

Sustaining the natural integrity of Fraser Island (K'gari) together February 2021

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Welcome to the first issue of the FINIA newsletter for 2021. Wow, after all the challenges we thought we had already faced, did 2020 ever decide to go out in a blaze!

Obviously, fighting and responding to the K'gari fire has been first and foremost for most FINIA members.

Our thoughts go out to the K'gari community and businesses as they recover from 2020 and to all our FINIA partners as they work together to help the island to restore and rehabilitate.

The Editor

K'gari (Fraser Island) – the Fire and the Aftermath



On 14 October, campers in the Ngkala Rocks vicinity left an unextinguished campfire at their campsite in the North of the Island. A raging South Easter was blowing. The coals reignited, fanned by the wind, and the fire spread into the adjacent vegetation. That was the start of the calamity.

Strong winds drove the fire across the island and within a day and a half, it had reached the Western side of the island. By the time it was drawn to the attention of QPWS, it had extended well inland. As it proceeded, it left behind numerous fires burning in inaccessible wilderness country.

The wind then swung to the North-North West. It blew the fire south, breaking into several fronts and burning over half the island (87,000Ha). It was eventually controlled by a huge fire fighting effort involving 90+ firefighters, 17 water-bombing aircraft (fixed-wing and chopper), and finally the advent of rain on 8 December.

During these eight weeks, the wind blew from every conceivable direction ranging from gale force to perfectly calm. The fires were very variable, and the resultant impact on the landscape was equally variable. At times the fires were extremely hot, totally engulfing the vegetation inflicting lasting damage. In contrast, at other times, it

North of Happy Valley - top of steep sand dune almost six weeks after fire and good rain. This is scorched earth. The earth is sterilised. Very hot fire moved up the steep slopes of this dune, probably driven by strong wind. There is no regrowth of trees or shrubs. No grass, ferns or seedlings of any kind are emerging. (Photo: Peter Shooter).

just crept along the surface, burning the accumulated material but not extending into the canopy of trees and shrubs.

K'gari's terrain is extremely varied, ranging from high steep dunes to large areas of undulating country. Similarly, the vegetation types are incredibly varied, ranging from majestic complex rainforests, featuring gigantic satinay and other trees, to sclerophyll forests containing a range of tree species including Eucalypts, Banksias, Casuarinas and many more. Then there are a range of heathland types and importantly wetlands including the incredible patterned fens. Each of these communities reacts differently to fire, adding to the complexity of this fire's impact.

Some of these plant communities have evolved to be fire tolerant and even benefit from periodic burns. This is the case for the heathlands and some sclerophyll ecosystems, while the rainforests do not tolerate fire. All this complexity means the impact of the fire was very variable. Some areas can be expected to recover quite well while others are severely damaged.

Of greatest concern, the fire would engulf rainforests (as happened at Binna Burra last year). This did not happen. In some places, the fire got into wet sclerophyll forests surrounding the rainforest areas but was restricted to the forest floor and did not extend into the canopy. This was excellent news.



North of Happy Valley - dead Scribbly Gum in front of live Swamp Turpentine. Scribbly Gums proved very fire sensitive. Swamp Turpentine proved very fire resistant. (Photo: Peter Shooter)



North of Happy Valley – a vigorously recovering Swamp Turpentine in front of dead Moreton Bay Ash. Moreton Bay Ash proved very fire sensitive. (Photo: Peter Shooter)

Most of the fire-fighting effort was concentrated on saving lives and property at The Cathedrals, Kingfisher Bay Resort and Happy Valley. This saved the day for these places and was an excellent result. However, the damage to the natural environment is considerable, and in some places, the scars and impacts from the fire will be long lasting.

On-island inspections are currently being undertaken by several organisations, including the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, and Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO). FIDO President, Peter Shooter, provides his insights below:

FIDO has done two post-fire inspections of the island. The impact of the fire is very varied, and there are many unburnt patches throughout the area. These provide refuge for both plants and animals as the slow recovery occurs.

