

Matsuura Sister City and the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens



A gift of peace and longevity

Mackay's most active Sister City relationship is with Matsuura City in Kyushu, Japan. The relationship is fostered by the Mackay /Matsuura Sister City Community Committee, in Mackay, and the Matsuura International Friendship Association, in Matsuura.

This relationship has encouraged many visits between the sister cities with a wealth of information and cultural awareness exchanged. One of the many highlights of Mackay's relationship with Matsuura City is represented in two gardens at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. The Japan Garden displays a living representation of the 'logo' of Matsuura and displays these colours with a

Acalypha 'Firesprite' for the sun, *Pogonatherum paniceum* 'Monica' - Baby Panda Grass for the green swirl and *Evolvulus glomeratus* 'Blue Eyes' for the blue swirl. In the adjacent World Cycad Garden - *Cycas revoluta* - Japanese Sago Palm are featured and can often be seen in many gardens in Japan. The Fernery is located next to the Gardens Shop and Administration building and is home to a beautiful sculpture gift designed and crafted in Matsuura.

The sculpture consists of four lifesize black and white cranes with red head highlights, a traditional Japanese stone lantern and a series of stones and boulders that were shipped from Japan to Mackay via the many coal ships that regularly ply their way between the two countries. Cranes have a long history in Japanese traditions and legends

and often represent peace and longevity. It is no coincidence that the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens is the home for this sister city gift - as gardens and trees also may be viewed with reverence - with many of the Garden's trees taking hundreds of years to mature. The lantern is traditionally designed for 'snow viewing' - a weather phenomenon rarely occurring in Mackay!

This area within the Fernery represents a themed tropical 'Asian style' courtyard that displays how plants native to Asia and Australia can be used together - also representing our links with our sister city.

Ophiopogon japonicus - Mondo Grass, originates from Japan yet the distinctive bamboo *Neololeba atra* - Iron Range Bamboo, is actually a native of Northern Australia.

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Some plants featured in the Fernery courtyard:

Australian Native plants:

Orthosiphon aristatus

Cats Whiskers - North Qld

Oplismenus sp.

A Rainforest Grass - Mackay

Neololeba atra

Iron Range Bamboo -

North Queensland

Pandorea jasminoides

Bower of Beauty - Mackay

Medinilla balls-headleyii

North Queensland

Pleomele angustifolia

Native Dracena -

North Queensland

Leptasis banksii - Mackay

Plants from Asia:

Farfugium japonicum

Leopard Plant -

Japan, China, Korea

Rhapis excelsa

Lady Palm - South East Asia

Ophiopogon japonica

Mondo Grass - Japan

Ophiopogon japonica

'Nana' - Dwarf Mondo Grass

-Japan

Liriope muscari

'Evergreen Giant'

-Japan, China, Korea



Top: *Neololeba atra*
Iron Range Bamboo



Middle: *Pleomele angustifolia*
Native Dracena



Bottom: *Ophiopogon japonica*
'Nana' Dwarf Mondo Grass

For more information
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