

Banksia Bytes

Native Plants Sunshine Coast



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Newsletter

Native Plants Queensland

Mar 2016 Number 6

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Dear readers,

I wish to thank you for letting me be the editor of your interesting newsletter Banksia Bytes. Unfortunately I don't have the time to produce something worthy of all you plant people this year. Newsletters take a lot of time especially when one has a few pages of plant names one is not familiar with!

I, however, enjoyed getting the publication up and running and thank you for your many words of praise and encouragement.

Wendy Johnston has kindly taken on the editorial task, so I hope you will all oblige her by sending her lots of interesting articles about the wonders of the plant world.

Bev McCuaig



Editor's Note

Our sincere thanks to Bev McCuaig who designed, set up and edited this newsletter for the past 2 years. Her captivating style has enticed us all to read and enjoy our newsletters.



COMING EVENTS



March 13 - 9.30 am Regional Gathering hosted by Sunshine Coast, Friends of the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, and Sunshine Coast Council at the Maroochy Botanic Gardens, commencing at 10.00am.



Please let Marie know by 1st March if you are intending to go on a guided walk.
Read the attached agenda.



April 10 - Walk amongst the foreshore plants Dicky Beach to Currimundi.
Lunch at Dicky Beach Surf Club, walk, afternoon coffee at Currimundi.
Michael McCuaig will book Dicky Beach Surf Club for lunch if numbers indicate the need.
Details are given on Page 3.



May 7 - NPQ AUTUMN PLANTS SALE at Grovely TAFE Campus.

Entry via Woking Street, off Casey Street, off Dawson Parade, Keperra.
(UBD Map 138:1E)
9.00am to 3.00pm. Admission free.



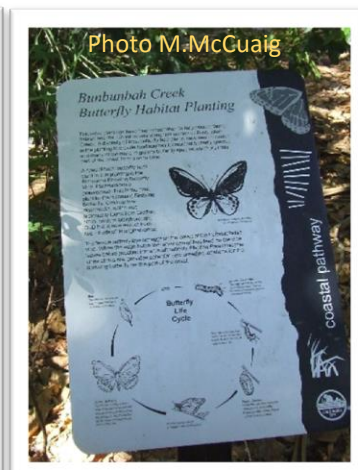
May 8 - Visit to NativesRUs wholesale nursery Traveston for a talk by Jacinta Curtis and a guided walk through the nursery. Possibility of a picnic lunch at Traveston and car pooling - to be checked closer to the date.



May 22 - Visit to Woodfordia site, led by Donna Farrell.
Joint outing with Samford, Pine Rivers and Caboolture.
Details to be advised closer to the event.



SIGNS AND WONDERS



Do you think the photo above could represent the world's largest plant cutting? Well here is your chance to do some research and make an informed decision. Currimundi could then boast THE BIG CUTTING - rivalling bananas, pineapples, merino sheep, cattle and even prawns. People would then pour into the area, filling already overcrowded car parks and streets beyond belief. Perhaps we will just keep it to ourselves.

Our April meeting will take us right to the very specimen(s) shown above. We will commence, for those who wish to, with lunch at the Dicky Beach Surf Club at 12.30 PM on Sunday April 9.

At 2.00 PM we will meet near the car park of the club almost at the intersection of the footpath and the Coastal Pathway which will carry us on our little journey.

From there we will **FOLLOW THE SIGNS** commencing with the "Bunbunbah Creek Butterfly Habitat Planting" sign just outside the club and shown below. From here there are some 13 other signs to delight and inform us - not to mention salt sea spray laden ocean views and vegetation covered with the latter, as we wind our way over to Currimundi. From this new vantage point will be visible - sideways views of Kathleen McArthur Park "floating" as it does on coffee rock, two very possibly distracting coffee shops and of course, the plants shown above. From this point decisions can be made. Coffee, tea, or other drinks, food etc., or another, shorter walk, northwards along the path past areas that contain some remnant vegetation, council plantings, and a group of area friends who have replanted some of the vegetation.

