

Newsletter

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2016 No.1

It is almost too late to say... Happy New Year ... as the month of January 2016 has zipped past already. While the 'Wet season' rains fall we hope you enjoy the latest from the Gardens.

Did you get to see these stunning images?

'In Our Backyard' - Creative Shots Photo Club's Annual Exhibition



They were on exhibition in our Lagoons Gallery during the school holidays 9th December 2015 – 17th January 2016

Creative Shots Photo Club members had been out and about taking many different styles of photographs to highlight the exhibition's theme "In Our Backyard". The photographers could interpret the theme as being their own backyard within the confines of their fences or 'our backyard' as in the Mackay region.

Image: River Street Jetty by Helena Slade

The images consisted of landscapes, portraits and macrophotography. Visitors to the exhibition were encouraged to vote for the image they felt best illustrated the theme "In Our Backyard".

Always welcoming new members, you can find out more about the Creative Shots Photo Club at www.creativeshots.com.au.

Make sure you visit the Lagoons Gallery and Café during February to see "Kids Botanic Art Exhibition"



There are some beautiful artworks created by children. Two weeks of School Holiday activities held in the Botanic Gardens Meeting Room were devoted to observing the flora of the Gardens. These observations were then inspiration for detailed 'botanic art style' drawings and watercolour paintings.

The children use a combination of pencils, watercolour pencils and watercolour paints.

← Maidenhair Fern Leaf by Francesca



Leaf Study by Luke just 6 years old.
Note the real leaf too →

←Winged Seed by Lilly.





The children, aged 5 – 12, also used recycled materials (mostly plastic) to create three-dimensional blooms. They were obviously species of plants that had not been seen before and the children enjoyed creating botanical (sounding) names for their creations. Some were as hard to pronounce as the real botanical names of plants in our Botanic Gardens.

These recycled plastic blooms are now growing in the Tropical Shade Garden. Check them out sometime.

← Beautiful Lily Pad by Ty.

Zender Vine Flower by Luke →



← Dotinapotum with visiting butterfly by Abby

The children and adults were delighted to see their artworks on the walls of the Lagoons Gallery and in the showcases during the Exhibition Opening event on January 20th. Thanks go to Clifford Stocks from the Lagoons Café for providing the kid's focussed food for the event... delicious Jelly Shots!



This exhibition was part of the Botanic Gardens' feature in the local Daily Mercury paper. Lyneale from Council's Corporate Communications took many photos of the Exhibition Opening event.



We always knew that there were newly named and yet to be named species in the Botanic Gardens and now there are more.

← Bunnyhoppalartis by Charlotte is identified by its rabbit shaped stamen within the flower!

Botanic Gardens Quiz Winners:

She was so excited! Milagros won the Botanic Garden's Nature's Christmas Decorations quiz. She went home with her hands full of Christmas decorations to add sparkle to her home. Visitors Services Officer, Maya Harrison was thrilled to hand over the prizes.



Another Botanic Gardens Quiz winner in January too!

And the winner of the Special Plant Species and Hidden Creatures Quiz at the Botanic Gardens during January was Charlotte! She was thrilled with her prizes too. Here she is with her new Magnifying Glass, a Creature container and a Special native plant. The plant is commonly called Velcro Bean or Cascading Pea, because it has bean like seeds that attaches like Velcro and lots of pea type flowers which cascade down on long stems about 30 - 40cm long. Botanically known as *Hanslia ormocarpoides*. You can see some growing in the Tropical Shade Garden.



Have you seen me?

A tiny new plant in the Botanic Gardens is called an Ant Plant *Myrmecodia beccarii*.

It's an interesting little plant, because when the plant grows, tissue within the tuber dies back and hollow chambers form. These chambers allow ants to enter the plant. The plant provides a protective shelter for the ants; in turn the ants provide additional nutrients to the plant with their food leftovers. This ant plant is endemic to Australia. Wonder what other interesting plants are in our Botanic Gardens?

Did you see Simone and her colourful display at the Wedding Expo at the Mackay Entertainment and Conference Centre (MECC)?

Simone Mellor, Administration Officer at the Botanic Gardens can tell you all you need to know about having your Wedding celebrations in the Botanic Gardens.

