

Annual Report 2012/2013



September 2013

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Chairman's Annual Report

This report is an occasion to summarise the past years' activities in connecting our community to their environment.

Throughout the year regular features included the Sarina markets, nursery volunteers, friends of the Sarina Community Native Gardens, Coastcare projects and school activity days.



Rod McFadzen (left) with Dung Beetle expert, Mr John Feehan

- School activity days included coordinated student involvement in learning about the minute water inhabitants, arousing interest and enthusiasm of youth is an ongoing challenge, but well worth the effort. This year we again hosted a high school work experience student and high school students have also been involved with work in the Sarina Community Native Gardens.
- The Sarina State High School Agriculture centre is a remarkable resource for short courses, such as the backyard explorer and aquaponic workshops held throughout the year.
- A dung beetle workshop with John Feehan provided very interesting and useful information to landholders.
- The installation of rainwater tanks at the nursery will hopefully reduce our dependence on town water and improve survival rates on some of the more delicate seedlings.
- Myrtle rust discovery in the district has also increased the workload on the nursery operation as we began regular fungicide treatment to prevent infestation into our nursery stock.
- With the completion of the blue green algae trials at Middle Creek Dam a community planting day was held and the African Tulip Tree eradication trial is nearing completion.
- There has been a steady increase in Land for Wildlife properties signing up and participating in the program.
- Coastcare week saw a coordinated approach with SLCMA working with Eco Barge, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Mackay Regional Council, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and BMA.
- The Central QLD Coast Landcare Network brings together Whitsunday, Pioneer and Sarina Catchment/Landcare groups for successful joint projects and applications.
- A team of 20 people participated in our support for the Cancer Council – Relay for Life event at the Sarina showgrounds.
- The Sarina Native Garden Competition has been successful in the recognition of native plants and promoting their use.

The official opening of the Sarina Community Native Gardens on 7 September 2013, has been a highlight of the year and perhaps the decade, for SLCMA. With Costa Georgiadis, host of ABC's Gardening Australia as special guest. His enthusiasm, information, and communication ability was an experience to remember with over 150 people taking advantage of the opportunity. When Costa officially opened the gardens and assisted to present the garden competition winners. He also visited three schools and addressed a gathering of teachers and other interested persons at the Sarina State High School Agriculture centre.

My sincerest thanks to all of the team and sponsors for the great result and may this spectacular launch spur on further enthusiasm in connecting our community to their environment. Special thanks to Saskia, Nadine and Margaret and executive members for their continued support.

Rod McFadzen, Chair.



Coordinator's Report

It is with great pleasure that I am able to provide my 9th Coordinators' report to SLCMA members, volunteers and project partners.

As of 1 June this year, the 3 year arrangement with Reef Catchments finished up. This has led to my position as part-time Catchment Coordinator for SLCMA and part-time Regional Landcare Facilitator (*employed by Reef Catchments with funding from the Australian Government Regional Landcare Facilitator Program and State Government*) go back as full-time Coordinator, employed by SLCMA.

While it is great to be back with SLCMA, this has meant a decrease in funding support towards SLCMA operations, so our plan for the coming year is to secure long term funding and become more self-sufficient, in order to retain our current staff capacity (2 full-time and 0.3 part-time positions).

There has been quite a few highlights this year, including our recent visit from Costa Georgiadis (host of ABC's Gardening Australia) who spent two days in the Sarina catchment inspiring local school students, teachers, community members and volunteers about ways to protect biodiversity and produce healthy food sustainably. A big thankyou to the SLCMA team (staff and volunteers) who helped with organising the events, to local business for their inkind support and stall holders for their attendance during the Sarina Community Day. It certainly provided a great day for the approximately 150 community members who attended the event.

It has been a few years, but we were able to hold the *Sarina Native Garden Competition* once again, and due to popular demand—extended the competition to include the Sarina and Mackay regions. It was a great opportunity to promote the use of native plants and see some great examples of how native plants can be incorporated into our gardens. A big thankyou to our sponsors Woodmans Mitre 10, Mackay Regional Council and Farm HQ and to our judges from Society for Growing Australian Plants, Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens and SLCMA management committee for their support towards the competition.

I would like to thank our SLCMA Community volunteers who continue to help out in the nursery and other events throughout the year such as the Sarina Community Day and Relay for Life. Also to Frank Langfield for his innovation and motivation to help SLCMA with all sorts of projects and activities whether that be giving tours of the Sarina Rural Skills Centre, helping with the Sarina Community Native Gardens or sharing his wealth of knowledge about aquaponics and land management. It is a pleasure to work with such enthusiastic people.

To the rest of the SLCMA staff, Nadine & Margaret and the SLCMA Management committee: Rod, Duane, Ray and Theresa—thankyou, it is only through team work that we are able to deliver good projects and events. A special congratulations to Rod, who received the well deserved *Community Volunteer Award* at this years, Sarina Australia Day Awards.

A big thankyou to Mackay Regional Council, BMA Community Partnerships Program and our many other project partners for your ongoing support.

