

Newsletter

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2016 No.6

The Botanic Gardens are looking a picture at the moment and the weather is fantastic for exploring, strolling and even exercising in such picturesque settings. Enjoy our latest newsletter.



This is probably the best time of the year to see beautiful sunsets while strolling in the Botanic Gardens. There are so many wonderful vistas and photographic opportunities

Why not come down in the afternoon, explore the Gardens, stop to smell the flowers, take a deep breath and relax, then linger till the sun goes down? Bring your camera and capture some sunset shots too.

Share them on our Facebook page...



We had an exciting photo shared with us by Bill Cameron, when he clicked a photo of one of our resident Platypus population. Thanks Bill for sharing your images.

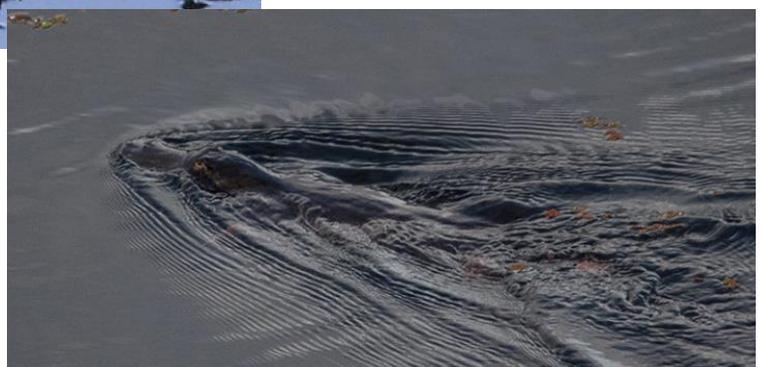
<https://www.facebook.com/#!/mackayregionalbotanicgardens/>



A Platypus is a very secretive animal and often it is only the early rises and walkers through the Botanic Gardens that get to see these interesting creatures.

They are quite active during the day at the moment and have been seen from the Lagoons Outlook Deck near the Lagoons Café.

The Platypus population in the Botanic Gardens Lagoons have been here for a very long time. There was concern that they may have disappeared after the 2008 flood, but thanks to documentation collected for 4 years, we now know their likely whereabouts.



Hope you haven't missed our exciting exhibitions in the Lagoons Gallery.



'Wasted Beauty' was an Eclectic Exhibition curated by Lalune Croker...

Wasted beauty was an environmental art exhibition, which aimed to take some of the items which cannot go in our recycling bins, and used them to create beauty.

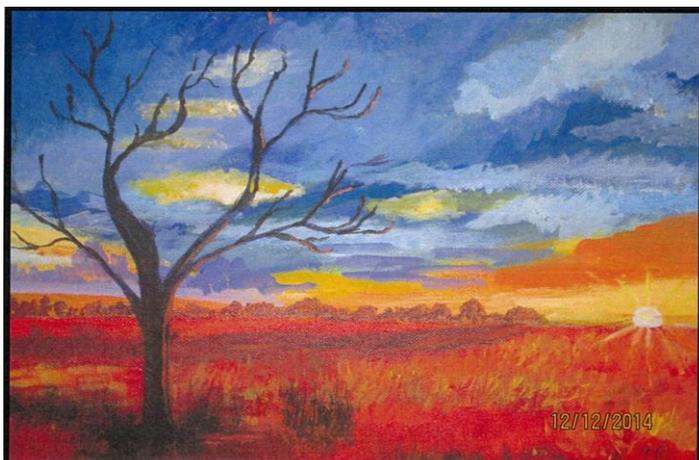
This exhibition aimed to create awareness around consumption and highlight the excessive and often unnecessary waste in our consumer society. There was also the hope that it may inspire people to look at these disposable items differently and creatively. This project used a variety of plastics including plastic bottle tops to create hanging works, sculptures and a large floating mandala installation visible from the café deck.



A diverse group of talented local artists and creators contributed to this eclectic exhibition... Stewart Alexander, Steve Brown, Jeudi Croker, Lalune Croker, Melissa Larsen, Cheb Jeffery, Anneke Meeder, Soetkin Pauwels, Tracey Robb, Lisa Roebig Holmes, Leah Tranter and Joanne Wood.

Did you see the Floating Mandala in the Lagoon!

Timeless Inspiration - Creativity is Ageless Exhibition was an inspiration!



Artistic expression and creativity is timeless and even after many years of lying dormant, given the opportunity it can resurface, or become a new and exciting challenge.

Creativity can take many forms but it is the doing that gives us the most satisfaction and the end result is the end of that journey.

The pieces of artworks in this exhibition were the creative journey for this group of Artists from Good Shepherd Lodge and they make this statement – “Age has no Creative Barriers”. Some of the artists are over 90 years young!

For most of the artists, Painting, Jewelry making and Basketry was a new challenge for them and they are an inspiration to us all.