Tuesday, Feb 22, this was dominated by a number of heady *Acronychia* plants in flower, and some very lovely old *Banksia aemula* in flower and fruit. There are many ground plants which seem to "disappear" without rain and return when it falls. Please send some before April!!! The leaves of the Velvet Leaf Plant are definitely worth a tickle. We will need to work out some details to avoid having to walk back to the Surf Club. This will involve car pooling in some way to overcome these possible problems.

A few of the signs are shown below.

Can't really show you ALL of them.



Small and colourful

Joan Dillon

Reconstruction of the main garden has presented an opportunity to try out some recent acquisitions. Some of you may have been growing them for ages, but they are new to me.

First is *Leiocarpa brevicompta* (Plover Daisy), obtained during our visit to Blackbutt and Yarraman last year. This bright yellow daisy with soft, hairy grey-green foliage has become positively rampant but flowers



consistently and is a nice dense edging plant along a bark chip path. I have noticed a tendency for older stems at ground level to die off and suspect that this is largely a result of the recent hot and very humid weather. The same problem has occurred with *Scaevola albida* but pruning, more light and better air circulation encourages new growth. *Leiocarpa* does after all originate in a much drier region than the coast and hinterland.

The second plant in the same general area is *Goodenia paniculata*. It's actually a plant of the wet heath so shouldn't really be growing in

my heavy soil. Fortuitously, however, it was planted on the drainage line from my irrigated pot plants and is steadily spreading via underground stems through this wet area. Always use water at least twice.

The majority of plants in this section of the garden have yellow, white or greenish yellow flowers so it will be interesting to see the effect once they are all fully established. *Calotis cuneifolia* with small white daisy flowers and finely divided foliage has recently been added but I'm beginning to run out of space.



On the other side of the path *Goodenia rotundifolia* is quietly rambling through the self-sown *Oplismenus*/*Ottochloa* ground cover under old melaleucas. So far, it is coping with the vigorous competition but may need help soon. A tame but selective grazing wallaby would be useful.



Colourful Ferns

Wendy Johnston



Blechnum cartilagineum

After the rain and humid weather, some of our ferns put up some very colourful new growth.



Adiantum hispidulum

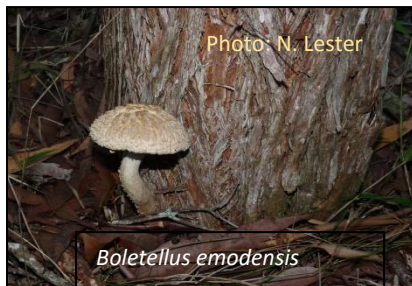
Fungi after Rain



From Nita: After the wonderful rains of over 6 inches, the Mapleton forest is damp and humid – a great place to spot fungi.

From Gretchen:

After the heavy rains in early February I went with a fungi friend to Mapleton Forest to look for fungi. We walked most of the Linda Garret circuit which we know is a good spot for fungi. We were overwhelmed by the number and variety we saw. This is partly due to the variety of habitat there. We



are still trying to work out which fungi may or may not be associated with certain trees. In the northern hemisphere there are certain fungi which are host specific, that is, they will grow only on certain trees. Here we found a bolete - *Boletellus emodensis* growing on *Allocasuarinas* but also on other trees.

Boletes are generally thick and fleshy and under the cap instead of gills like mushrooms they have pores which makes it look a bit like a sponge. One particular group of boletes we saw seemed to be growing in an area where there were many palms. We need to do a lot more study to try to determine the association between certain fungi and their habitat.

The other group which were well represented were different species of the genus *Amanita*. Amanitas look more like the typical mushroom as they have gills. They vary in size and sometimes have a ring on the stalk. Some grow out of a cup or volva at the base of the stalk.

You cannot collect in Mapleton Forest so it is a good idea to take along a

small mirror so you can see what is underneath the cap. If you are sending a photo to someone for an ID please take 2 photos: one general photo and one showing underneath the cap. An Echidna (5 cent coin) beside the specimen also helps to determine the size.