As you will see through the next pages of the 12/13 annual report, it has been an eventful year with a range of workshops, field days, community and school events taking place within the Sarina Catchment and wider Mackay Whitsunday region. All of these activities aim to engage with our diverse community of all ages and interests; to create a better understanding and respect for our local environment while keeping our land productive and waterways healthy for future generations.

Saskia von Fahland, Coordinator



Saskia von Fahland, Coordinator

Project Officer's Report

Once again I have enjoyed spending the past year concentrating on developing, maintaining and strengthening new and existing partnerships with local landowners, community members and organisations.

SLCMA's partnerships with local primary schools continued with SLCMA delivering biannual School Activity Days at Grendon Park (Aug 2012) and Sarina Beach (June 2013). SLCMA utilised funding from *Reef Catchment's Public Fund* to partner with Conservation Volunteers Australia and Alligator Creek State Primary School assisting staff and students rehabilitate their local creek, planting 250 plants on school's tree day. Partnerships with Sarina State High remain strong as teachers and students conducted revegetation work at Middle Creek Dam, learned about blue green algae and water quality. A developing partnership with Mackay State High School has begun and will continue with SLCMA hosting year 10 work experience students.

Projects which SLCMA continues to deliver through Mackay Regional Council's *Natural Environment Levy* include Land for Wildlife Program and Sarina Community Native Gardens. I have continued to work with Ray Greaves to monitor and control African Tulip Trees in the catchment for the African Tulip Tree Pilot Project. Another successful funding application from Mackay Regional Council's *Natural Environment Grants* assisted with purchasing rain-water tanks and new equipment for the nursery.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working on Middle Creek Dam's project, *Landholder engagement and on ground activities for improved water quality* which has now completed. Over the course of the project, funding was offered to local landowners to improve water quality in Middle Creek and Plane Creek catchments through devolved grants by installing off-stream watering points and fencing off waterways.

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Project Officer's Report ...continued

A new volunteer, Jessica Scoble was welcomed to SLCMA's Healthy Waterways program. Jessica volunteers monthly alongside Sharon Allen to collect important water quality data through ambient monitoring at three Plane Creek sites.

The SLCMA Community Nursery volunteers are a pleasure to work with every Wednesday at the SLCMA Community Nursery. Their dedication to the local environment is an inspiration, not to mention interesting conversations and yummy morning teas.

My third year as SLCMA's Project Officer has been very eventful as I assisted with SLCMA projects and attended community events like Sarina Markets, Relay For Life and National Tree Day. I look forward to assisting local schools and organisations with future annual Landcare events as well as continue working alongside SLCMA staff, SLCMA executive, volunteers and project partners to provide Sarina Catchment community with Landcare advice.

Margaret Meng, SLCMA Project Officer



Margaret Meng planting in Stuarts Gully

Organisational Objectives

The objectives of Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association Incorporated are:

- To promote a strategic and integrated approach to natural resource management and biodiversity conservation in the Sarina Catchment area.
- To foster coordination and cooperation between land managers, community groups, industry and government agencies in their natural resource management activities.
- To promote understanding and awareness of the interactions and relationships between the natural systems and resources of the catchment.
- To identify and prioritise natural resource management issues within the Sarina Catchment Area.
- To prepare, coordinate and implement priority action plans identified in the Sarina ICM Strategy.
- To promote sustainable solutions and actions through strong community, industry and government partnerships in catchment management strategies.
- To provide a forum for community and government discussion on natural resource and catchment management issues.

Bringing landholders together at the Dung beetle Paddock walk



SLCMA's Vision and Goals

Vision for the Sarina Catchment

The Sarina Catchment Area is an economically viable region, which is ecologically sustainable and well regarded as a healthy place to live and work

Goals

Land Use Planning: The land resources of the Catchment are managed in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Land Management: The most appropriate ecologically and economically sustainable land management practices are adopted throughout the catchment.

River/Creek Management: The creek systems are managed in such a way as to enhance and maintain their natural values while providing for the needs of the catchment community.

Water Management: The integrity of the natural systems within the catchment are enhanced and maintained while providing water of a suitable quality and quantity to meet the needs of the community.

Coastal Management: Management of the coastal area in a way that will ensure the sustainable use of the natural resources

Vegetation/Biodiversity: The native vegetation and biodiversity values of the catchment are enhanced and maintained and the natural systems are not further degraded.

Community Awareness and Involvement: A community that is aware of the need to maintain and improve the natural resources of the catchment and is actively involved in doing so.

SLCMA Membership benefits!

