

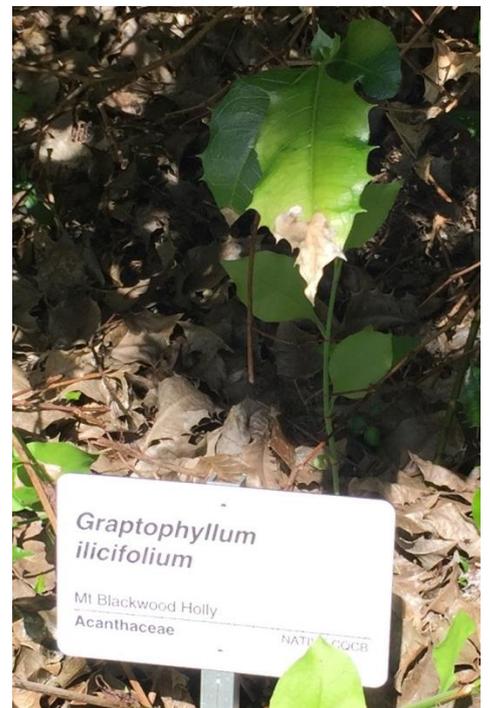
Newsletter

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2016 No.3

Our Botanic Gardens is nearly a teenager! On May 24th, Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens will be 13 years old. Enjoy the latest from 'The Botanic Gardens'.

Yippee! The first etched plant label has been placed into the Botanic Gardens. Ross Demuth, on his last day as Team Leader of Horticulture achieved his goal of initiating the addition of these new plants labels to the Gardens. The labels are a result of a new Data Base created from Audits done of the plants currently growing in the Botanic Gardens. The etched plant labels are to eventually replace the current printed labels which fade extremely rapidly. Ross and Moyea (Garden Friend volunteer) then noted that this specific plant (our Logo flower... Mt Blackwood Holly) has an etched label on the Data Base. This is a fantastic achievement by Ross, Moyea and other Gardens Friends. Thank you.



The first new etched label to be added to the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens was for Mt Blackwood Holly (*Graptophyllum ilicifolium*) the Botanic Gardens' Logo flower.

The Mt Blackwood Holly, *Graptophyllum ilicifolium* has also featured recently with its appearance as a sculpture on the Administration Building, so it is very fitting that the first etched label was the Botanic Gardens' logo flower.

Have you seen the feature wall at the Administration at night? You can't miss it and you can even see it from Lagoon Street as you drive past the Gardens. LED lights behind the sculpture makes the logo flower glow in the dark and creates a striking and noticeable silhouette.

The feature wall is now the place for participants to gather when they come along on the **Free Friday guided walks**.

A few locals have come along to these walks, but Friends of the Gardens are also using these walks to learn about plants, features and creatures in the Gardens.

In time Garden Friends may be able to lead a guided walk in the future when their confidence and knowledge has grown.

Have you seen it? Lots of colour in the Lagoons Gallery and Café ...

“Flow” an exhibition by Jodie Connolly



‘Flow’ is a solo painting and mixed media exhibition. The works are abstract, bright and colourful.

The paintings theme is 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 Jodie 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.

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

There are two long weekends approaching soon...

Monday 25th April is Anzac Day Holiday and

Monday 2nd May is Queensland's Labour Day Holiday.

Note: <http://publicholidays.com.au/qld/>

*** On 13 October 2015 amendments to the Holidays Act 1983 were passed by Parliament prescribing that from 2016, Labour Day public holiday is to be observed on the first Monday in May and the Birthday of the Sovereign (Queen's Birthday) public holiday is to be observed on the first Monday in October.



Such a lot of fun and learning during the School Holidays...

Eggs and Seeds > How to get away from your parents in a time capsule?

Seed dispersal is the way that plants send their youngsters far and wide... be that by floating on the breeze (wind), sailing down the river or rainwater (water), exploding (ballistic), taking a ride on people or animals (burrs, hooks and stickiness), being eaten and passed along (fruits and berries), dropping and rolling (gravity) or by fire.



Everlasting Daisies have heaps of tiny seeds... and if you give a big puff of air they float away. Wonder where they will travel to and if they will grow into another plant with golden flowers.

Toss a winged seed into the air and watch it spin to the ground!

Eggs... are also how some creatures make sure their young are in a time capsule that will eventually hatch a new animal, often away from them, for eggs- ample... a female stick insect will just lay her eggs from a bush and let them drop to the ground never to see them again. Walking through the Gardens we were surprised to find quite a few creatures that had laid eggs or hatched from eggs.



Excitement as we saw a very large female praying mantis that looked ready to lay eggs, a huge grasshopper (they lay eggs in the ground), harlequin bugs with eggs, baby harlequin bugs that had just hatched, lady beetle larva and caterpillars.



Female praying mantis, praying mantis nymph just hatched, large grasshopper and learning about the life cycle of the grasshopper after it has hatched from an egg...



An adult Harlequin bug guarding her eggs, the empty egg shell (white) and two day old Harlequin nymphs.