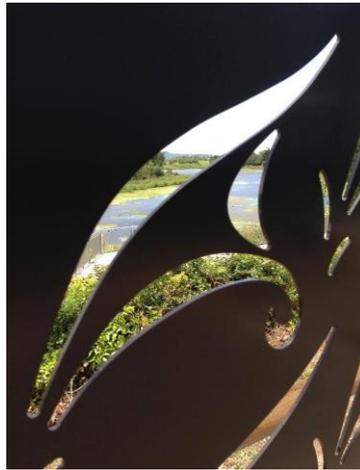
Ceremony sites and Reception options are all available.



Contact Simone on 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au or check out the Botanic Gardens website.

In the Botanic Gardens... Richard reports.

If you haven't been to the Botanic Gardens for a while, there have been a few changes. Walking down a few paths you will see some additional seats have been added for people's comfort. The 51hectare site has a 3.5 kilometre circuit of pathways, a long walk in the hot sunshine so sometimes you may need to take advantage of a seat for a rest. These new seatings are positioned so people can take a spell in the shade but also take in the different views and vistas available throughout the Gardens. Enjoy them sometime soon...



Here is a sneak peek at the panels within the new fence that is alongside the upgraded path and slope adjacent to the Water Works.

These panels will make for some interesting photography opportunities with the views in the distance and using the Botanic Gardens' logo and other cut out shapes within the panels for novel effects.

There is also another change appearing soon on the Administration building. It too will feature the logo of the Botanic Gardens. All will be revealed...

Garden Friends Welcome Guided Walk and BBQ.

Saturday February 13th Walk at 4.00pm, Welcome BBQ following at 6.00pm



Welcome in the New Year 2016, meet new Garden Friends and Richard Brown (Curator). Richard will be our Guest Speaker for a short walk and talk where he will explain and excite us with changes about to take place in the Gardens (Water Works path, Orientation Garden, new Feature Wall, Garden's Shop) including more opportunities for the volunteers to be involved.

We will meet at the Meeting room, walk to the Outlook deck and look at the changes to the lagoon...WATER!

← Like this one, See the drafts for more deck signs!

The Welcome Guided Walk continues...

We will walk down the deck stairs and go to Water Works area, later walk back along Palm Walk (see all the Heliconia plants and Gingers) to the Orientation Garden, stop at the new Feature Wall and Garden's Shop and then all enjoy social times with the Welcome BBQ.

We will also take the opportunity to give you something of great value to us... but we will want them back later. Check out the new vests that Gardening Friends will wear when working in the Gardens. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at The Botanic Gardens Meeting Room for the Guided walk at 4.00pm. The welcome to 2016 BBQ will follow with participants to bring along a salad or sweet / fruit to share. Bread rolls and meat will be provided for the BBQ. Have you sent your R.S.V.P to Simone by Wednesday 10th February so catering can be organized? Contact by phone 49527300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

“Friends Meeting Place” in the Botanic Gardens Meeting Room

Volunteers return to the 'Friend's Meeting Place' on February 3rd and February 17th 2016 in the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Meeting room opposite the Lagoons Café and Gallery.



Refreshed after the festive season holiday break they will be ready to dive into their volunteering at the Botanic Gardens and help out with many activities that will assist the Botanic Gardens growth and development. February activities revolve around Plant Audits, Photography and Labels. Ross Demuth (Team Leader of Horticulture) will demonstrate the new process for collecting information about the plants currently growing in the Gardens and how this information will be used for the Botanic Garden's Database.

Meet at 9.00am for a cuppa, meet and greet new friends and then venture off into the Gardens, 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.

The “Friends Meeting Place” occurs 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.)

Date claimers for March...

“Wednesday Gardening/ Planting Friends” ... begins March 2nd 7.00am!
(More information following page.)

“Friends Meeting Place” March 2nd and March 16th 9 am – 12noon

Small Explorers... ‘Wildlife in the Gardens’ ... March 15th 9.30 am

Garden Friends Planting Bee... Saturday March 19th

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

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS March 29th – April 10.

"Wednesday Gardening / Planting Friends" ... begins March 2nd



Join in at 7.00am - 9.00am or at 10.00am - 12.00noon ...or both?

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

Volunteer / Gardening/ Planting Friends can assist the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens staff to give the Heritage Gardens area of the Botanic Gardens some special care, but also the Garden Friends can benefit too by learning some gardening skills.

Throughout the year, Garden Friends may also team up with other Botanic Garden's staff to assist in other Garden areas eg, Shade Garden, Orientation Garden, Meadowlands and come in more regularly to assist. These will be personal arrangements made with other Garden staff members. Let us know if you are interested in volunteering more often in the Gardens.



