



# Society for Growing Australian Plants

Cairns Branch Inc.

Newsletter 222, July 2022

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## June Excursion - Figree Wetlands. Joint outing with Mulgrave Landcare.

**Don Lawie**

On 19 June, SGAP Cairns Branch combined with the Mulgrave Landcare Group to inspect and learn about the miracle in land conservation that they are achieving in a patch of formerly degraded land near Fig Tree Creek, south of Fishery Falls. This trip was postponed from last month since the entire site had been flooded.

We were made welcome by Landcare Boss Lady Lisa O'Mara and Landholders Lenny and Grace Parisi. Lenny knows the subject 100% and is a natural speaker so we listened with great interest as he gave the history of the scheme and the details of the project to date. The soil, an ancient mangrove swamp, is unsuitable for farming and

had to be remediated due to the threat of Acid Sulphate. Progress has been made: one large and two small lagoons have been established to allow such plants as sedges to freshen the water by absorbing unwanted organic nitrogenous products.



Len Parisi describes rehabilitation of the Figtree Wetlands.

Over ten thousand trees specially grown for this area in the dedicated Landcare Nursery have been planted to absorb more toxins and a network of drains dug to deal with the frequent flooding from the adjacent Mulgrave River which combines with the tremendous flows from the mile-high mountains just to the west.

Lisa has a team of dedicated and skilful volunteers and their work is now close to maturity. Several trees were fruiting on our visit and Nursery Manager Lois was busily collecting planting material. Notable fruiting species were Cassowary Plum *Cerbera manghas*, *Barringtonia calypttrata*, *Harpullia frutescens*, *Melicope elleryana*. Lisa warned us to stay clear of the lagoon's edge since at least two crocodiles have been sighted, enjoying Landcare's hard work.



*Mud on the leaves from recent flooding.*



*Drains help reduce the impacts of flooding.*



*Weeds and more weeds. Eclipta prostrata (white flowers) and the infamous Singapore daisy (yellow flowers).*

Simon Kennedy of Birdlife Australia told us of the birdlife that is returning to this area, most notably Latham's Snipe (a species that migrates to and from Japan) and Short Tailed Sandpiper (whose annual migration reaches as far as Siberia) – both pass through *en route* to southern breeding grounds. Simon said that certain birds can be indirect indicators of water quality. Egrets prey on frogs, and frogs must live in clean water - therefore egrets will forage mostly in clean water.

A large majestic Jabiru – Australia's only stork species gave us a prolonged view as it cruised above us and a Homing Pigeon complete with leg holster strutted about with us before resuming his flight home.

A method for dealing with the pasture weed Para Grass was demonstrated by Luke of Terrain piloting his remote controlled small bulldozer/slasher/mulcher which waded into shoulder high weed and reduced it to a coarse mulch.

We enjoyed a sunny window in the winter weather as we strolled along the drains between tree

plantings dominated by *Leichhardt* (*Nauclea orientalis*) and a variety of *Syzygiums* with occasional *Melaleuca*, *Melicope*, *Cerbera*, *Harpullia* and *Barringtonia* species. Some local species recruitment is occurring – probably by birds roosting- and Lenny is hurrying this along with some well-placed *Huperzia* ferns.

A raft of the South American weed Water Hyacinth in an offshoot of the Mulgrave River took me back to my boyhood when this weed choked every tributary of the lower Russell and Mulgrave Rivers. I thought that it had been destroyed but it must still lurk in forgotten off-river reaches.

This project is reminiscent of similar works I have inspected near Malanda and at Davidson Road south of Tully; in both of them clear water runs along clean creek beds and birds can nest in safety. The Fig Tree Wetlands Project will, I am sure, be equally successful.

[Editor's Note: President Patsy has prepared a thank you note for both the Parisi's and Mulgrave Landcare for organising and hosting the day.]

## Species List: Figtree Wetlands

**Compiled by Rob Jago**

\*indicates the species is an exotic weed

# indicates the species is an Australian native that's not native to the region, and potentially weedy.

C3 indicates the species is a class three pest plant.