A membership with SLCMA has many rewards:

- ◇ Easy access to Natural Resource Management information and extension
- ◇ Monthly newsletter, meeting minutes, progress and project reports
- ◇ A vote on issues in your catchment
- ◇ A say in the types of projects applied for
- ◇ Up to 20 free local native seedlings from the SLCMA Community Nursery each year
- ◇ Invitations to Natural Resource Management bus tours, field days and workshops



Members of CQCLN doing governance training with Wombat Creative

SLCMA Membership 2012/13

Class of Membership	Is membership of the class to be limited or unlimited in number?	If the class of membership is to be limited in number, how?	Limitations relating to the class of membership	Entry requirements for class of membership	Number of members
Government Organisation Member	Unlimited	N/A	1. Full voting rights	Open to nominated Councillors of local authorities within the Association's catchment area, and nominated officers of State Government departments or authorities, or divisions or branches within them.	16
Associate Member	Unlimited	N/A	1. Full voting rights	Shall be opened to nominees of: Companies and Cooperatives carrying out activities within the Catchment area. Local organizations and institutions. Local groups with a direct interest in land use	27
Ordinary Landcare Member	Unlimited	N/A	1. Open to any adult owners or occupiers of land 2. Full voting rights	1. Must be over 18 years of age 2. Annual fee for membership, the amount to be decided at an annual general meeting	155
Junior Member	Limited	There are to be no more than 50 Junior members at any time	1. May not vote 2. Not eligible for election to management committee positions	1. Must be under 18 years of age 2. Must be a registered Junior Landcare member.	28

2012/13 Management Committee Members & Staff

Management Committee Members:

Chair	Rod McFadzen
Vice Chair	Duane Brown
Secretary	Ray Greaves
Treasurer	Cr Theresa Morgan

Staff:

Sarina Catchment Landcare Coordinator/	Saskia von Fahland
Regional Landcare Facilitator	Nadine Hamill
Administration Officer	Margaret Meng
Project Officer	

Communication & publications

- **SLCMA Catchment News** (your local newsletter) is distributed monthly to approximately 280 recipients. The newsletter is a great way for land managers to keep up-to-date with available funding, workshops, field days, volunteer opportunities and the latest natural resource management news.
- **SLCMA website and facebook page** are a great way for the community to keep up-to-date with what is happening in our catchment.
- **SLCMA Calendar 2013** was well received by members, schools and volunteers. It is a great opportunity to showcase places of interest and critters from around the catchment. It also includes important dates such as meetings, environmental awareness events and cattle sales. *Thankyou to BMA & Mackay Regional Council for their contribution towards the printing costs.*
- **SLCMA General meetings** are held monthly and, are an opportunity for members and the community to discuss and learn more about Landcare related topics, local issues and solutions.

Thankyou to our guest speakers throughout the year including:

- Jessica Renton, Environmental Ranger, Mackay Regional Council
- Peter Barr, local snake handler
- Michelle Jones, Biosecurity QLD



Program & project updates:

Land for Wildlife Program



The Land for Wildlife program is a voluntary program that recognises landholders who are making a significant effort to encourage and provide habitat for wildlife on their properties. This is achieved by conserving and actively managing habitat as well as integrating nature conservation with other land uses such as agriculture, grazing or tourism. Within the Mackay Regional Council boundaries of the Sarina Catchment, we have 41 properties (8200ha) involved in the program, protecting approximately 3200 ha of native habitat.

Landholders participating in the program, receive a number of benefits including; 20 free native plants per year, land management advice and links to resources, re-visits to registered properties, invitations to field days and workshops. This year, PCL & SLCMA worked together to re-introduce a regional newsletter for participating landholders. This has been well received by landholders and has been a great opportunity to provide information and updates about the program. Landholders from Sarina and Pioneer catchments also enjoyed a field trip organised by PCL to "Padaminka" a registered Nature Refuge and Land for Wildlife property.

The Land for Wildlife program is delivered within the Mackay Regional Council boundaries of the Sarina Catchment by SLCMA and the Pioneer Catchment by Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group (PCL); on behalf of the Mackay Regional Council Natural Environment Program. This coordinated approach provides consistency across the region and beneficial linkages to other complimentary projects and programs.

SLCMA Community Volunteer Program



Sandy & Jeane seed collecting

The SLCMA Community Volunteer program provides an opportunity for community members to gain knowledge about our local native plants and gain skills in plant propagation.

A big THANKYOU to our volunteers who have contributed their time, stories and laughter during our volunteer mornings.



Gail, Jeane, Dawn, Margaret & Ankie potting on

The team of volunteers are an essential part of the successfulness of the SLCMA Community Nursery—being a part of the process from seed to seedling, and everything in between. Some of our volunteers are having a break as they travel around Australia and one of our volunteers, Stuart moved south to (cooler) greener pastures. All of whom, keep in touch from time to time, with updates about their travels or for a quick visit as they travel through. We have also gained some new faces throughout the year—which is always great to see.

The SLCMA Community Volunteer Program has been operating every Wednesday 9-12noon, since late 2003. It is a great opportunity to find out more about our local native plants, how to propagate them, gain skills in general nursery activities and meet some other great volunteers. The program is currently supported by Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Levy which provides SLCMA with funds to facilitate the volunteer mornings.

SLCMA Community Nursery

The SLCMA Community Nursery began operating in 2003 as a training facility for volunteers, students and trainees to learn about general nursery practices, hygiene and native plant propagation; and the past year has been no different. Through this process, this year we have been able to provide approximately 3500 local native plants, for revegetation projects, environmental awareness events, Landcare members, landholders and schools.