Wednesday Gardening / Planting Friends will assist with planting lots of annuals, de-heading spent flowers, 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 calling 4952 7300 or email botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au

If we plan to have our Wednesday Gardening / Planting Friends working in other parts of the Botanic Gardens, we will pick you up from the Heritage Gardens...if we know you are coming that is.



Become a Garden Friend...

Feel like joining the Friends of the Gardens and volunteer too; then 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.

There is something for everyone...

Our website is...

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

February is fabulous for Fungi...

Strange and smelly fruits appear in the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens...

Are they at your place too?



Image: Lacy Veiled Stinkhorn.

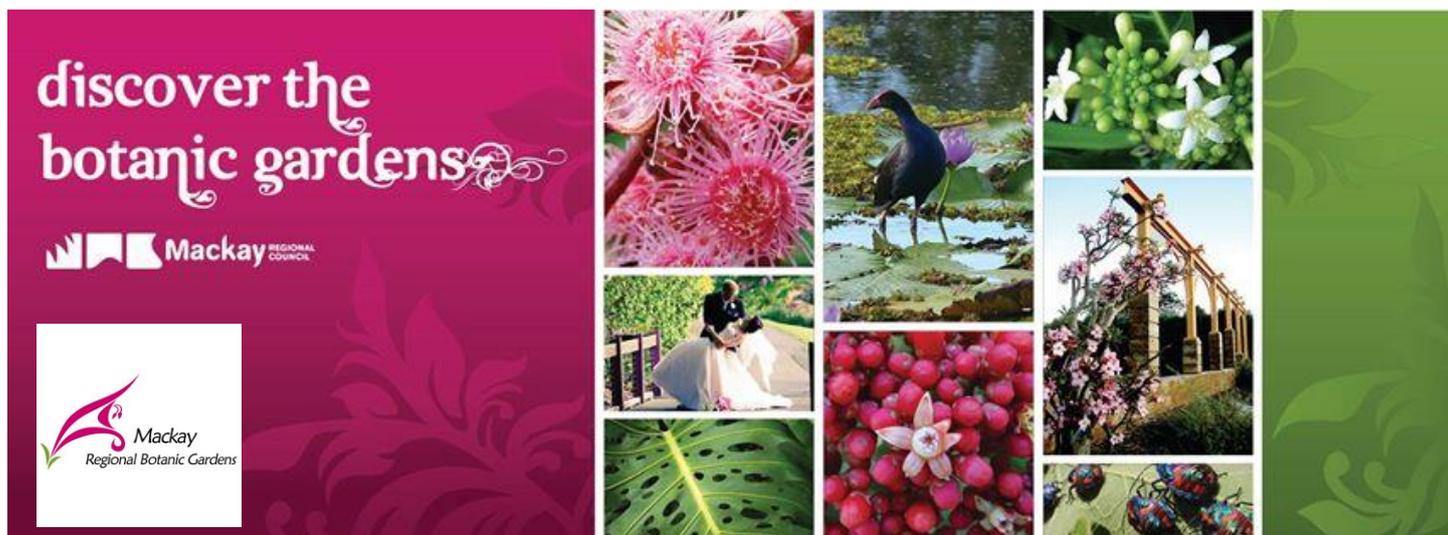
Mysterious objects are appearing with almost magical speed of growth intriguing us with their colours, shapes and smells. The strange things popping up in the gardens and lawns here at the Botanic Gardens are the fruiting bodies of Fungi. Fungi vary in size from microscopic yeasts and moulds to bracket fungi a metre or more in width. In their method of growth, feeding and reproduction, fungi are different from all other plants. Fungi have a complete lack of the green pigment called Chlorophyll and they reproduce by spores, not seeds. As much as we might not like the weather conditions at the moment, for Fungi, the combination of humidity, temperature and the kind of soil they are in is just right for them to produce spores to germinate.

Mushrooms, toadstools, stinkhorns and other strange shaped growths, are 'fruits'...just like an apple is the fruit of the apple tree. These strange 'fruits' sole function is to produce spores and they have many variations in how they achieve this and then have them dispersed.

Mushrooms that look like umbrellas have their spores in the flaps of tissues (gills) under the cap. Stinkhorns, which seem to have hatched from eggs in the soil are so named because of the foul odour that oozes from the moist brown cap. The odour, similar to rotting meat entices flies and insects to land and walk on them and thus spread the spores with their feet.

Visiting the Botanic Gardens during our damp weather, you may see many varieties of fungi, including stinkhorns. All you need to do is follow your nose...

Did you know? 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