There were so many people in the Lagoons Gallery to celebrate the opening of the Timeless Inspiration - Creativity is Ageless Exhibition.

The artists are all members of Good Shepherd Lodge with ages ranging from 85 - 96 years.

The inspirational artists were very pleased to see their works on display. Being creative at 90+, now that's a great achievement!



Have you been for a Guided Walk in the Botanic Gardens?



It was a picture perfect day for this guided walk at the Botanic Gardens.

There was great excitement when a Platypus was seen from the Lagoons Outlook deck near the Lagoons Cafe & Gallery.

Flowering plants, fruits, seeds, birds and creatures were all part of the interesting and informative walk with Volunteer guide Toni and Maya.



Why not join in next Friday or any Friday at 10am.

Meet at the Mt Blackwood flower sculpture at the Administration Building just before 10 am and meet either Maya, Margaret or Toni?

You could also call and let us know you wish to attend. Phone 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au



Have You Noticed?

There have been additions and changes with lots of planting in Lagoons Creek Wetland during National Tree Day...



Sixty volunteers took time out on Sunday to help plant 1246 plants at the recently upgraded Lagoons Creek Wetland near the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. The group transformed the area in little over two hours. The wetland plants will not only make the area look fantastic in years to come, but they play a fundamental role in the establishment of the ecosystem that will encourage fish habitat and migration.

Thank you to all the wonderful helpers who helped plant out this area yesterday. Your help is very much appreciated. The area will look magnificent when all the plants grow. Great work!

Spring is here!



There is one open already! You know Spring is here when this bloom appears in the Botanic Gardens. It is the Powder-Puff Lilly-Pilly; *Syzygium wilsonii* subsp. *wilsonii*. It is such a beautiful small tree with pink buds, new leaves that are pink too and white berries.

Coming soon...

They only appear for 3 - 4 weeks and the buds are nearly open.

The terrestrial orchid is called the Swamp Orchid, *Phaius australis* and the flower spikes are stunning. See them flowering in the Tropical Shade Garden.



Stop and smell the 'Orchids'

September 17-18, 9am – 4pm*
Ken Burgess Orchid House,
Goldsmith Street, Mackay
Entry by gold coin donation



Mackay's Orchid Extravaganza is back! As in previous years, the Ken Burgess Orchid House at Queens Park will be transformed into a magical world for young and old in September. "Orchid Pollinators" is the theme for this year's display and attendees will learn the secrets from orchid growing experts, with free orchid workshops, information sessions and an orchid auction held on the Saturday.

***Please remember the Orchid House is not at the Botanic Gardens but in Queens Park. We just wanted you to know about this special event.

* ***Orchid displays will remain open for community groups and the general public from 10am – 3pm, Monday September 19.***

Christmas in the Gardens.

We know that you might think this is a little early, but our Christmas Orchids must know Christmas is around the corner as they have already started to bloom in the Tropical Shade Garden...

Planning is underway for Christmas in the Gardens 2016 and we would like to hear from any Garden Friends / Volunteers who would like to be involved.



This year will be the first year Christmas in the Gardens is being held in the Meadowlands Amphitheatre; with more room and a purpose built hard stand area means we can offer more to the community!

We'd like to offer the Garden Friends the first opportunity to take part before opening it up to other community groups. In the past safe flame candles and glow sticks have always been a crowd favourite but if you have an idea for another stall we would love to hear it.

If you're interested in volunteering on the night or running a stall please make contact with Maya or Simone at Gardens administration 4952 7300 or botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

Christmas in the Gardens is a free community event hosted in the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens that attracts 400+ people annually.

Traditionally this event was held on the front lawn at the Botanic Gardens; this year will be the first year *Christmas in the Gardens* will be held in the Meadowlands Amphitheatre and will involve food vendors, market stalls and family friendly activities e.g. face painting & roving entertainers

Expressions of interest in performing on the night are now open!

If you are available on Friday 16th December from 4pm (sound check, event from 6pm to 9pm) and interested in performing we'd love to hear from you; please contact Botanic Gardens administration on botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

Set lengths will be approx. 35min and we welcome a mix of different styles of music from both solo performers and groups. Performers are encouraged to include a few family friendly songs in their set along with the Christmas songs/carols they chose to perform.

Microphones will be provided, performers are to provide instruments if required.

If you have specific sound requirements, please mention this in your expression of interest.

What are the Friends of the Gardens up to?



Unfortunately the Teemburra Dam Excursion on Saturday, September 3 was cancelled as Helen Paulsen who was leading the guided walk, had damaged her knee.

The proposed talk... The 'Sex Life of Orchids' has also been cancelled as the date clashes with the Orchid Extravaganza...

September 17th and 18th, 9am – 4pm

But... The next outing is still ON!