I'm sure all you photographers out there can't resist a good fungi photo. How about sending some in for Gretchen to write about in the next newsletter.



For Gretchen..

On our excursion to Emu Mountain I was photographing a fungus, when, by chance, Gretchen happened on the scene. By the time she left, I had more or less promised to include a photo of the fungal bits in our newsletter. (I know, I know, how can you more or less promise? I'm just trying to absolve myself.) For one reason or another, both due to poor photography, no picture of a fungus appeared. And so I am thus in debt.

Very recently in our back yard, there appeared what later turned out to be the initials of at least four fruiting bodies of a very pale lemon fungus. These were winding their way outwards through the water drainage holes of a pot. Knowing even less about fungi than I do about plants, I thought I would have plenty of time (as in days) to fire up the old camera and atone for my previous sin of fungal omission.

You guessed it!! I had no time at all – the process proceeds at a pace seemingly close to the speed of light!! And to well and truly make sure I learnt my lesson – it rained and poured over night, so that the fungi were now flattened. Well, I thought, half an atonement is better than none at all, so I took photos of the now flattened four and one of these photos appears above.

But wait a minute. Someone must have been on my side. Some days later, with all visible traces of the previous fruiting efforts removed, another pair of fruiting bodies began to start their journey. No missing the process this time - good or bad photography. Steps in this process were captured and are presented here to the best of my ability.

So Gretchen, I hope this goes some (a very long) way to my settling the ledger. *I know* not whether the specimen is native or one of the nasties. We will just have to concentrate on the process and appearance, which after all, are (presumably) common to most good, well behaving, fungi.

Michael



KATHLEEN MCARTHUR CENTENARY

Kathleen McArthur was born in 1915, which made 2015 the centenary of her birth. I was ignorant of this fact until I saw the display to celebrate it, mounted by the WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY AND THE STAFF AT CALOUNDRA LIBRARY. The display made me realise how very little I know about the lady after whom the reserve I spend a fair amount of time in, was named.

So thanks to the excellent computer skills of Governor Bev, I was able to receive copies of two of her books from online sources. Nor have I been disappointed – except to not have witnessed some of the graphic and alluring wildflower scenes she describes as she wanders through her wallum and other areas.

I hope to dwell on this further, in the future, with your patience and forbearance.

Michael



Photo: M.McCuaig

Wallumballum golfae var. Wayexboundxiensibus.



“Creating a new species is always a traumatic event.”

So says Hal Hellman, in chapter 9 of his book, “GREAT FEUDS IN SCIENCE”, page 170. He was describing the feud between the Leakeys, particularly Richard and Don Johanson. They were working in the north east of Africa finding fossil hominids, naming them at a pace and fighting over who had found, at that stage, the earliest “people”, allegedly on the direct line to human beings.

No such trauma here. I am happy to offer this nomenclature, nom. probab. illeg., to describe this fascinating species.

10 specimens have been revealed, merely due to a non-chance fire. You will remember that a fire sent through the Kathleen McArthur Park in May meant that much of the obscuring vegetation in that area was reduced, and visibility into the park was greatly increased.

Thus were revealed the interesting specimens shown above. Believed related to the original Saintandrewsiaballum golfae of Western Scotland, they were introduced into Australia by people with a yearning desire to cultivate. The species is quaint, not dissimilar to Australian species of Balanophora. The cultivation implements, however, are almost weird. Made of iron and or wood, they have no names but are identified by NUMBERS. The implements, in the right (or left) hand, can send the species over long distances. Often they are accompanied by large lumps of soil or turf. Cultivation is surely the name of this game.

So far, I have not noticed any great advantage to the species from the effects of fire. In fact, quite the opposite, even though I regularly check out the little specimens to quickly record any change, any change at all, and thus be the first to do so. Alas!