Two years ago, we received permission from Mackay Regional Council to expand the nursery area to incorporate an undercover area for our volunteers and space for water tanks and more benches. We are happy to say that things are certainly progressing. This year we were successful in obtaining funding through Mackay Regional Council Natural Environment Program for the purchase of 2 x 15,900L and 1 x slimline 3,000L water tanks for the SLCMA Community Nursery. Once fully installed, these will allow us to utilise rain-water captured off nearby sheds and reduce our usage of town water. Our next step is to construct new nursery benches and give the old ones some much needed TLC, as well as re-surfacing of the nursery area.



One of the water tanks installed

The SLCMA Community Nursery is operated by SLCMA staff and receives enormous support from our volunteers who help propagate and look after the native plants. The native plants are utilised on community and school revegetation projects; up to 20 free native plants are provided to Landcare members each year and a portion of the plants are sold at the Sarina markets or to other organisations seeking local native plants. Any proceeds gained from selling plants go towards the SLCMA Community Nursery to help pay for consumables, materials and maintenance.



Neil & Stuart with the new cement mixer

Sarina Community Coastcare

The *Sarina Community Coastcare Program* has progressed into its third (& final) year, continuing to raise community awareness about the importance and sensitivity of our coastal environments as well as encourage and facilitate onground rehabilitation projects to help protect and restore our foreshores.

SLCMA continues to work in partnership with Council to ensure a strategic approach to coastal activities continues across the region and aligns with the *Sarina Shire Beaches Management Guidelines for Coastal Zones (2006)* and individual beach plans (2008). We also work in partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia, Mackay Regional Council (Sarina) Beach Team, Coalport Community and Recreation Association and local residents to rehabilitate our sections along our foreshores.

We have continued to undertake 6 monthly coastal monitoring as per the *Sarina Shire Beaches Management Guidelines for Coastal Zones*. The monitoring has been undertaken since 2007 and is a great way to show how the coastal zones are changing over time. A range of other highlights include:

- Organisation and facilitation of two *Caring for Our Coasts* School activity Days for local primary schools (see the 'school support' section for more details).
- A free community field trip to celebrate Coastcare Week (December 2012) with 25 participants attending the bus tour, showcasing the ongoing work and commitment by the Sarina community to protect our coasts. The day including visiting Conservation Volunteers Australia at Hay Point; Coalport Community and Recreation Association at Louisa Creek Reserve, Mackay Regional Council at Grasstree Beach and talks from Mackay Regional Council Environmental Ranger, Mackay and District Turtlewatch.
- Opportunities to discuss coastal awareness at the Sarina markets
- Mackay (& Sarina) Coastal Clean Up (October 2012 and May 2013) — SLCMA assisted Eco Barge Clean Seas to organize community coastal clean-ups at the Sarina Beaches with 1118kg collected in October 2012 and 4751kg collected May 2013. SLCMA adopted Salonika/Half Tide Beaches and Freshwater Point beaches, respectively.

The *Sarina Community Coastcare Program* is supported by BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance—Community Partnerships Program and was completed on 30 June 2013. SLCMA will still endeavour to work with stakeholders and project partners to assist local residents and other community groups to protecting our coastal environment.



Participants enjoy a break at Grasstree Beach during the Coastal Field Trip



Marine debris, a common site in mangroves



Rubbish collected at Freshwater Point Beach, during the Sarina Coastal Clean Up

Middle Creek Dam Catchment: Water quality monitoring, remediation works and landholder engagement..

SLCMA recently completed the *Landholder engagement and onground activities for improved water quality* project focusing on improving water quality in the Middle Creek Dam and Plane Creek catchments. Throughout the project, SLCMA worked closely with Mackay Regional Council, local landholders, organisations and schools to raise awareness about improved land management practices to improve water quality and reduce the potential of blue green algae outbreaks.

Throughout the eighteen month project, SLCMA was able to assist landholders with funding for on-ground activities such as installing off-stream watering points and fencing off waterways from stock. Revegetation was also undertaken at Middle Creek Dam recreational area, to act as a filter/buffer for surface water runoff into the dam. All onground works will assist with improving the water quality within the Middle Creek catchment by reducing erosion and nutrient input into waterways.

As part of the final stages of the project, two blue-green algae information signs were designed and installed (in partnership with Mackay Regional Council) at Middle Creek Dam. The signs will provide locals and visitors with information about what to look out for during blue green algae outbreaks and effects on water quality, human and animal health.

The aquaponic units installed at Middle Creek Dam during the previous project; *Monitoring and remediation of blue green algae outbreaks in coastal ecosystems (funded by Australian Government, Community Coastcare)* are now being removed due to the conclusion of the current project. Monthly ambient water quality monitoring by our Healthy Waterways volunteers will continue.



