (screwdrivers, pliers and some weeders / mini matiks) to remove the stubborn and prickly ones. This short activity and following induction will assist everyone in knowing which plants are definitely a weed and the ones to pull out.



← Sensitive weed flower...

Weeding will begin at the Orientation Garden, Screen and Hedges, World Cycad Garden and then further down the paths. Friends / volunteers are welcome to bring home gardening tools but as we are serious about introducing fungus, bacteria and other pests, so they (the garden tools not the people) will be sprayed with a metho/ water combination before digging in any of our soils.

Feeding: A BBQ will follow afterwards at the Meeting room from 6.00pm so we can thank all those who have got down and dirty and volunteered their time to rid the Gardens of these unwanted plants.

We ask that participants bring along a salad or sweets to share. Meat, drinks and bread rolls will be provided. **...Billy Goat weed→**



Please R.S.V.P. to Maya on 49527321 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au if you are coming in this event.

Remember you can help the Botanic Gardens thrive...



The “Friends Meeting Place”

Meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month 9am – 12noon... throughout the year at the Meeting room of the Administration building... (Except school holidays... unless the volunteers want to work with Maya and young children.) There are lots of things to do...

Wednesday April 6th is during School Holidays, but Garden Friends and volunteers can meet on the Admin Deck in the Tropical Shade Garden to make labels, place out labels in the Gardens and do Plant Audits and photography...or assist with “Seed and Eggs” School holiday activity.

“Wednesday Gardening / Planting Friends”

Join in at 7.00am - 9.00am or at 10.00am - 12.00noon
...or both sessions?
Come along on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month, March to late November.

Meet Kellie (MRBG Gardener) at the Heritage Gardens at 7.00am or 10.00am. Please be prompt for the sign on / induction process and to collect your GARDEN FRIENDS vest.

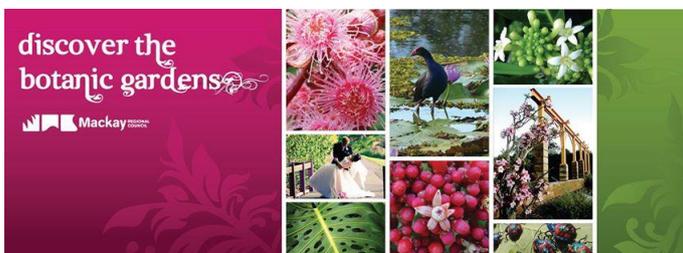
Remember ... to bring a hat, water bottle, wear closed in shoes and sunscreen and you are ready for work. Please let us know you are coming by either phoning on 49 527300 or emailing on botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au . See you there.



Just so you know...

EASTER Holidays Good Friday March 25th – Easter Monday March 28th

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS March 29th – April 10.



**Remember we are on Facebook too.
Why not check us out and like us?**

<https://www.facebook.com/#!/mackayregionalbotanicgardens/>



Need more information about anything in this newsletter... Contact the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au