On a slightly more serious note – and anything would be slightly more serious. Examination of each of the collected specimens can show a really good simile in thinking about how fire affects, or really does not affect, the plant vegetation. Given the fact that the heat appears to be so intense, it is remarkable that the bottom half of the little dimpled objects shows no heat damage. Is this helpful in explaining how the vegetation is able to bounce back in areas where even close examination of the surface shows very little left of the original species? Larger shrubs and small trees have much on the outside to protect cells on the inside, parts of small plants merely have a little soil above the roots and underground stems.

To illustrate the regeneration process, I choose a photo of three Gahnia plants and the surrounding vegetation, which beckoned to be taken when I first saw the burnt scene, in early August. On returning to see the regrowth, in early December, I was thrilled to see a small clump of Christmas Bells, which I tried to show both from the original spot and in close up.

Numbers of these flowers appeared after the fire at the correct flowering time. Not as many as I (greedily) would have liked, but surely enough to justify, even without all the other regeneration, the hard work of setting up and sending the fire through in the first place. So bless the EPA and very many thanks to Dot Crane who alerted me to the presence of the Blandfordia plants when heat and approaching Christmas were strength and interest sapping.

Michael

Early August



Early December



Close up



Report on Water Plants Workshop in November 2015

Marie Livingstone

In the beautiful surroundings of Mt Mellum, Anne Windsor gave an informative and visually appealing presentation on the wonders of Water Plants. Her vast knowledge and prowess with the camera gave us a wonderful insight into the life, habitat and forms of these often overlooked native plants.



A practical demonstration followed and we were left in no doubt that water plants are tough.



Water Plants are tough

Report on Mapleton Community Library Plant Sale

Marie Livingstone

Joan Dillon, Marie, Gretchen and Jackie used their knowledge and salesmanship to sell \$350 worth of plants on the morning of 28th November at the Mapleton Community Library Fair.

Thanks to Nita Lester for inviting us to attend and supplying a shelter. The native plant gardeners around Mapleton really seek small plants for their gardens and appreciate advice on what native plants will suit their particular site.



Our visit to Fairhill Native Plant Nursery began with an interesting talk from the owner Nick Hansa, who told us about some of the many issues he faces in the business of getting people to embrace native plants. He also talked about the troubles he has encountered trying to find a potting mix which would be suitable for the wide variety of native plants he grows.



Following Nick's talk, we had a delightful afternoon tea at Elements Cafe, the restaurant on site at Fairhill. And of course, no trip to Fairhill would be complete without a few purchases to take home for the garden.

Nick gives his Ten Commandments document (see attachment) to people unfamiliar with native plants, in an effort to answer questions and explain issues concerning the growing of native plants in their gardens.

Fairhill Native Plants & Botanic Gardens
The Ten Requirements to create a Healthy Native
Garden (attached to this email)
 By Nick Hansa



Report on the February Meeting at Mt Mellum

Wendy Johnston

Our first meeting for 2016, which included our AGM, was held on the McMaster's property at Mt Mellum. Our new secretary, Cat Secomb, spoke to us about her passion, experience and ongoing journey in the field of ecology. We wish her well with her studies. After the meeting, Ian and Chrissie led us on a walk, giving us a view into the different vegetation areas, from rainforest on the top on the basalt, through flooded gums on the edge of the rainforest to the sandstone soil eucalypts below.

Photo: C. McMaster

Photo: W. Johnston

Photo: W. Johnston

Native Plants Sunshine Coast

Future Meetings and Excursions

June 12 - Talk on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened species by Patrick Leonard and walk through the Lester's garden.



July 8-10 - Qld Garden Expo

August 14 - an ecological walk with Wyn Boon in Jowarra

September 11 - a flower spotting walk along Forestry Rd Landsborough, led by John Birbeck

October 9 - a walk in the Dillon garden at Hunchy

November 13 - Meeting and garden exploration at Peter and Linda Scharf's property

December 11 - Forest Heart. Talk from Spencer and afternoon tea by Karen



Information about outings contact....

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Gretchen	0400 772 602
Anne	0417 733 991

The end of Banksia Bytes No. 6