

## Soil Health Workshop

On May 26, PCL Chairman Dave Hunter attended a workshop on soil health promoted by Simon Mattsson. Simon is a Nuffield scholar and is one of the brightest and most passionate young farmers in the Mackay region. Simon shared some of the things he observed in his latest information gathering exploits in New Zealand and several countries in South America. The biggest take home message was if you want a large diversity of micro-organism in the soil you need to have a great of diversity of plants as hosts growing in that soil. To this end Simon is running his own trials using multispecies of complementary plants in the inter row of this year's cane crop.

The other exciting speaker was Colin Seis winner of the Bob Hawke Landcare Award in Melbourne 2014. Colin is known as the father of pasture cropping, a method of integrated farming that restores soil fertility while maintaining production. If you want to know more go to [ABC.net.net/Landline](http://ABC.net.net/Landline) archives 26-04-2009; the segment is called "Building Carbon Momentum" and shows what Col has done on his own property and how much CO<sub>2</sub> he has sequestered in the process.

Day two of the workshop was held at Simon's farm where speaker Gerry Gillespie of Resource Recovery Australia spoke about how to make your own inoculants for anaerobic compost and foliar fertilisers. To find out more about this Google "The unconventional farmer", which will give you all the information you need to make your own serum that is the basis of natural farming. The information on this site is just as useful to the home gardener as it is to a farmer or a local authority that wants to compost it's bio-solids. Gerry works all over the world with local authorities helping them to deal with mountains of organic waste that they currently putting into landfill or decay on the surface. There are councils in NSW already dealing very successfully with their bio solids, green waste and shopping centre food waste using Gerry's methods.

## Community Engagement Event

On June 5, PCL held a community Engagement Event at Wanemya, Eungella.

The purpose of the event was to provide information about Threatened Species and Weed Management. The day started with property owner and PCL committee member, Dianne Williams leading a tour of her property identifying improvements made through various techniques, some of which include;

- Permaculture gardening techniques,
- Planting of a wildlife corridor,
- Revegetation,
- Improving surface water quality.

Daryl Barnes from Birdlife Mackay and Patricia Julien from Mackay Conservation Group, held a presentation on threatened local bird species and spoke about the Eungella Honey Eater surveys that are currently taking place and Shelley Molloy from the Mackay Regional Council bought the pest management trailer where she displayed and provided information on pests currently affecting our catchment.

Thank you to Dianne for hosting the day and Daryl, Patricia and Shelly for presenting. PCL would also like to thank all who took time out of their schedules to attend including the year 4-6 students and Judy Atkins, who is acting principal of Eungella State School.



*Patricia of Birdlife Mackay presenting information about the Eungella Honey Eater Surveys currently being undertaken.*

## Did you Know?



The Great Barrier Reef is home to a array of marine creatures includes 600 types of soft and hard corals, more than 100 species of jellyfish, 3000 varieties of molluscs, 500 species of worms, 1625 types of fish, 133 varieties of sharks and rays, and more than 30 species of whales and dolphins.

## Volunteers Needed!



Volunteers are required to help participate in the next round of surveying of the Eungella Honey-eater. If you can offer your services, please contact Birdlife Mackay on 07 4959 3382.

**Weeping Paperbark / Long-leaved Paperbark**

**Family:** Myrtaceae

**Habit:** A large tree with thin papery layers of bark and bright green weeping foliage.

**Leaves:** Simple, short stalked, long and narrow (20cm x 2cm), leathery, tapering to a sharp point at the apex. New shoots may be covered with silky hairs.

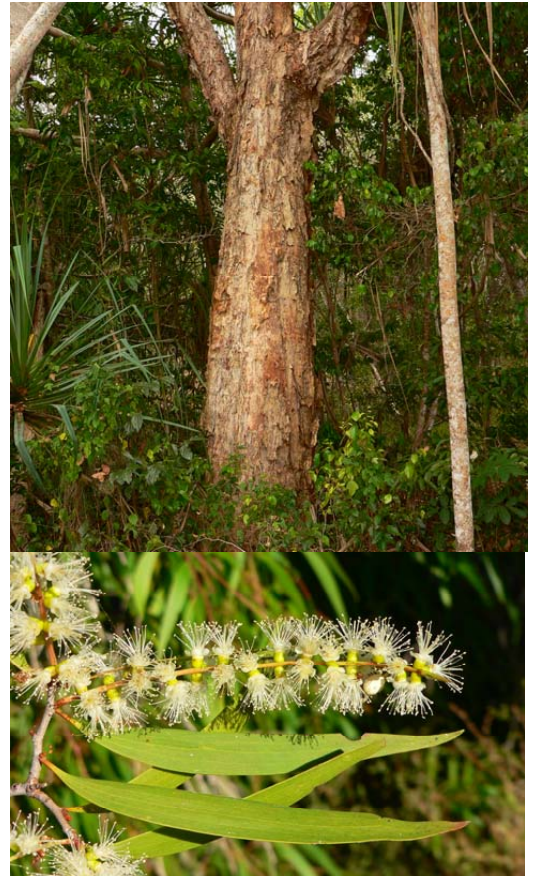
**Flower/Fruit:** The nectar-rich, fragrant, cream flowers are borne in open to fairly dense 'bottlebrush' spikes. Small woody capsules contain fine brown seeds and reach maturity during summer.

