

Newsletter

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2016 No.5

Cooler weather has finally found us and the Botanic Gardens seem to be breathing a sigh of relief! Enjoy the brilliant weather and take some time to visit the Gardens. Enjoy.

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

There was “**Inflorescence**” an educational exhibition by Maya Harrison...

an **inflorescence** being a group or cluster of flowers arranged on a stem that is composed of a main branch or a complicated arrangement of branches. The complete flower head / inflorescence of a plant include stems, stalks, bracts and flowers.

Remember these giant versions of... Spike, Raceme, Compound Umbel, Spadix and Spathe and Capitulum / Head inflorescence.



Pinnacle School – One Sun, One World, Many Dreams Art Project:

Pinnacle State School was one of ten schools throughout Queensland to be chosen to participate in a special Art project conducted by Dr. Barbara Piscitelli AM in collaboration with QPAC.

Image: 'View from Pinnacle School' by Michela Lewer

The Art project was carried out by Artist in residence, Maya Harrison, involving all the children at Pinnacle school. Children aged 8 have a selection of their art works displayed in Brisbane and China. An exhibition to showcase many of the works of **all the children** in Pinnacle School is in Lagoons Gallery until Sunday July 3rd.

The children of the school are very excited when they came to see their drawings, portraits, paintings and prints in the Mackay exhibition which coincided with the Brisbane exhibition During the Out Of the Box Children's Festival in Brisbane.

There is my artwork...and mine too!



The purpose of the project was to collect young children's (8 years and under) Queensland (Australia) artworks to exchange with Hubei (China). The aim was to enhance understanding and appreciation of children, their art and their ideas.

Looking at all the prints the students made and remembering the experience...



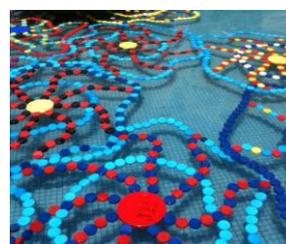
The two youngest students see their artworks. Original Artworks are on display in the Out of the Box Festival in Brisbane and will become part of the Queensland State Library archives.

These 12 artworks are included in the collection

Well done Pinnacle School!



Coming in July... Wasted Beauty... An Eclectic Exhibition curated by Lalune Croker...



Wasted beauty is an environmental art exhibition, which aims to take some of the items which cannot go in our recycling bin, and use them to create beauty.

This exhibition aims to create awareness around consumption and highlight the excessive and often unnecessary waste in our consumer society. There is also the hope that it may inspire people to look at these disposable items differently and creatively. This project will use 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.

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Lagoons Gallery is open Wednesday to Friday 10am – 3pm and weekends from 9am - 4pm. The exhibition is available for viewing July 6th – July 31st.

Make sure you see the Floating Mandala in the Lagoon!

Tecomanthe Talk...



They're out! The flowers of the *Tecomanthe* are blooming beautifully. Walk to the end of the Lagoon Outlook Deck next to the Cafe at the Botanic Gardens and look up into the roof structure. Isn't it just a fabulous display?

For years this *Tecomanthe* has been named as *Tecomanthe* sp. Roaring Meg.

Well it has been confirmed by visiting Curator Manager Dr Dale Dixon from Royal Sydney Botanic Gardens that it is in fact *Tecomanthe dendrophila*.

What's the difference?

Tecomanthe dendrophila is a fabulous woody climber that has the unique botanical ability to form blooms off its old woody stems. The bi-coloured, 4" rose-red flowers have creamy white tips, which form in large umbels during late winter and spring. Its common name is New Guinea Trumpet Vine or New Guinea Creeper and you can guess where it originates from. Flowering begins once the vine forms a rough bark, and then blooms emerge from the same stem year after year. Now imagine this over a pergola just like the sturdily constructed one at the Botanic Gardens. The flowers emerge on leafless old wood so the lower branches produce more flowers every year and masses of flowers form a dense canopy when the branches grow horizontally. Flowers have no stems so it is virtually impossible to use them as cut flowers. If the vine becomes too rampant, you can cut it back without losing out on the blooms.

So what is *Tecomanthe* sp. Roaring Meg?



Tecomanthe sp. "Roaring Meg" is not a hybrid, it is a distinct species found in the Mt Finnigan area of North Queensland. "Roaring Meg" is apparently, the most spectacular bloomer of Queensland species. The name comes from the Roaring Meg Falls on the upper reaches of the Bloomfield River.

Tecomanthe species 'Roaring Meg' is also a vigorously twining Australian native climber with dark green glossy foliage. It has the most spectacular reddish magenta bell shaped flowers that occur in sprays several times a year. There are no creamy white tips on the ends of the flowers.