CVA & SSSHS planting at Middle Ck Dam

SLCMA would like to thank landholders involved in the project as well as our project partners; Mackay Regional Council- Water and Waste Laboratory, Central QLD University, Sarina State High School Agricultural Department and SLCMA Community Volunteers for their ongoing support and assistance during project. SLCMA will continue to work with project partners and assist landholders to implement sustainable land management practices within the Sarina Catchment. *The Landholder engagement and onground activities for improved water quality project was funded by the Australian Government, Community Action Grants Program.*



Sarina Community Native Gardens



There has been lots of activity in the *Sarina Community Native Gardens* this year, with the "friends of the gardens" monthly volunteer morning kicking off, weekly assistance from the Sarina State High School students, assistance from Conservation Volunteers Australia (via BMA Hay Point Services funding) and of course the more recent grand opening by Costa Georgiadis, host of ABC's Gardening Australia during the Sarina Community Day. It will be a memorable occasion for a long time to come, with 'cutting' of a strand of Costa's beard signifying the 'official opening' of the gardens, with a crowd of over 150.

The establishment of the Sarina Community Native Gardens is well under way with many of the plants now beginning to flower and fruit, encouraging native birds to use the gardens as a food source. Whistling ducks have nested in the edible bush foods garden this year with the *Myoporum acuminatum* (Boobialla bush) providing great camouflage for the ducks and their eggs until the 6 little ducklings hatched. The sensory gardens are beginning to prosper with visitors enjoying the edible purple fruit of the *Myoporum acuminatum* (Boobialla bush), feeling the silky leaves of the *Acacia holosericea* (Silver wattle), smelling the unusually fragrant *Herbertia scandens* (Native climbing guinea flower), hearing the wind whistle through the *Casuarina cunninghamiana* (River she-oak) and observing the different shapes on show in the sight garden.



Kirsten Hamill helping cut the "ribbon" with Costa Georgiadis for the opening of the gardens.



Ray Greaves painting the stepping stones



Conservation Volunteers Australia & SLCMA volunteers plant the Grasstrees

We have introduced more local native plants to the gardens, sourced from a combination of our very own SLCMA Community Nursery and Society for Growing Australian Plants. We were fortunate to be donated 12 mature *Xanthorea sp.* (grasstrees) from BMA HPX – these are now providing a lovely feature in the coastal garden and entrance to the walking track.

The walking track has been completed with the construction of the concrete boardwalk across the main in-flow of the seasonal wetland and the installation of stepping stones at the minor in-flows; allowing all weather access along the path. A big thankyou to BMA Hay Point services who donated the boardwalk material.



"Friends of the gardens" mulching

SLCMA's 'Friends of the Gardens' volunteer program began this year with great success. The community days are held one Saturday a month and have seen volunteers from all age groups enjoying a family day out to learn about the native plants and assist with planting, weeding, mulching and general garden maintenance.

SLCMA will continue to work with Mackay Regional Council, Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens and v Society for Growing Australian Plants to identify suitable plant species and groupings for additional plantings. Weekend volunteer mornings will continue to assist with garden expansion and ongoing maintenance.

Below: how the gardens have changed 2009-2013



The purpose of the Sarina Community Native Gardens is to demonstrate the use of native plants in gardens and landscaping situations as well as be utilised as an educational resource the community, volunteers and Sarina. SLCMA would like to thank Mackay Regional Council Natural Environment Program for providing financial support for the current stage of the project.

Coordinated Feral Pig Control

SLCMA has continued to work alongside project partners: Mackay Regional Council, Reef Catchments, the Regional Landcare Facilitator, Plane Creek Productivity Services and, landholders this year to help coordinate a feral pig control program throughout Rocky Dam Creek Catchment and for the first time extending down to the Carmila Catchment.

Overall, 53 landholders participated in two aerial control events in December 2012 and January 2013 which resulted in 292 pigs controlled during 34 hours of fly time.

It is great that landholders are working together and recognise that a pig controlled a few kms away is still of benefit to them and their property.

The coordinated approach allows for a large area of the catchment to be covered in a short space of time, increasing the potential to reduce feral pig numbers and hence reduce negative impacts on farming land and natural areas.

The Feral Pig Control Program is part of a collaborative approach between landholders and project partners using a variety of control methods at different times of the year.

As well as the aerial control events, the program has involved meetings with landholders, workshops on trapping, surveys, loaning of pig traps.

Participation, funding and inkind support from landholders and project partners is integral to the success of the program.

Pre-flight meeting with stakeholders and landholders



Pig damage in local coastal wetland



Mark Sant (shooter) with one of the pigs



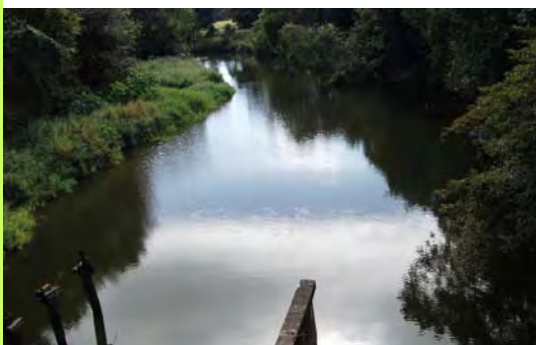
Landholders get some tips from Michael Tuckett, Mackay Regional Council Pest Officer about trapping

Healthy Waterways Volunteer Program



Above: 2006 water lettuce infestation

Below: 2010



The Healthy Waterways Volunteer Program has continued throughout the year, with new volunteers Sharon Allen and Jessica Scoble taking on the regular monitoring along Plane Creek.