## FERNS & ALLIES

### POLYPODIACEAE

*Platyserium hillii*

### THELYPTERIDACEAE

*Cyclosorus interruptus*

## FLOWERING PLANTS-BASAL GROUP

### ANNONACEAE

\**Annona glabra*

### LAURACEAE

*Cryptocarya hypospodia*

### NYMPHAEACEAE

\**Nymphaea mexicana* x hybrid

## FLOWERING PLANTS-MONOCOTYLEDONS

### ARECACEAE

*Archontophoenix alexandrae*

### COMMELINACEAE

*Commelina diffusa*

### CYPERACEAE

\**Cyperus aromaticus*

*Cyperus pilosus*

*Cyperus polystachyos* subsp. *polystachos*

*Hypolytrum nemorum*

*Rhynchospora corymbosa*

*Schoenoplectiella mucronata*

*Schoenoplectus subulatus*

### HYDROCHARITACEAE

*Blyxa aubertii*

### LAXMANNIACEAE

*Cordyline manners-suttoniae*

*Lomandra hystrix*

### POACEAE

\**Echinochloa colona*

\**Echinochloa crus-galli*

\**Hymenachne amplexicaulis*

\**Megathyrsus maximus* var. *maximus*

\**Paspalum conjugatum*

*Paspalum scrobiculatum*

\**Steinchisma laxa*

\**Urochloa mutica*

### PONTEDERIACEAE

*Monochoria vaginalis*

## FLOWERING PLANTS-EUDICOTS

### ACANTHACEAE

\**Hygrophila polysperma*

### AMARANTHACEAE

\**Alternanthera ficoidea*

### APIACEAE

*Centella asiatica*

### APOCYNACEAE

*Cerbera floribunda*

*Gymnanthera oblonga*

### ASTERACEAE

\**Ageratum conyzoides* var. *conyzoides*

\**Eclipta prostrata*

\**Sphagneticola trilobata*

### BRASSICACEAE

\**Cardamine flexuosa*

### CAESALPINIACEAE

\*C3*Senna obtusifolia*

### CLUSIACEAE

*Calophyllum inophyllum*

### COMBRETACEAE

*Terminalia microcarpa*

### CONVOLVULACEAE

<i>Merremia hederacea</i>	
<b>ELAEocarpaceae</b>	
<i>Elaeocarpus grandis</i>	
<b>EUPHORBIACEAE</b>	
<i>Homalanthus novoguineensis</i>	
<i>Macaranga tanarius</i>	
<b>FABACEAE</b>	
<i>Castanospermum australe</i>	
<i>Entada phaseoloides</i>	
* <i>Mimosa pudica</i> var. <i>unijuga</i>	
<i>Mucuna gigantea</i>	
<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> var. <i>minor</i>	
<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> var. <i>pinnata</i>	
<b>LAMIACEAE</b>	
<i>Premna serratifolia</i>	
<b>LECYTHIDACEAE</b>	
<i>Barringtonia calypttrata</i>	
<i>Barringtonia racemosa</i>	
<b>LINDERNIACEAE</b>	
<i>Bonnaya antipoda</i>	
<b>LORANTHACEAE</b>	
<i>Dendrophthoe curvata</i>	
<b>MALVACEAE</b>	
<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>	
* <i>Urena lobata</i>	
<b>MELIACEAE</b>	
<i>Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum</i>	
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	
<b>MENYANTHACEAE</b>	
<i>Nymphoides indica</i>	
<b>MORACEAE</b>	
<i>Ficus benjamina</i>	Weeping Fig
<i>Ficus hispida</i>	Hairy Fig: Boombil
<i>Ficus racemosa</i> var. <i>racemosa</i>	Red Cluster Fig
<i>Ficus virens</i>	White Fig
<b>MYRTACEAE</b>	
<i>Melaleuca leucadendra</i>	
<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	
<i>Melaleuca viminalis</i>	
<i>Syzygium hemilamprum</i> subsp. <i>hemilamprum</i>	
<i>Syzygium luehmannii</i>	
<i>Syzygium smithi</i>	
<i>Syzygium tierneyanum</i>	
<i>Tristaniopsis exiliflora</i>	
<i>Xanthostemon chrysanthus</i>	
<b>OLEACEAE</b>	
<i>Chionanthus ramiflora</i>	Native Olive
<b>ONAGRACEAE</b>	
<i>Ludwigia hyssopifolia</i>	Yellow Willow Herb
<i>Ludwigia octovalvis</i>	Willow Primrose
<b>PHYLLANTHACEAE</b>	
<i>Bridelia insulana</i>	Grey Birch
<i>Glochidion philippicum</i>	Buttonwood
<i>Glochidion sumatranum</i>	Buttonwood
<i>Phyllanthus cuscutiflorus</i>	Pink Phyllanthus
<b>PLANTAGINACEAE</b>	