Leaves and Flowers. Copyright B. Gray

Tecomanthe sp. Roaring Meg has a common name known as **Roaring Meg Creek Trumpet Vine** or **Pink Trumpet Vine**. It is an undescribed species of climber, native to Queensland, Australia. The taxon was recorded in the Australian Plant Census in 2010.

Tecomanthe comes from *Tecoma*, abbreviated from the Mexican name of the plant, *Tecomaxochitl*, and the Greek (*anthos*), a flower, anther; *hillii* is for Walter Hill (1820 – 1904), first curator of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens.

*****For those who attended the presentation "Understanding Plant Names" by Dr. Dale Dixon at the Friends of the Gardens AGM, they will remember that Botanical names that end with a double ii after a consonant is honouring a person... in this case Walter Hill.

To add confusion there is also...



Tecomanthe hillii, commonly known as Fraser Island Creeper is also a woody, evergreen perennial climber which can grow up to 10m high with appropriate support such as a tall tree to climb.

Fraser Island Creeper has attractive, lush, green, glossy, pinnate foliage on multiple twinning stems. It produces prolific skirt-like clusters of 6cm long, pinkish-cream throated, lipstick-pink coloured flowers on old growth during October. *Tecomanthe hillii* is a rare plant that is endemic (can only be found in) Eastern Queensland, Australia.

Photographer: Fagg, M. ANBG Photo No.: a.21048

As its name suggests, Fraser Island Creeper is native to Fraser Island in South-East Queensland, however there are also small isolated populations on mainland South-East and North-East Queensland. *Tecomanthe hillii* is often found naturally growing in sandy soils that are close to water sources throughout its range.

Have You Noticed?

There have been a few additions and changes to the Botanic Gardens...



Hundreds of new Golden Every Lasting Daisies have been added to below the deck, and will produce a new sea of yellow to view from the Café.

Thanks to volunteers, Veronique, Steve, Greg and Elisabeth for their toil working alongside Botanic Gardens staff members.

Have you seen the new front entrance?
There have been some changes there too...

A lovely new bed of Grass trees are featuring near the foot path and are visible to the passing traffic.

They will look wonderful when they send up their flower spikes and the butterflies and the birds discover their nectar filled flowers.

But that's not all...





From this..... to this.

New planters with colours on the top of the planters are showing some of the plants you will find in those garden sectors of the same colour. If you notice the path light poles within the Gardens you will notice the same colours. For e.g. Cremorne the area around the buildings colour is 'raspberry' (see the light pole behind the planters). Thanks to the friends of the Gardens and Cr. Fran Fordham for helping with the plantings for this area.

There were more plantings from another group too. **SGAP (Society for Growing Australian Plants), now known as Native Plants Australia.** They went to work on the upper section of Brigalow Belt and what a difference it has made to what was basically a storm water drain.



How the area has changed with all the plantings SGAP members have done over the years and still continually to maintain and add too. This is how the area looked many years ago.

The Botanic Gardens is a wonderful community facility and we are indeed fortunate for the knowledge, passion, dedication, drive and toil of all our volunteers. Thank you one and all.

The Australian Governments Green Army also helped with re- installing plant signs for the school holiday "Bush Foods Quiz" interpretative / information signage.

The volunteers learnt a lot about Bush Foods as they read the signs and filled out their own quiz sheets. Many are hoping that their quiz sheet will be drawn to **WIN** the 'Bush Tucker Foods' prize.





Could you survive in the Australian Bush? Bring the whole family to the Botanic Gardens, pick up a “Bush Foods Quiz” and find out what might be edible from plants. Watch out, some are NOT!

Quiz sheets are available at the Botanic Gardens or online on the Botanic Gardens website. Completed quizzes can be returned to Botanic Gardens Administration. Bush foods quiz winner drawn Friday, July 8.

Pictured is *Morinda citrifolia*

Morinda citrifolia **Cheese Fruit, Noni,**

The Cheese Fruit Tree is always found growing close to the coastline in tropical areas. It looks more like a bush than a tree with low set large broad glossy green leaves.

The flowers are small, white and sweet scented. You will often find ants and bugs on the fruit. Are they after the sweet smelling nectar?



The fruit is elongated in shape with irregular depressions on the outer surface. It looks like a dimpled egg shape.

The fruit turns from green to whitish-yellow when fully ripe.

The fruit is unmistakable, with translucent flesh, many brown/ blue/ purplish seeds. It has a powerful aroma similar to rancid cheese when very ripe.

Some say it smells like blue vein cheese. It is best eaten when two thirds ripe.



The fruit is produced throughout the year. It can be eaten raw or cooked and the young leaves are also edible.