Some of the worst damage is on steep dunes where the fire, driven by strong winds raged up the slopes, creating very hot burns that burnt most plants to the ground and sterilised the soil. Where the burn was cooler, blady grass and bracken ferns have come back prolifically, shooting from underground stems, as have a range of other plants.

Some of the forests, especially around Happy Valley, experienced very hot burns. Some species, notably Scribbly Gums (*Eucalyptus racemose*) and Moreton Bay Ash (*Corymbia tessellaris*) appear to have died over extensive areas. Others like Blue gums (*Eucalyptus tereticornus*) are reshooting, with Swamp turpentine (*Lophostemon suaveolens*) has bounced back with great vigour. It is covered in shoots and is flowering on the new growth.

The iconic Pandanus trees of K'gari have suffered dramatically of recent years from the introduced leafhopper (*Jamella australiae*). They took another hit where fires went through coastal dunes. Many Pandanus are

reshooting, but given the population was so weakened by the leafhopper, they have a real struggle ahead. Banksias have expressed a varying response. Of the dominant species, the common Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*) has suffered badly. Most appear dead in burnt areas, while the Swamp Banksia (*Banksia robor*) has regrown from their roots and the tree Banksias (*Banksia aemula* and *Banksia serrata*) that dominate wallum forests the West of the island are already shooting well from their stems.

There is considerable, albeit well-placed community concern about the impact of the fire on wildlife.

Koalas attract the vast majority of publicity in the aftermath of forest fires, but K'gari does not have koalas. There are a small number of Eastern grey kangaroos and some swamp wallabies. It is expected that these larger animals, along with the iconic K'gari Wongari (dingos), will have avoided the fires. Not so the smaller or slower moving creatures in the burnt areas.

It can be expected that the smaller marsupials and rodents, reptiles and some small birds will have suffered, but this is very hard to assess. Concern has been expressed about the loss of habitat of two threatened bird species, the ground parrot and the black-breasted button quail, both ground dwellers. Large areas of habitat were destroyed both in this fire, and the earlier 2019 fire (affecting 1350Ha at the south of the island).

The likelihood of injured smaller animals being found is very low. We may never know the immediate extent of the impact.

We inspected the remarkable Patterned Fens north of the Wathumba Road. The vegetation was burnt to the ground. It is coming back vigorously, as the plants grow in high water holding peat soils. The primary large plant species, Swamp Banksia (*Banksia robor*), Woolly Teatree (*Leptospermum leavigatum*), and Ghania are regrowing vigorously from the roots.



Patterned Fens – North of Wathumba Road. This area was completely burnt over a month before this picture was taken. It is now vigorously regrowing. The soil is peat, with high water holding capacity. {Photo: Peter Shooter}.

The big questions

This fire event on K'gari is unprecedented in both duration and magnitude. It occurred at the time of an extended and arid period. It begs the question – "Was this abnormal dryness just an example of normal cyclical climate variation? Or is it just another example of a much greater phenomenon that has seen many unprecedented damaging fires in protected areas and across the country of recent times? Has this been influenced by man-induced climate change?"

The K'gari fire makes this the seventh World Heritage property in Australia affected by fire in the last year. They include:

- Gondwana Rainforests here in Qld (including Binna Burra) and over the border in NSW, which were 54% burnt according to the 2020 Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements,
- Greater Blue Mountains area west of Sydney, which was 82% burnt,
- Budj Bim Cultural landscape in Victoria, and
- Stirling Range National Park in West Australia.
- Five Ramsar Wetlands were also impacted by fires last year.

In his later years, the late John Sinclair AO examined the rainfall records over recent decades from Double Island Point. They pointed to a significant decrease in annual rainfall over that period.

Is this an indication that K'gari is drying? Will this result in increased fire activity on K'gari into the future? If so, what impact will this have on the island's vegetation and wildlife? What impact will it have on the famous perched lakes of K'gari?

These questions can only be answered with a concerted and comprehensive research effort.

K'gari is World Heritage-listed. The Federal and State Governments need to take their commitment to the World Heritage Estate seriously, with resources urgently needed to fund both this research and response, providing effective fire control measures for K'gari.