The ambient monitoring program involves collecting water quality data and recording observations at set locations, on a monthly basis. A range of variables are monitored including electrical conductivity, pH, dissolved oxygen, water and air temperature, clarity and filterable phosphorus. Other observations include weather, rainfall, flow, presence of weeds etc.

Plane Creek has been monitored by SLCMA volunteers since 2003, with the information collected providing an understanding of the health of the waterway and trends over time.

Below: 2013 wet season



The 3 sites monitored along Plane creek capture a mixture of landuses from Forestry/horticulture in the upper catchment, cane in the middle catchment and urban/industry in the lower catchment.

The data is currently input into uniDap—a web based data collection site, where approved stakeholders can see samples in real time.

Supporting our local schools

SLCMA continues to provide support to our local schools, conducting school activity days, offering technical advice and plants for onground projects as well as assisting teachers and students with resources and information. SLCMA has received funding from various sources to make this possible (*see below for details*). However a special mention to Mackay Regional Council, Natural Environment Program through the *Landcare Support Project* which gives SLCMA the foundation to provide an initial of 10 days support to local schools per year. Some highlights of the year include:



Alligator Ck School revegetating their local creek bank

Alligator Creek School Riparian Rehabilitation project funded by Reef Catchments Public Fund —SLCMA has worked with Conservation Volunteers Australia and Alligator Creek State School to rehabilitate their local creek. The project began in March 2013 with site preparation and has continued throughout the year. On **Schools Tree Day**, SLCMA and CVA assisted approximately 400 students, teachers and parents to plant 250 trees at the creek site. The project is due to be completed in November 2013.

“Caring for our Coasts 2012” School Activity Day (Oct 2012) 140 students from Clarke Creek, Dundulla and St Anne’s primary schools came together at Grendon Park, to participate in the event. Students and teachers participated in 3 hands-on activities themed:

- Effects of marine debris on marine animals and their habitats delivered by Eco Barge Clean Seas Inc
- Sustainable fishing practices delivered by Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- And the importance of mangroves and their adaptations to survive in such harsh environments delivered by SLCMA staff.

“Caring for our Coasts 2013” School Activity Day (Jun 2013) Over two days, 237 students from Alligator Creek and Chelona Primary schools came together at Sarina Beach to participate in various activities. SLCMA staff took participants for a stroll along the Sarina Inlet Trail learning about the importance and roles of various coastal habitats. Students got washed away with Mackay Regional Council staff during the River story - learning about interactions between land, water, aquatic environments and human activities. A favourite of the day was the Marine Turtle activity delivered by volunteers from Mackay and District Turtlewatch. Students learnt about the importance of monitoring turtle nesting sites and ways to help stranded marine animals.

Both activity days were funded through BMA Community Partnership Program and Mackay Regional Council Natural Environment Levy and aimed to create a greater understanding of and provide practical ways to look after our local coastal environments.

School Resource Kits: Macro-invertebrate identification, “River Story” (catchment management) and water quality sampling kits have been well utilised throughout the year by local schools.

Sarina State High School (SSHS): We have a strong partnership with SSHS Agriculture Department and Sarina Rural Skills Centre as well as individual classes. Students and teachers have been involved a range of Landcare activities including in nursery work at the SLCMA Community Nursery, revegetation at Middle Creek Dam, gardening in the Sarina Community Native Gardens and educational activities on native plants and water quality. SLCMA also attended the SSHS Career Expo in August 2013, with the pest education trailer and Landcare display.

Work experience students: In May and August 2013, SLCMA hosted Mackay State High School work experience students, Isla Cramer and Joshua Southward. The students had the chance to actively participate in a variety of Landcare activities such as preparing plant specimens for identification by the QLD Herbarium, onground works in the SLCMA Community Nursery and Sarina Community Native Gardens; assisting with preparations for school activity days, volunteering with Conservation Volunteers Australia and site visits to project sites. A partnership has been established between SLCMA and Mackay State High School to continue to host future work experience students.

Reef Guardians School—FLEC activity day held at Sarina Rural Skills Centre. SLCMA facilitated the planting activity with the aim to establish native shade trees in paddocks for stock, which will also increase biodiversity.

Landcare Week celebrations (Sep 2013) Three local schools, who are active Landcarers; Alligator Creek and St Annes Primary Schools and Sarina State High School had the opportunity to meet Costa Georgiadis (host of ABC’s Gardening Australia) during Landcare Week 2013. Students, teachers and parents were inspired by discussions around vegetable gardening, companion planting, importance of biodiversity and sustainability, using recycled materials, integrating chooks into gardening systems and gaining general advice and inspiration for their future activities.