<i>Limnophila fragrans</i>	Fragrant Limnophila
<b>POLYGONACEAE</b>	
<i>Persicaria barbata</i>	Smart Weed
<b>PROTEACEAE</b>	
<i>Grevillea baileyana</i>	Findlay's Silky Oak
<b>RHIZOPHORACEAE</b>	
<i>Carallia brachiata</i>	Corky Bark
<b>RUBIACEAE</b>	
<i>Atractocarpus fitzalanii</i> subsp. <i>fitzalanii</i>	Brown Gardenia
<i>Nauclea orientalis</i>	Leichhardt Tree
<b>RUTACEAE</b>	
<i>Melicope elleryana</i>	
<b>SAPINDACEAE</b>	
* <i>Cardiospermum halicacabum</i> var. <i>halicacabum</i>	
<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>	Tuckeroo
<i>Diploglottis bernieana</i>	Bernie's Tamarind
<i>Guioa acutifolia</i>	Glossy Tamarind
* <i>Harpullia ramiflora</i>	Cape York Tulipwood
<b>SAPOTACEAE</b>	
<i>Planchonella chartacea</i>	Dugulla
<b>URTICACEAE</b>	
<i>Pouzolzia hirta</i>	
<b>VITACEAE</b>	
<i>Leea novoguineensis</i>	Bandicoot Berry

## Constitution update

Our branch constitution is due for a review. It doesn't reflect current electronic payment methods, and some of its language is dated. If you'd like to review the constitution, and bring your thoughts to the next meeting, it can be found here: <http://sgapcairns.org.au/SOP.pdf>

# What's Happening?

## Cairns

**17 July 2022.** Unfortunately our Cooktown plans have had to be cancelled. Botanic Gardens Curator Peter Symes has come down with COVID, and will be in isolation for the next week.

Our back up plan is the Cairns Botanic Gardens. Park on Greenslopes Street, and meet 12 noon at

the sheltered picnic table located between kids Nature Play Area and Saltwater Creek.

We could walk via Chinese Friendship Garden to the Melaleuca And Rainforest Boardwalk over the creek and might even come across the Banks and Solander Garden and spare a thought for our scuppered Cooktown plans.

**7 August 2022.** Visit the garden of Garry and Nada Sankowsky at Tolga. Meet 10 a.m. at 27 Equestrian Drive Tolga. Bring chairs, bring morning tea and lunch, and bring some mosquito repellent!

**21 August 2022.** Smithfield Conservation Park

**18 September 2022.** Russell Heads

**16 October 2022.** Babinda Rainforest Farmstay, Kruckow Road, East Russell.

**20 November 2022.** Davies Creek - start of the Kahlpahlmin Rock Track

## Townsville

**14 July 2022.** NPQ Townsville normally meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month, February to November. The meeting venue is the Oonoonba Community Hall, Shannon Street, Oonoonba.

Betsy Jackes will discuss her recent trip to South Australia, in a presentation entitled "Travels in the Eyre Peninsula".

**17 July 2022.** Excursion to Mt Zero. This is a wonderful area for drier-country plants, almost like a bit of the White Mountains in Townsville's backyard. After extraordinary rains in July, the plants of Mt Zero should be looking their best. Contact [editor@npqtownsville.org.au](mailto:editor@npqtownsville.org.au) for details.

## Tablelands

SGAP Tablelands Branch holds its meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the C.W.A. Hall, Tolga, commencing 7.30. Excursions occur on the following Sunday. Contact: Peter Radke [pandaradke@gmail.com](mailto:pandaradke@gmail.com)

**26 - 28 August 2022.** Excursion to Cape Tribulation to see its rare endemic species and visit a successful revegetation site. See the attached flyer for more details. You must register with Peter Radke before the weekend.



*In flower this month - Viola betonicifolia on Mt Baldy*



*In flower this month - Xanthostemon chrysanthus.*

### SGAP Cairns Branch 2022-2023 Committee

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