Article contributed by Peter Shooter, Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO)

Editor – the fire has provided access into previously inaccessible areas of K'gari, providing opportunities to record cultural and natural heritage across the island. FINIA partners are reminded that as K'gari bursts back into life, to ensure that all members apply strict biosecurity protocols – including washing your boots before entering any new areas to prevent the spread of weeds, pests and unwanted pathogens like myrtle rust into recovering ecosystems.

Community views to help inform K'gari Bushfire Review

The views and experiences of community members, businesses and tourist operators are being sought as part of a review underway into recent bushfire events on K'gari (Fraser Island).

Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM), Alistair Dawson APM announced the community forums would be held to inform IGEM's review into the preparedness and response to the bushfire events.

As part of the review, the Office has been tasked to examine the effectiveness of preparedness activities and the response to the K'gari bushfire event by entities responsible for managing the island and bushfire and disaster management in Queensland.

The review will consider the island's cultural and environmental significance and consolidate observations, insights, findings and recommendations from previous bushfire reviews undertaken by the Office, in addition to the final report of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.



While no lives or major infrastructure were lost during the recent K'gari bushfire, what price can we put on the island's natural and cultural heritage? (Photo: Chris Barnes)

In conducting the review, the Office will ensure good practice and opportunities for improvement are highlighted in the report. A copy of the review's terms of reference is available for download [here](#).

"We are seeking feedback from community members, business and tourist operators and interest parties about what they thought worked well and any opportunities for improvement to ensure we have the best possible disaster management arrangements in place," Mr Dawson said.

"It's vital the review hears from those people who can speak first-hand about their own experiences and reflections.

"The forums will focus on the review's terms of reference and will also consider the cultural and environmental significance of the island.

"We'll also be looking to consolidate observations, insights, findings and recommendations from previous bushfire reviews and the recent Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements."

Forums with a community, business and tourism industry focus were held on K'gari at Orchid Beach, Happy Valley and Kingfisher Bay and in Hervey Bay from 19-21 January with a final forum for Rainbow Beach scheduled for Thursday 4 February.

The Office will work closely with local, state and federal agencies, First Nations people and other relevant stakeholders to obtain information to assist in the review. Public submissions have now closed. The Office's report will be provided by 31 March 2021 to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services, and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services.

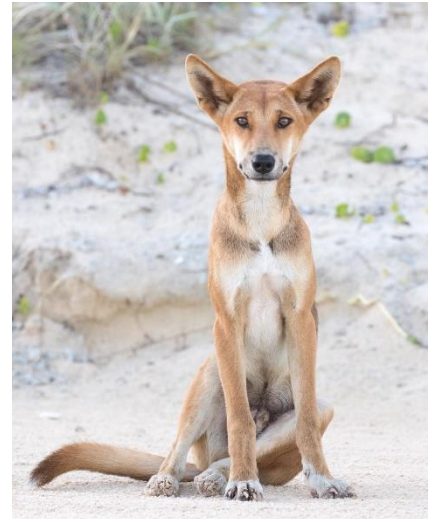
Keeping K'gari's Dingoes (Wongari) People-Safe!

Dingoes are one of the many icons of K'gari-Fraser Island – and one that attracts a fair amount of debate and interest. So, what are the facts about the island's dingoes?

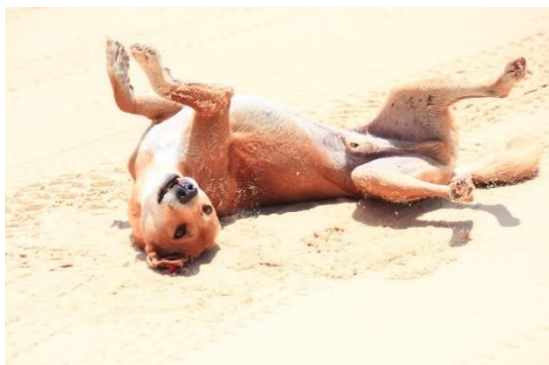
Before European settlers came to K'gari, two types of dingoes were known to the Butchulla traditional owners. One was wat'dha (the camp dingo), and the other was wongari (the wild dingo). All K'gari's dingoes are now considered to be wongari - wild and free.