Mt Blackwood Excursion: Saturday October 8

Garden Friends Maya and Kevin invite you to their Mt Blackwood acreage.

See the Mt Blackwood Holly growing (and flowering in the wild) and recognise many other trees and plants growing in rainforest and woodlands that are also showcased at the Gardens. A couple of easy walks available, but to see the Mt Blackwood Holly there will be some rock hopping in the creek...



Friends Meeting Place:

We love to have Friends coming along to get involved with the Gardens.

Current Friends assist by updating our plant database, hosting guided walks and putting out new or replacement plant labels.

We really appreciate everything that they do and we'd like to broaden the opportunities as much as possible so anyone who is interested can get involved"

"We'd love to hear from you if there are any ideas or jobs you could help with? We've been brainstorming a few ideas and activities that could be possible..."

- Write some articles for the Gardens Newsletter or take on the whole newsletter!!!!
- Walking guide training (practise runs together to build confidence)
- Create some Self-guided walk brochures... 5minute walks, Half an Hour walks, Longer walks
- Creating a What's on poster (change once a month)
- Fact sheet research,
- Repair floating pontoon for pump (ideas to replace what is on the floating structure eg... small boat, floating sculpture or interesting structure)
- Assisting Roy with Oiling timber/painting (decks and seats around the gardens)and wooden slates near toilets (pull down and re-oil)
- Golf Buggy tour prep (timing different routes, potential for friends to host the tours)

Got an idea or two????... Do you like the sound of any of the above, then drop a line to either Maya or Simone.

Lagoons Gallery ... Can't wait to see this exhibition...

Mackay Landscapes – Photography by Robert Bole

Wednesday 7th September – Sunday 2nd October 2016



The exhibition's images are showcasing the Mackay region, places which most of us have been to. The photographs are captured by local landscape photographer Robert Bole and displayed on aluminium. When standing in front of these stunning images, their beauty is enhanced by this medium and with its ultra-glossy finish you can't help but feel that you are standing in the scene itself.

Image: 'Romance of the River' – Robert Bole

In this age of digital photography, Robert still prefers to shoot his landscapes with film without the need for coloured filters. The images you will see on the wall are what Robert witnessed at the moment he pressed the shutter.

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

School Holiday Activities... The Best Beak in the Botanic Lagoons...

Week 1: 21st, 22nd Friday 23rd September
Week 2: Wednesday 28th, 29th, 30th September
10.00am – 12.00noon

The 2-hour session will include walking in the Botanic Gardens, where children will be introduced to Bird Watching with members of BirdLife Mackay members with their scopes and binoculars.

In the meeting room, the story of "The Best Beak in Boonaroo Bay" will be read, introducing children to the variety of beaks that birds have. There will also be

opportunity for creative activities, including making a bird mask with a variety of beaks to choose from and lots of colourful feathers and making bird nests. Bring Binoculars if you have them.



Each child MUST HAVE... hat, closed in shoes, water bottle and sunscreen to participate!

Each group is limited to 10 school aged children (5 years and older)
Payment with Bookings by Friday 16th September ... ensures your child attendance. Cost \$5.00 each

Contact Botanic Gardens 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au or visit the Botanic Gardens website www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au for more information.

Small Explorers: Spring in the Gardens. Tuesday September 13: 9.30am – 11.00am



Join Maya, Botanic Gardens Visitors Services Officer, and “Spring” into the Gardens to see lots of spring blooming flowers, read some stories and join in some fun physical activities that might put a ‘Spring’ in your steps!

Meet at the Meeting Room (opposite the Lagoons Café closed Tuesdays,) at 9.30am

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. Small Explorer sessions are fun and educational opportunities for toddlers and kindergarten aged children 18 months to 5 years held monthly or by appointment and they are very popular.

Speaking of SPRING!!!!

Have you been checking out our Facebook page? And Liking us?

All this month (September) there is a posting of a different flower blooming in the Botanic Gardens during SPRING...

We started with September 1st – Wattle Day - Wattle day has been celebrated across Australia since 1992 and back in 1988 the Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) was officially gazetted as Australia's national floral emblem. In our Botanic Gardens we have Pretty Wattle (*Acacia decora*) flowering.



Have you seen the sea of Golden Everlasting Daisies (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*) from the Lagoon Outlook Deck at the Botanic Gardens? It is like a golden glow and you especially notice them when you venture out of the shade at the bottom of the Finch Hatton Waterway's waterfall. Garden friends planted these alongside Gardens staff...to add a little sunshine to your day.

A tiny white flower. It is the (*Sauropus albiflorus*) and you'll notice a small hedge of the plants on your right as you enter from the carpark near Administration. If you look closely you may see a shiny Green Jewel Bug hiding amongst the leaves, flowers and exploding fruits!



Need more information about anything in this newsletter or more...

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