Lady beetle larva, moth caterpillar and watching, watching how that caterpillar was crawling off the leaf and on to his hand...

But what about those other eggs we found in the Gardens...?????

Some were... Stink horns, a fungus that emerged from egg shapes, (the lacy veiled stinkhorn looks pretty but what a smell!) and Golden eggs (gold sprayed *Neisosperma kilneri* endocarps that made for a golden day!



The children decorated plant pots and plant a range of seeds as a time capsule or two to take home.

We love hearing comments and gaining some feedback from activities in the Gardens. Maya loved this comment... "I thought it was going to be boring... but it was so cool".



School Holidays continued...

And then there was "Lop" the Rabbit... a Facebook quiz that encouraged more families to visit the Gardens.

"Lop" was photographed in many different sections of the Gardens and people had to find out where she was...

On April the 1st, this post was made on our Facebook page...

It's the 1st of April and that is no joke, well maybe an April Fools' joke. Just saw "Lop" the Rabbit eating carrot cake at the Botanic Gardens. Now where could she be doing that? Maybe you can go there and have some carrot cake too. Remember to write down where she is and the map number on your quiz sheet.



Some posts prompted some comments...

Like this one with "Lop" under the railway bridge →

Favorite place to run everyday!

Watch out for rabbits... just kidding.

Did "Lop" see the platypus under the bridge?

'Lop' the rabbit seems to be looking towards the trees and not towards the water, so may not have seen the platypus. She may not have been there early enough either.



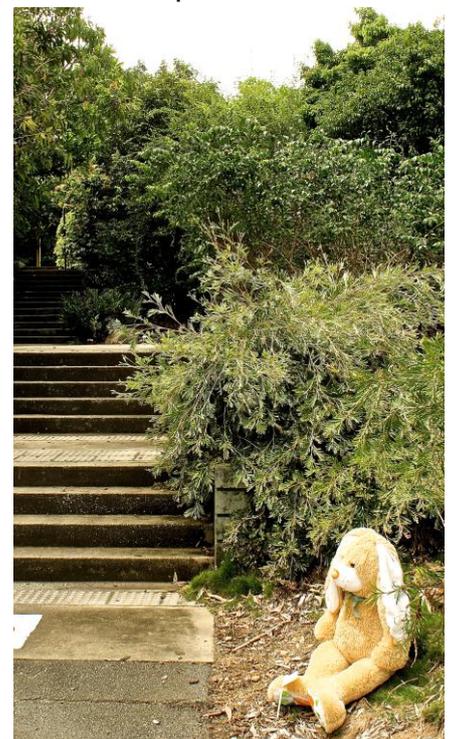
Two of our "Lop" posts disappeared and were reposted and prompted this response.

Was this post supposed to be for Wed 30th? Ta

Yes it is...not sure what happened to make the post revert to March 23rd (possibly its creation date as the posts were scheduled). Hope you are enjoying the quiz.

Ta, yes the kids are having fun & I'm learning about the gardens at the same time!

Do you know where "Lop" is in the Gardens in these photos? These 3 images didn't appear on Facebook.



What have the Garden Friends been up to?

Weed and Feed!

Did you see the birds pecking at the Vetiver Grass in the Botanic Gardens? They were a new type of Fluro finches! Just kidding, it was really a bunch of Garden Friends doing a spot of weeding. Just a small bunch of Friends started beneath the Cafe and ventured as far as the World Cycad Garden resulting in many bags of weeds that filled the trailer and the Polaris. The Garden Friends wore their new vests. What do you think of the vests? Thank you Garden Friends... Veronique, Elizabeth, Heather, John, Phillip, Steve, Maya, Kevin and Gardens' Staff Kellie and Aaron.



Fluro Finches... Check out the fluro vests the Gardens Friends now wear in the Gardens when working on site. It has Garden Friend embroidered on the back.



Wow, what a load of weeds! A good example too, of the Friends' new vest and one of our famous (within Botanic Gardens) yellow shirts.

Happy fellows Kevin and Steve are often seen volunteering in the Botanic Gardens

Sandringham Conservation Area Excursion...

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Friends group gather for their excursion through Sandringham Conservation area.



Giant Spear Grass, Blady Grass, Kangaroo Grass and Grader Grass (also known as Habana Oats) were some of the plants that Friends of the Gardens can now identify after their excursion to Sandringham Conservation Area. Over 20 Garden friends joined Meryl and Maya on the guided walk to identify local native plants. A great day out followed by a BBQ back at the Botanic Gardens.



← Giant Spear Grass *Heteropogon triticeus* was easily identified by the end of the walk.



Blady Grass *Imperata cylindrical* has a white fluffy → inflorescence which makes it easy to identify from the other plants.



← Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra* is a more delicate grass than the stronger robust introduced species Grader Grass *Themeda quadrivalvis* that is a weed in the local area. Grader Grass is also known as Habana Oats.

Why Habana Oats?

The story is... that after the Boer War, saddles that had been brought back to the Habana area got wet during the 1918 flood and the stuffing inside the saddles was made up of this grass (with seed) and the seed sprouted... and thus the plant was introduced to the area.