The dingo (wongari) *Canis lupus dingo* is protected in Queensland national parks as a native species. QPWS has a legal responsibility to conserve dingoes on K'gari, even though the dingo is a declared pest outside of these areas.

Wildlife authorities have suggested that K'gari dingoes may be the purest strain of dingo on the eastern Australian seaboard (and perhaps Australia) as they have not crossbred with domestic or feral dogs to the same extent as most mainland populations. Therefore, their conservation is important.



K'gari's apex predator – the dingo or wongari (Photo: Chris Barnes)



A playful dingo (wongari) moment captured safely from a distance (Photo: MK Oldfield)

Dingoes are a highly evolved [apex predator](#) on K'gari, meaning like the sea eagles and sharks, they prey on other animals. Survival on an island means you need to adapt, so K'gari's dingoes are omnivores relying on a mixture of foods including marsupials, rodents, reptiles, berries and other flora, and the remains of [stranded marine animals](#) washed up on the beach. Medium-sized mammals (such as bandicoots) and fish were the most common food items detected in [dingo scat records](#).

Being a highly intelligent animal, some dingoes have also adapted to another food source/supplier on the island – us!

Fishers, beach campers and tourists can leave behind a smorgasbord of food items on K'gari's beaches including fish frames and barbecue leftovers, and dingoes then dig these up. Sadly, some visitors to K'gari don't appreciate the dingo's naturally slim frame, and by feeding dingoes have habituated some individual animals to expect food. These dingoes may then exhibit aggression if food is not available on the next occasion they approach a tourist.

Negative interactions are carefully monitored on the island. If a dingo is considered too significant a risk, (remembering the death of nine-year-old Clinton Gage in 2001, and the more recent attack on the toddler who was pulled from a camper trailer in 2019) then managers are forced to act. Euthanasia being the last resort for a dangerous animal.



Check out the canines! Remember dingoes (wongari) are a natural predator (Photo: MK Oldfield)

In 2020, (with the island closed for a significant period and less visitation) dingoes reverted to their natural food

sources. The result – which is noteworthy – no dingoes were euthanised for high-risk behaviour or starvation.

Sadly, after just returning from a trip to K'gari myself, this trend hasn't continued with numerous dingoes back out scavenging around popular tourist hot spots on the island like Waddy Point and Eli Creek.

So, what are the key things you can do to help keep yourself and K'gari's dingoes (wongari) safe?

1. Never feed a dingo (not even inadvertently)! Feeding, attracting or intentionally disturbing a dingo attracts a hefty fine up to a maximum of \$10,676. If you have to bury food scraps, make sure that they are >50cm deep (and don't do it while a dingo is watching). Better still, bag your scraps, secure them, and take them home with you or dispose of them in a designated bin.
2. When visiting lakes, take no food. Never take food or drinks (except water) to lake shores and use the fenced picnic areas provided.
3. If camping outside a dingo-fenced area, keep your campsite clean and tidy with any food securely stored in a locked box (not your tent!).
4. Always stay very close to children. Children forget that they are at risk, and may run during play attracting the attention of dingoes. Treat a dingo as you would a busy road and teach your children to be dingo-safe.
5. Slow down for wildlife including dingoes and shorebirds. Dingoes are unpredictable. Unfortunately, some people have accidentally or deliberately hit dingoes with their vehicles.

Ultimately, we are all responsible for K'gari's dingoes (wongari). If you see someone at risk or doing the wrong thing, get a photo, take down some details like the location, date, time and vehicle registration and send it to dingo.ranger@des.qld.gov.au.

Most of all – help keep dingoes (wongari) safe, remember, K'gari is their place.

Article compiled and contributed by Sue Sargent, FINIA

K'gari World Heritage Discovery Centre



*FIDO's Peter Shooter checks out the new displays at the K'gari-Fraser Island World Heritage Discovery Centre
(Photo: Sue Sargent)*

The K'gari World Heritage Area Discovery Centre at Kingfisher Bay Resort is now open! The Centre is a joint project of USC and Kingfisher Bay Resort. The Centre aims to provide a dynamic, non-commercial learning experience that engages adults and children visiting the island.