Alligator Ck students learn the River Story



SSHS Career Expo



SSHS students & work experience student in the Sarina Community Native Gardens



Costa with St Annes Catholic Primary School students

Other projects and grants underway

- **African Tulip Pilot project** funded by Mackay Regional Council—Natural Environment Program. The trial control part of this project has been extended to December 2013, to allow for more completed monitoring and follow up control of suckering trees.
- **Administration support** funded by the Australian Government, Grants to voluntary Environment & Heritage Organisations. This grants program has provided essential support towards some of our administration and operational costs as well as the purchase of a new computer.
- **Sarina Landcare Support Project** funding from Mackay Regional Council—Natural Environment Program
This project supports SLCMA to provide ongoing services to landholders and the general community through activities such as the SLCMA Community Volunteer Program, environmental awareness events, displays at local events, working with stakeholders, coordination of projects and workshops.
- **Community Coastcare in the Mackay Whitsunday Region** funding from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Everyone's Environment Grant 12/13. SLCMA will work closely with Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group (PCL), Whitsunday Catchment Landcare (WCL) through the COCLN to implement coastcare activities across the region at Louisa Creek Reserve, Far, Cannonvale and Conway Beaches. Conservation Volunteers, Mackay and Whitsunday Regional Councils will also play a big role.
- **Central QLD Coast Riparian Health Project** funding through Whitsunday Catchment Landcare, via Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Everyone's Environment Grant 12/13. The Central QLD Coast Landcare Network will work together deliver the project which includes activities at Plane Creek Revegetation Site (by SLCMA), Pioneer River, Marian (by PCL) and Gregory River (by WCL).

Supporting Community Events

- **Reef Rescue Grazing Forum** (Mar 2013) : SLCMA as part of the Central QLD Coast Landcare Network hosted a display at the Reef Rescue Grazing Forum in March 2013.
- **Relay for Life** (Apr 2013) — For the 6th year, SLCMA volunteers, staff & members once again joined the “Gum-nut” team to participate in the annual Sarina Relay for Life, a fundraising event for cancer research. In total, the Sarina Community raised around \$66K. A big thank-you to Nadine Hamill who made a special effort in fundraising through a raffle and sausage sizzle (with help from family and friends). Prizes were donated from Woolworths Sarina, The Body Shop, the Meng, Hamill, Jackson/Frenken Family, SLCMA, Sarina Safety & Embroidery and “I love it” Sarina.
- **Sarina markets** — We have continued to waive the Landcare flag at the local markets each month, it is a great opportunity to chat with the community, encourage the use of native plants, provide information to landholders and highlight some of the projects and programs that are available.
- **National Tree Day** (Jul 2013) —SLCMA joined forces with Sarina Athletic Club to plant native plants around Brewers park Athletic oval.
- **Community Planting days**—In partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia, we have been able to offer weekend community days for volunteers. Sites include Louisa Creek Reserve and Sarina Community Native Gardens.
- **Ag Trade Life Show** (May 2013) — SLCMA joined PCL and the Mackay Regional Pest Management Group with the Pest Education Trailer and Landcare display ~ providing a range of information to landholders about native plants and pest management.



QLD Landcare Award nominations for the region

Congratulations and good luck to all the nominees from the Mackay Whitsunday region, for 2013 QLD Landcare Awards. Just to be nominated deserves a ‘pat on the back’ ~ keep up the good work!

- **Sarina Rural Skills Centre** (partnership between the Sarina Rural Skills Centre Committee and SSHS Agricultural Department) (Junior Landcare Team Award)
- **Beaconsfield State School** (Junior Landcare Team Award)
- **Mackay Regional Council** (Partnerships with Landcare Award)
- **Mackay and District Turtlewatch** (Coastcare Award)
- **The Werner Family** (Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award)

Working Groups supported

SLCMA is proud to support the following working groups and projects:



Central QLD Coast
Landcare
Network

- Central QLD Coast Landcare Network
- Mackay Whitsunday Regional Pest Management Group
- Mackay Regional Council — Natural Advisory Committee
- Rocky Dam Creek Coordinated Feral Pig Working Group
- Isaac Regional Council—Coastal Working Group

Landholder Support

SLCMA provides a wide range of support to Landholders within the Sarina Catchment including free property visits and land management advice for a range of topics such as property planning, pest, vegetation, waterway, stock and pasture management.

It is great to see existing and new landholders continue to keep in touch with SLCMA. Throughout the year, we have had lots of questions about plant identification, weed control and selecting the right type of native plants for specific sites. Landholders are also making the most of loaning equipment such as the pig traps and the lantana splatter gun. And it is definitely rewarding when we hear back from the landholders on how their property is progressing.

Where possible, we are able to link landholders to funding opportunities to assist with improved management strategies. This was possible through the *Landholder engagement and onground activities for improved water quality Project* which helped landholders in the Middle Creek and surrounding catchments implement activities such as riparian fencing and off-stream watering points.

We have begun to support our 'equine landholders' this year, through regular equine Landcare articles submitted to the Breakaway Horse Riders Club—we hope to extend this to other horse groups in the future.