There was a lot of animated conversation during the feasting (BBQ) back at the Botanic Gardens after the informative and enjoyable walk.

Thanks to Meryl for sharing her plant knowledge and plant identification skills and thanks to Maya for the laminated "cheat sheets" which had information on many more plants found during the walk.

In the Gardens...



What has been happening down near the railway tunnel?

MRBG staff and members of SGAP (Society for Growing Australian Plants) have extended the Brigalow Belt section of the Gardens. Check out the new plantings the next time you take a stroll in the southern end of the Gardens. SGAP is now known as Native Plants Australia NPA (Mackay Branch). Great work everyone. Thank you...



If you look at the top right hand photo, you will notice something is happening in the distance on the green hill. Roy and his offsider Dave are up to something too.



Well actually they are working on the ground, so down to something...

They are upgrading the path between the Buffer forests...Pioneer Peaks, Koumala Range and Reliance Creek with a product called Modwood. It is a recycled product but less flammable than the Replas product. You might recall the walkway and bridge (Blue Water trail) near Canelands that was burnt by vandals.

This new walkway presents some challenges with large roots to go around and small bridges to be created in the gullies.

What's on...

Annual Farleigh Palm Fete:

Sunday 15th May. 8.00am onwards at the Farleigh Primary School...

We require friends to assist to set up and attend at the stall, selling souvenirs and sharing information about the Botanic Gardens via brochures and fact sheets. Everyone is welcome to join in. Two people are needed for each 1-2 hours shift.

Call Maya on 49527321 or 0409750453 or leave a message to be part of the day's roster. Thanks.

SGAP (or NPA Mackay Branch) Annual Native Plant sale will be at Farleigh School alongside us or we are alongside them... SGAP will have a list of the plants they will have for sale our soon. You can always contact Grant Paterson on 0488426671 or Irene Champion 0417551745 for more information.

“Happy Birthday Botanic Gardens”



It is the Botanic Gardens' 13th Birthday on May 24th.

The Garden Friends will getting down and dirty for this year's Birthday present to the Gardens with a Planting bee. They will be assisting in adding some new features to the Orientation Garden (part of the front entrance to the Gardens' buildings) on the Saturday 21st May. Will you be coming to help?

The Garden Friends will also continue with the Gardens' new Data Base and add more plants as different garden sections are Plant Audited.

The Garden Friends are committed to these projects and plan to contract Ross Demuth to assist with the Plant Audits so the Friends can replace all the faded labels with either new paper labels or our new engraved labels. The paper labels cost around \$1.00 to produce whereas the engraved labels are \$11.00 per label.

Would you like to give a present to the Botanic Gardens... you can.

If anyone would like to “**Sponsor a Garden Bed of Labels**” by donating monies via the Garden Friends towards the production of more engraved labels, we would love to hear from you. Even if you would just like to sponsor a few labels, that could be your present to the Botanic Gardens this year for the 13th Birthday. I'm sure new labels would be appreciated by many people.

Contact Maya on 49527321 or 0409750453 or leave a message should you want to donate. Thanks.

Small Explorers: “Plant a Seed and Grow a Mindset”

Monday May 23rd: 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 and later plant some seeds.

Meet at the Meeting Room (opposite the Lagoons Café, closed Mondays) and get fascinated by all sorts of seeds, big, small, spiny and smooth that become plants like the ones growing in our Botanic Gardens. The session includes story reading, making a recycled pot, planting a seed or two to take home and a small walk in the Gardens.

Bookings are essential as these sessions are very popular. Phone 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

Special Free Friday Guided Walk... Friday 20th May >10.00am “They Dare to be Different!” Special Free Friday Guided Walk



International Day for Biological Diversity is celebrated each year on May 22nd.

Join Maya / Margaret and be lead down the Botanic Gardens' paths to see a variety of plants which are special to our local region's biodiversity. Some of the plants highlighted in this walk only grow in our bioregion and nowhere else in Australia. Some are considered 'Threatened in the wild species' due to their small populations.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the variety of all living things; the different plants, animals and microorganisms in existence, the genetic information they contain and the ecosystems they form. Biodiversity also encompasses diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

For more information> Contact the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

**BGANZ OPEN DAY:
Sunday 29th May.
We will be participating:**



The first Botanic Garden Australia and New Zealand Open Day will be held on Sunday, 29th May in Australia and New Zealand.



National Media launch in Australia and New Zealand (ABC TV's Costa Georgiadis, Australia Ambassador, and Auckland Botanic Gardens Jack Hobbs, New Zealand Ambassador.

Botanic gardens, arboretum and gardens in Australia and New Zealand will celebrate the vital work botanic gardens do for plant conservation. For more information... visit <http://www.bganz.org.au/>

What will be happening at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens?

We are planning a variety of Guided walks, presentations and activities throughout the day, with a plan to have something for everyone... Bird lovers, children, gardeners, walkers, runners, nature lovers and plant enthusiasts.

Keep informed by visiting the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens website...

<http://www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au>

or our Facebook page... <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