The Centre is based on four key themes:

- Exceptional natural beauty (World Heritage List criterion vii)
- Significant ongoing geological processes (World Heritage List criterion viii)
- Significant ongoing biological processes (World Heritage List criterion ix)
- Conservation of this amazing place

The Centre now plays a central role in the development of comprehensive interpretive education for the island. In the future, it will link to, and direct, visitors to the planned K'gari Butchulla Cultural Centre at Central Station. Further interpretation is planned for Dilli Village.

We are grateful for the support and assistance provided by the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation, USC students, Peter Meyer and the Fraser Island World Heritage Unit. Many of the photos are from the John Sinclair Collection (held by USC's K'gari-Fraser Island Research Archive), the Fraser Island World Heritage

photo competition, Luke Barrowcliffe (on behalf of the BAC), Ian "Long Nose" Morris, Peter Meyer and Clare McKay (USC staff). USC students provided the artwork.

The official opening will be on a date, yet to be fixed, in March. If you are visiting K'gari, don't forget to pop in and check out the new Centre.

Contributed by Dr Kim Walker, University of the Sunshine Coast

Mission Biosecurity is LIVE!

The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has teamed up with Costa Georgiadis of Gardening Australia and our colleagues in New South Wales and around Australia to bring you Mission Biosecurity!

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to become a biosecurity warrior, and help protect Australia from plant and animal pests and diseases.



Costa Georgiadis, Biosecurity Ambassador

"My love of gardening was cultivated by my grandparents, and the time I spent in their suburban garden when I was growing up. I fell in love with gardening and went on to study landscape architecture at university, exploring the relationship between gardening and sustainability."

"The world of biosecurity is no longer just quarantine at the national border, the technology in biosecurity now is mind-blowing, and the science being executed is phenomenal."

"Understanding what biosecurity experts do can help us as a nation, manage things better. The big picture challenges can be solved with lots of little steps."

"We're in this together, side by side with the birds, the bees, the frogs, the insects, the plants, the whole ecosystem. We're partners. We're family."

"During Mission Biosecurity, you're going to meet scientists, experts, specialists and passionate citizen doers, people on a mission, sharing the latest info about what biosecurity is and better still, how you can be a part of it."

This article previously appeared in the Biosecurity News Mission Biosecurity Special Edition newsletter

Check out the great Mission Biosecurity hub with some great resources including podcasts, classroom materials and the [garden escapee game](https://www.missionbiosecurity.com.au/resources) at: <https://www.missionbiosecurity.com.au/resources>

FINIA Weed Spotter Workshop

A big thank you to the Queensland Herbarium's Senior Ecologist, Dr Melinda Laidlaw for her Weedspotter Workshop held at the Maryborough Town Hall back in November.

Fourteen FINIA and community members joined Mel for her two-hour introduction to the Weedspotter program.

Did you know that there are 1400 naturalised species in Queensland with an average of 10 new weeds becoming established across the state each year? A naturalised species is a non-native plant that does not need human help to reproduce and maintain itself over time in an area where it is not native.



Dr Melinda Laidlaw, Senior Ecologist with the Queensland Herbarium (Photo: Sue Sargent)

Weed Spotters help find, identify, and document those new occurrences of potential weeds early to limit impacts. It provides a community-based weed alert system in Queensland, based on the Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management model.

Melinda's presentation covered the General Biosecurity Obligation (or GBO) under the Biosecurity Act 2016 and an overview of some of Queensland's biggest weed threats. These included the Blind and Bunny Ear cacti (check out which cacti you have at home) and the prolific Mexican bean tree, producing more than 100,000 seeds a year.

Melinda offered practical suggestions where community members can help – spotting plants that 'out of place.' You can take photos of the plant (whole plant, leaves, and flowers or seeds) and submit these with a date and detailed location to your Weed Spotter local coordinator (Juliet Musgrave with Fraser Coast Regional Council) or the Duty Botanist at the Queensland Herbarium for identification.