**Propagation:** Remove mature capsules from tree and place in a paper bag in a warm dry position until capsules have released the seeds. The material shed contains chaff and seed.

**Local Habitat:** Melaleuca swamps, rainforests, littoral rainforest and riparian areas.

**Distribution:** Northern Australia from the Kimberly region of Western Australia to Gladstone, Queensland.

Source: Alcock & Champion, 1989 One Hundred and One Trees of Mackay



Images: S. Robins

**Weed Spotting***Striga asiatica***Red Witchweed**

**Family:** Scrophulariaceae

**Form:** Herb

**Leaves:** Arranged in opposite pairs along the stem, 6-40mm long and 1-4mm wide with a tapered pointed tip.

**Flowers:** Flowers are usually red, but sometimes white, yellow or pink, 5-20mm long.

**Fruits / Seeds:** Seeds are very small and remain viable in the soil for up to 15 years.

**Spread:** Seeds spread primarily with soil (which can adhere to machinery or vehicles or other contaminated produce such as mulch or seeds).

**Distribution:** Native to tropical and semi-arid Africa, Arabia and Asia. One population has been found near Mackay.

**Distinguishing features:** Red Witchweed is distinguished from native species of witchweed by the calyx which has 10 ribs. Native species have calyces with 5 ribs.

**Impacts:** Effects corn (maize), millet, rice, sugarcane and sorghum. Has the potential to become a serious pest.

**General:** All suspect detections must be reported to Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23**.

Source: Website, Queensland Government; [www.daf.qld.gov.au](http://www.daf.qld.gov.au)



Images sourced from Queensland Government website (referenced left)

### Creating a Perfect Balance at Cloudbreak

The Tenant family have recently joined the Land for Wildlife Program and are a prime example of how wildlife conservation can be integrated with other land uses. In the Tenant's case they are using portions of their property for producing Lowline cattle.



Above: Cloudbreak farm and the Lowline cattle produced there.

The property is fortunate to have the beautiful Crediton Creek flowing along a portion of the boundary and the Crediton State Forest and Eungella National Park adjacent to other boundaries. Large areas of the property were infested with lantana and tobacco weed to name a few, much work has been undertaken to clear these areas and they are now being utilised. Preservation of remnant vegetation in low lying gullies has been a priority. Additionally the family has been instrumental in identifying and removing exotic species from the property. Other measures taken in their commitment to being environmentally sustainable and minimising the impact of grazing have included riparian protection measures such as wildlife friendly fencing and off stream watering points, the introduction of a dung beetle species to improve soil health and biosecurity measures.

The Lowline cattle are a smaller breed of cattle; during wet times they have a lesser impact on the land than other larger heavier cattle breeds. Their smaller size makes them a good choice for people with smaller parcels of land.

If you would like to know more about Cloudbreak's Lowline cattle please visit the webpage [www.lowlinecattlegld.com.au](http://www.lowlinecattlegld.com.au) or the face book page <https://www.facebook.com/lowlinecattlegld?fref=ts>

To obtain further information on becoming involved with the Land for Wildlife program and integrating nature conservation with other land uses please contact the PCL office.



The Tenant family at the Pioneer Valley Show 2015.

### Landcare Activities in June 2015...



PCL Project Officer Lara with the Pest Management Trailer at the Pioneer Valley Show. 415 plants were given away along with advice on land management issues.



Photographed by John Atkinson at Finlayson Point, Seaforth on May 20, during a walk with Friends of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

The **Eastern tube-nosed bat** (*Nyctimene robinsoni*) is a **megabat** (flying fox) in the family **Pteropodidae** that lives in north-eastern Australia. *N. robinsoni* is one of the few species in Pteropodidae that roosts solitarily. They get their common name from their raised tubular nostrils which is unlike most other species in the family. Resembles a dead leaf, blotches look like sun flecks. Finds food by smell; their favorite food is figs.

## Upcoming Events

### July

**Saturday 4**—Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee

**Sunday 5**—Birdlife Mackay Outing—Hay Point

**Friday 24**—School Tree Day

**Saturday 26**—National Tree Day

### August

**Saturday 1**—Morag McNichol Reserve Working Bee

**Sunday 2**—Birdlife Mackay Outing—Goorganga Plains, Proserpine



### Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. Management Committee

**Chair:** Dave Hunter

**Vice-Chair:** Di Salau

**Treasurer:** Margaret Lane

#### Committee Members:

Irene Champion Cr Theresa Morgan

Caitlin Davies Dianne Williams

Grant Howard

### Plant Allocations:

*Please note that members and participants of the Land for Wildlife and Peri-Urban projects can still collect their plant allocations from the nursery.*

### *PCL welcomes the following new members who have joined since January:*

- BRW Transport & Quarries Pty Ltd
- Mackay & District Turtle Watch Inc.
- Judie Inkson
- Sandy Whittington Shaw
- Ilaria Capra
- Lucy Lauder
- Blake & Melissa Martin
- Katie Finch
- Sharon & Rodney Dallas
- Andre & Melanie Camilleri
- Dom & Katrina Vella
- Mark Radke
- Melissa Spalding
- Sonja Sant
- Rob Bounds
- Leonne & Paul Fordyce



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*July 2015*

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