Before & after: Riparian fencing to restrict stock access and protect waterway



Aquaponic information session

Landholder workshops & field days

SLCMA facilitated a range of community awareness raising events throughout the year. A big thankyou to our funding providers, project partners, volunteers and those who attended, to make these valuable learning events.

- **Weedbuster Week "Teaming up to tackle weeds"** (Sep2012) - Free Weed ID Field day held at Farm HQ
- **Aquaponic Information Session** (Oct 2012) - Held at the Sarina Rural Skills Centre and facilitated by Frank Langfield and SLCMA staff. This information session introduced landholders to the 'ins & outs' of aquaponics and provided information on how to set up your own system. It was a great opportunity to see a variety of different aquaponic systems (utilised at the Centre) as well as the new mobile aquaponic unit (*funded by the Gambling Community Benefit Fund*).
- **Nitrogen Use, Soil Carbon and Carbon Farming in the Sugar Industry Information session** (Feb 2013) - Ben Keogh (Australian Carbon Traders) and Dr Philip Moody (Science Leader—Soil processes) introduced 15 landholders to the Carbon Farming Initiative and how to increase soil carbon and health through nitrogen use efficiency. Workshops were held in Sarina and Proserpine through the Regional Landcare Facilitator Program, funded by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) as part of the Carbon Farming Initiative and was supported by the Central QLD Coast Landcare Network.
- **Dung Beetle Paddock Walk** (Mar 2013) - 15 landholders met with visiting entomologist and dung beetle expert Mr John Feehan during a paddock walk to learn about how dung beetles benefit soil health and production as well as identification. This event was co-supported by the Regional Landcare Facilitator Program
- **Backyard Explorer Workshops** (Apr 2013) - Approximately 200 school students, teachers and community members *discovered the world of insects* during a series of regional workshops. Visiting entomologist, Dr Christine Lambkin, from the Queensland Museum took participants on a journey on how to assess biodiversity using insects as an indicator. The workshops were supported by the Regional Landcare Facilitator Program and Central QLD Coastal Landcare Network.
- **Understanding soils workshop** (Jun 2013) - 27 landholders joined Dr Ross Coventry (Soil Horizons) and John Hughes (QDAFF) to learn more about soil characteristics, problems and remediation options. Workshops were held in Sarina and Proserpine through the Regional Landcare Facilitator Program, funded by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) as part of the Carbon Farming Initiative and was supported by the Central QLD Coast Landcare Network.



Dr Christine Lambkin demonstrating one of the ways to collect insects



Walk & Talk with Costa at the Sarina Rural Skills Centre

- **Walk & Talk, Meet & Greet** with Costa Georgiadis (Sep 2013) 45 Community members and teachers attended the event held at the Sarina Rural Skills Centre and were inspired by Costa to take a step towards producing healthy food, sustainably. Thankyou to Frank Langfield who assisted the guided tour of the innovative systems currently in place at the facility. Attendees has the added bonus to have a 'meet & greet' with Costa. Thankyou to SSHS tuckshop for catering, Paula Acting HOD for Agriculture Department and Principal Bruce Heggie for assisting with the organisation and, to those who attended for your support.

Sarina Native Garden Competition

SLCMA held the *Sarina Native Garden Competition* this year, which generated a lot of interest amongst local gardeners. Due to popular demand, the competition was expanded to include the Mackay area. The aim of the native garden competition is to support and promote the use of Australian and local native plants in gardens.

It was a great opportunity to see the variety of ways native plants are being utilised in both urban and rural settings. As well as a chance to provide gardeners with advice and identify any potentially weedy garden plants and suggest native alternatives. All entrants received a voucher for 5 free native plants, from the SLCMA Community Nursery.



L-R: Costa Georgiadis, Matt Moore, Lynette Keir, Lyn & Tom Jantke, Saskia von Fahland and Kerry Woodman

A big thankyou to the sponsors of the competition; Woodmans Mitre 10, Mackay Regional Council and Farm HQ and to Dale Arvidson (Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens), Margaret Lane (Society for Growing Australian Plants) and Ray Greaves (SLCMA) for their time, knowledge and assistance with judging the garden entries. The judging process was difficult with some great native gardens on display.

The winners were announced during the Sarina Community Day, by the sponsors and guest Costa Georgiadis (host of ABC's Gardening Australia). Congratulations to the winners who received 1 year SLCMA membership as well as:

- First place—Matt Moore—\$500 vouchers from Woodmans Mitre 10
- Second place—Tom & Lyn Jantke - \$300 from Mackay Regional Council
- Third place—Lynette Keir - a wheelbarrow full of gardening goodies (value of \$150) from Farm HQ

We look forward to seeing working with our partners again next year and seeing the existing native gardens progress and new native gardens being established.

L-R: 1st, 2nd and 3rd winning gardens



Some of the wonderful and innovative native garden creations from other gardeners :)



SLCMA is supported by:



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37 Broad Street, Sarina
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Regional Landcare Facilitator

supported by local businesses through community support fund