There is also a [Weed Spotter App](#) for Android phones that you can use. A full plant (including leaves, flowers or fruit and roots) can also be collected and pressed (take care not to drop any seeds) for more positive identification.

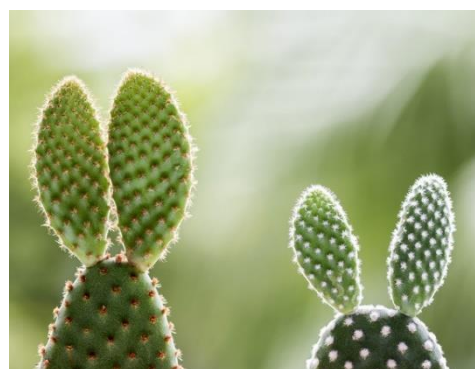
To learn more about how to identify weeds, share information with the right people to attack the problem, and make our landscapes - from bushland to parks to properties better places, please join the Weed Spotter Network.

Weed spotters receive access to a free [handbook](#), and a weed spotters bulletin each month (with information on current and emerging weeds, weed spotter activities and a list of regional contacts).

To join Weed Spotters Network Queensland, please fill in the application form [here](#).

Contributed by Dr Melinda Laidlaw, Weed Spotters Network Queensland, Queensland Herbarium

If you find a new or emerging weed in your area, please don't hesitate to contact either your Weed Spotter regional coordinator, the Queensland Herbarium or Biosecurity Queensland so that we can check on its identification for you and advise if any further action is necessary.



No doubting the identification of these cacti – any guesses on its common name?

New Managers at Dilli Village

USC manages the K'gari Research and Learning Centre (Fraser Island) at Dilli Village. The Centre at Dilli Village has bunkhouses, self-contained cabins and campsites.

Dilli Village now has new managers with Leesa Downey and David Mierocha on site. Leesa and David are experienced camp managers having managed the campsite at Noosa North Shore.

Dilli Village provides accommodation for students and staff, and access to field study sites for primary, secondary and tertiary student groups and accommodation for groups and individuals. There is a central dining area with a commercial kitchen and large verandahs currently used for teaching.



Some of the great facilities at Dilli Village Research and Learning Centre (Photo: Noosa Today)

We were sad to see Simon and Jodi Parker leave and are very grateful for their time managing Dilli. Leesa and David have settled in well. FINIA members passing Dilli are encouraged to call in and say hello to Leesa and David, and if you are staying at Dilli, ask David about his card tricks.

To contact the managers, please call Leesa Downey 0413 736 610 or David Mierocha 0479 107 098. The best reliable contact number is the Dilli Village land line 07 4127 9130 or dillivillage@usc.edu.au.

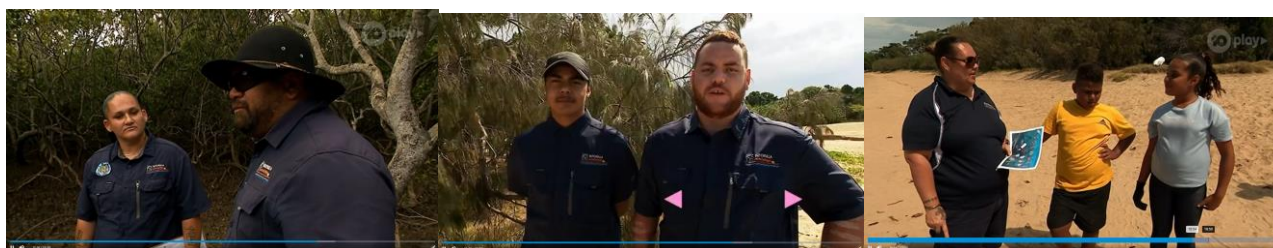
Contributed by Dr Kim Walker, University of the Sunshine Coast

Butchulla Rangers and Trainees Go 'Totally Wild' for K'gari

In late October, Network Ten's popular children's show, *Totally Wild*, filmed with the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation and Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers. The BAC, BLSR and Skilling Queenslanders for Work Trainees recorded a total of four segments over two days featuring the Junior Rangers program (along with Senior Students from the Urangan Point State School) on Butchulla Culture and Cultural Heritage, along with Myrtle Rust and Marine Debris.