The tree is also referred to as the Noni fruit and the Native Custard Apple and it was used as a health drink for indigenous men; a fruit with medicinal qualities.

Today, Noni fruit, leaves, flowers, stems, bark, and roots are still used to make medicine for a long list of ailments. However, the effectiveness of Noni for these uses has not been proven. Noni plants have a lot of potential in the medical world. Because of the nutrients the Noni fruit possess, it's used to treat a variety of health problems

Have you heard of Noni Juice? The fruit juice is used for arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, muscle aches and pains, menstrual difficulties, headaches, heart disease, AIDS, cancers, gastric ulcers, sprains, depression, senility, poor digestion, atherosclerosis, circulation problems, and drug addiction.

Noni contains many substances, including potassium. Some of these substances might help repair damaged cells in the body, activate the immune system, and have other activities. Wow, what a fruit!



Find out more about Bush Foods on our guided walk

'Plants feed the Planet' – Bush Tucker

Saturday July 9th > 10.00am – 1.00pm



Meet at the Meeting room at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens by 10am.

Join Maya and Friends of the Gardens to explore trees, plants and grasses that could provide you with food, shelter, medicine and tools during a walk through the Gardens.

Samples of bush tucker will be available to taste as part of this educational experience.

Let us know if you wish to come along by contacting the Botanic Gardens 49527300 and booking the date with us. Cost Free:



Plant a seed and grow a mindset!

Seeds were the focus of Small Explorer sessions recently at the Gardens...



Seeds can spread throughout the environment in many different ways... by wind, water, hooks, stickiness, gravity, being eaten and being hoarded by animals for later.

The Gardens is full of different seeds and pods and during a walk lots were discovered.

Later the children returned to make recycled pots from newspaper and plant some seeds inside to take home and grow.

They all knew that their seeds would need a good drink of water every day. We planted vegetables so that in the future they could harvest their rewards of growing and caring for plants.... And eat them!

Children in the Botanic Gardens

Days with children in the Botanic Gardens are always exciting and sometimes exhausting too. School children on excursions often come to the Gardens to see real life / living things and see first hand how they grow, smell, feel, move (creatures not plants unless it is very windy) and live out their life cycles.

Wow, What a day! 100 prep year children from Fitzgerald State School visited the Botanic Gardens today and didn't we see some exciting living things... Harlequin bugs with eggs, beautiful coloured Caterpillars, wonderful fluttering Day Moths, Tadpoles, Yabbies and even Backswimmers. We know these living things need food, shelter, air and water to survive... just like us.



Fitzgerald prep children discovering BUGS! Harlequin bugs - different stages of nymphs and adult with eggs



Frog tadpoles, yabby and backswimmers were some of the creatures that can be found in our waterways... even the lagoon.

Eggs of Zodiac moth and caterpillars of the Four O'clock moth. Lots more creatures and plants were seen too.

We loved this comment about the excursion... *Thank you botanical gardens team.... from the moment I picked up my little preppy till when he finally crashed (very early) all he could tell me was about his wonderful day he had at the Gardens today. Now I can see why :) rest up and keep up the good work.*

It is not all about plants and creatures...

WHY not do some exercise (walk or run) in stunning surroundings...

Join in every Saturday at 7.00am in the **Mackay parkrun!** Meet at the Under the Banyan PlayGarden.



GALA IN THE GARDENS:

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens' Meadowland Amphitheatre

Friday 8 July > Gates open 5:30pm > Performance starts 6pm > ENTRY - Gold Coin Donation



Picture yourself rugged up on a picnic blanket sitting with your loved ones, under the stars at the beautiful surrounds of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, sipping on a glass of wine, maybe a hot chocolate, or tempting your taste buds with a picnic basket full of gourmet delicacies... Now cue the entertainment - listen to the Queensland Youth Orchestra as they deliver their much-loved classical program.

But it doesn't stop there.

Be serenaded by the sounds of the Mackay Choral Society and the Mackay Big Band; bringing you their combined program of modern hits and traditional classics.

BYO alcohol permitted – please drink responsibly.

GOURMET PICNIC BASKETS

Pre-order your gourmet picnic basket and collect it from the MECC for just \$30 - phone 4961 9777 or pop into the MECC Box Office to pre-order your basket. Baskets must be pre-ordered; you cannot purchase on the night.

Small Explorers:

“Wildlife in the Gardens” Wednesday July 13th: 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' on Wednesday 13th July at 9.30 – 11.00.

Meet at the Meeting Room (opposite the Café on the Lagoon) 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...bookings are essential for these popular sessions

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

Contact the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email

botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

Check us out on our Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Facebook page too.