Their first episode went to air on 23 January, focusing on their Creek for a Week and Junior Ranger marine debris activities. Great job team!

Check out their efforts for yourselves [here](#) (Season 27, Episode 12). Their segment starts at 16:30.



From L to R: Butchulla Land and Sea Ranger Jodie Rainbow and Trainee Coordinator Bob Broome, Ranger Trainees Chase Chapman and Dakota Broome and Ranger Coordinator Chantel Van Wamelen with school leaders from Urangan Point State School share their knowledge about marine debris (Photos: Totally Wild, Network Ten).

Article contributed by the Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers

Feature Pest: Mossman River Grass



Keep an eye out for this problem grass – spotted recently near signage at Champagne Pools car park

Mossman river grass or Mossman burr (*Cenchrus echinatus*) is an invasive plant native to Central America and southern North America. It prefers sandy soils including at the beach, footpaths, roadsides, lawns, parks and disturbed areas – so K'gari provides some perfect habitat.

The plant is an annual grass with prostrate or erect stems forming loose tufts. Seedlings are erect, robust, hairless and have bright mid-green leaves. The leaf sheaths are purplish-red, especially in older seedlings.

Mature plants form prostrate or ascending tufts with stout stems up to 90 cm, but mostly up to 60 cm. The leaves are flat and somewhat stiff, tapering towards the tip. They are 5–25 cm long and 3–12 mm wide. The ligule (where the leaf blade becomes the leaf shaft to wrap around the stem) is a rim of short hairs, with a few scattered hairs on the leaf margin at the leaf base. The joints along the stems are hairless.

It flowers mostly during summer and autumn with seed heads, borne on several stems per plant, are spike-like clusters of 12–14 burrs. Each burr (0.5–1 cm across) is a ball of stout, broad, spiny bristles joined together at the base. The burrs fall off readily when ripe and cling tightly to clothing, animal hides and human skin. They can also penetrate bare feet, making it unpopular with tourists.

Mossman river grass mainly spreads by burr seeds and by burrs attached to animals, clothing and bags, machinery and vehicles, fodder, and soil.

The most effective control method is to destroy young plants before they set seed. This can be done by hand-pulling, burning off with heat using steam jets, or spraying with herbicide.

Please make sure you check your boots/clothing carefully for these burrs before moving around the island and dispose of any seeds/burrs carefully to prevent spread.



Don't become part of the problem – check your clothing and boots or weed seeds and burrs (Photo: Brisbane City Council)

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

As many of you would be aware, the Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance (FINIA) is a non-incorporated, not-for-profit, umbrella organisation for its partners. As a non-incorporated organisation, we rely on our partners to support our activities for the Fraser Island (K'gari) World Heritage site, with no dedicated funding to support our meetings, administration and barge transfers. Without this generosity, FINIA's activities would be far more challenging, so we would like to acknowledge the following sponsors for their generous support:



Fraser Coast Regional Council – who provide meeting venues.

Groups and organisations - that sponsor catering for meetings.

Kingfisher Bay Resort Group – who support many of our on-ground activities, with subsidised barge fees.

Add to this our amazing contributors, volunteers and donors—K'gari is a special place that attracts truly special people. Thanks to you all for making FINIA work.

Dates for the Diary

What: Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance Meetings

Where: Town Hall, Maryborough

When: Tuesday 16 February, 10am to 2pm

For: For all FINIA members and supporters. Quarterly meetings are a great chance to catch up and share what's happening or should be happening on Fraser Island (K'gari).

Cost: **FREE** (although we always appreciate a sponsor for morning tea or lunch).

More info: Please contact the Chair, Sue Sargent on 0429 462 041 or email contactfinia@gmail.com.

What: Weed Management

Where: Happy Valley, Fraser Island

When: 20-26 March, 6-12 June, 4-10 July and 14-20 November

For: Peter Shooter leads these trips to help tackle the heavy weed infestation around Happy Valley. A group of up to 8 will share "Kurrawa", a comfortable holiday house in the Centre of Happy Valley. The group will work to contain a particularly aggressive weed with poisonous seeds, *Abrus prectorius* Var. *Africanus* that is heavily impacting on the vegetation but isn't found anywhere else on Fraser Island. As the *Abrus* is coming under control, the team will be increasingly turning to eliminate large woody weeds Easter Cassia and Lantana. Fitness is needed to carry heavy chemical backpack sprays across steep terrain.

Cost: \$300 (\$200 for concessions) to subsidise costs.

More info: Please send any questions to weeding@fido.org.au.

What: Bush Regeneration and Monitoring

Where: Eurong, Fraser Island

When: 21-27 February, 2-8 May, 1-7 August and 31 October to 6 November (Sunday to Saturday).

For: FIDO has been conducting weeklong weeding –bush regeneration programs in Eurong since 2005. These have progressively transformed Eurong and dramatically reduced the weed threats there. Based at Tallinga, the former Sinclair family home in Eurong Village, work will focus on weeding, bush regeneration, building the Eurong nursery's capacity, and continuing FIDO's ongoing environmental monitoring programs. The program is supported by Eurong Resort, providing dinner for the volunteers each night.

Cost: \$300 (\$200 for concessions) to subsidise costs.

More info: Please send any questions to weeding@fido.org.au.

What: Cooloola Bioblitz 2021

Where: Cooloola National Park

When: **SAVE THE DATE!** - 14-16 May 2021

For: After a cancellation in 2020, the Cooloola Bioblitz is back in 2021. Join scientists and Cooloola Coastcare volunteers for 48 hours of nature! The BioBlitz is an intense biological survey to expand all the plant and animal species' records within the Cooloola Coast. Scientists, naturalists and volunteers like you survey in small groups. No natural history expertise is required with experienced mentors and leaders accompanying all the teams on their field excursions to help find, identify and document as many species as possible and provide information. Suitable for teens to retirees.

Cost: **TBA** - a small cost will be charged to assist with administration.

More info: Check out the website <https://www.cooloolacoastcare.org.au/projects/bioblitz>

Funding Opportunities

What: Gambling Community Benefit Fund

For: One-off grants of up to \$35,000 (inc. GST) for not-for-profit organisations to help provide community services or activities that benefit the Queensland community. To increase access to funding, the GCBF offer five funding rounds a year.

When: Round 108 is now open and will close at 11.59 pm on 28 February 2020.

Email: cbf@treasury.qld.gov.au

Phone: (07) 3247 4284

Website: <http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/sponsorships-and-grants/grants/community-benefit-funding-programs>

What: Norman Wettenhall Foundation—Small Environmental Grant Scheme

For: Projects that enhance or maintain the vitality and diversity of the Australian natural living environment. Objectives of the Small Environmental Grants Scheme (up to \$10K) are flora and fauna conservation and threatened mammal conservation with one or more of the following: monitoring/recording data, community education, community capacity building (training) and research/science.

When: Next round opens 1 April 2021 (funding released May 2021)

Phone: (03) 5472 1316 - Elizabeth (Beth) Mellick, Executive Officer

Email: beth@nwf.org.au

Website: <http://www.nwf.org.au/>

What: Australian Geographic Society Sponsorship

For: Founded by Dick Smith, each quarter up to \$15,000 is made available for Australian Geographic Society Project Grants. Funding provided by the Society for Project Sponsorship targets all four Project Categories: Science, Community, Adventure and Environment. The society also offers seed grants between \$500 and \$3000.

When: Applications are now taken throughout the year for sponsorship rounds.

Phone: (02) 9263 9825

Email: society@ausgeo.com.au

Website: <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/society/sponsorship/2013/11/apply-for-sponsorship>

What: The Mullum Trust

For: Supports projects which have significant, ongoing or catalytic environmental outcomes. Grants are available from \$100 to \$10,000. Projects with specific localised environmental outcomes are preferred, although locally based projects but have far-reaching impacts are also encouraged.

When: Ongoing

Phone: Mr Ryan Neoh on (03) 9671 6658

Email: rneoh@deloitte.com.au

Website: <http://thetrusteeformullumtrust.myob.net/>