



# FINIA

THE NATURAL INTEGRITY ALLIANCE FOR K'GARI

## Newsletter

*Sustaining the natural integrity of K'gari together*

*May 2025*

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'Autumn' is always a busy time for K'gari with the Easter School Holidays, Anzac Day, breeding Wongari (when they are most active and territorial, with territory disputes leading to increased aggressive behaviour) and cooler conditions marking the start of the prescribed (planned) burn season.

It is also when FINIA undertakes its annual Field Trip keeping all our partners in the loop with the work underway and finding new ways to collaborate and support each other.

*The Editor*

## Tracking the Lifeblood of K'gari: Collaborative Water Research on a Changing Island



On Queensland's World Heritage-listed K'gari, water is both sacred and abundant. But where does this water come from? How long has it been beneath the ground? And how might climate change affect its future?

These questions are at the heart of a groundbreaking project led by the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC), Burnett Mary Regional Group (BMRG), CSIRO, the University of Adelaide, and the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation. Together, this consortium is investigating the hidden lifelines that sustain K'gari's unique freshwater systems. Using a suite of techniques—from stable isotope analysis and sediment coring to lake bathymetry and water quality sampling—the team is unlocking critical knowledge about the island's water sources, their age, and their vulnerability.

### Why Water Matters on K'gari

K'gari's perched and window lakes are unlike any in the world. Their quality, colour, and biodiversity are shaped by the delicate interactions between rainfall, groundwater, sand, vegetation, and time. Yet very little is known about their hydrology.

This knowledge gap presents a risk: without understanding where lake water comes from, how long it stays, or how it interacts with groundwater, it is difficult to manage these ecosystems effectively—especially under a changing climate. Already, we've seen the consequences: Deepwater Lake, once thought to be buffered by

deep aquifers, has dried in recent decades, leading to the local extinction of the endangered honey blue-eye (*Pseudomugil mellis*).

The Butchulla People have long emphasised the importance of caring for water in line with their cultural lore. This project seeks to honour that knowledge by combining Traditional Ecological Knowledge with cutting-edge science to better understand and protect the island's freshwater resources.

### A Collaborative Approach



Pre-start briefing at Boorangoora (Lake McKenzie) Photo: BMRG

The BAC has played a central leadership role in guiding research questions, selecting sampling sites, conducting fieldwork, and shaping the communication of findings. Butchulla Rangers have been trained in sampling techniques, contributing directly to the collection of water from lakes, creeks, rainfall, and groundwater bores across the island.

Sampling has taken place at key sites including Lake Boorangoora (McKenzie), Lake Boomanjin, Lake Garawongera and Deepwater Lake - each representing a different type of lake. These lakes are monitored for a wide array of parameters: stable isotopes (oxygen, hydrogen), tritium, dissolved organic carbon, phytoplankton,

turbidity, and temperature, and other water quality parameters. Rain gauges and depth loggers have been installed to monitor real-time changes and catch rainfall isotope signatures.

### What Are We Learning?

Through this work, the team is beginning to answer questions that were once unapproachable:

- **Are lakes connected to deep or shallow groundwater?**  
Stable water isotopes (of oxygen and hydrogen), allow the team to determine whether a lake receives ancient groundwater or is fed primarily by recent rainfall. This distinction affects how resilient a lake is to drought.
- **How do lake colours relate to hydrology?**  
Lakes with high tannin levels (e.g. Lake Boomanjin) absorb more heat and evaporate faster. The source of these colours may be linked to groundwater inputs or surrounding vegetation.
- **What risks does climate change pose?**  
Data from sediment cores help infer past lake levels and climate variability. If lakes have dried in the past during wetter-than-now periods, future climate scenarios could present even greater challenges. Real-time water level monitoring also enables early detection of trends in drying or recharge.
- **How can this knowledge inform future action?**  
The collected data will support climate impact assessments, guide restoration priorities, and improve understanding of ecological health, water source vulnerabilities, and fire preparedness. Ultimately, this will lead to a Butchulla water harvesting decision making tool for fighting fires that prioritises lake systems based on volume, the environment, and cultural significance.

### Looking Ahead

By the end of 2025, the Consortium will have generated a comprehensive dataset covering water quality, lake volumes, isotope ratios, and ecological indicators from 12 lakes and multiple bores on K'gari. This will be one of the most detailed assessments ever undertaken on the island.

But it is only the beginning. The findings will inform future modelling of groundwater and lake systems, assessments of resilience, and restoration planning. Importantly, they will contribute to global understanding of how sand island ecosystems function—and how they can be protected in a warming world.



Surveying lake and groundwater levels to compare over time (Photo: BMRG).

As the Butchulla say: Minyang Galangoor gu, djaa kalim baya-m — “What is good for the land must come first.”

*Article contributed by the K’gari Water Resource Consortium, which includes the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation, CSIRO, University of Adelaide, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and the Burnett Mary Regional Group.*

## Yellow Crazy Ants – on the move

Regular FINIA followers will know that we have been closely watching the yellow crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) situation on the mainland for many years. Yellow crazy ants were first recorded in Hervey Bay near the Urangan boat harbour in early 2005. After attempts to eradicate this 77Ha infestation, populations of the ants have continued to be monitored by Fraser Coast Regional Council near Booral (Hervey Bay) and Maryborough.



*Yellow crazy ant – note the brown abdomen and unusually long legs and antennae (Photo: DPI NSW)*

Considered to be one of the top 100 ‘World’s Worst invasive species’ by the IUCN, yellow crazy ants made their way into Australia through our ports. After first arriving on Christmas Island sometime before 1934, the ants have established in Queensland, the Northern Territory and NSW.

Yellow crazy ants do not bite. Instead, the highly aggressive species sprays formic acid to blind and kill their prey. They feed on a range of animals to access protein, but also they also obtain carbohydrates from plant nectar and honeydew from scale insects; and although they’re tiny, they can swarm in great numbers, killing much larger animals like lizards, frogs, small mammals, turtle hatchlings and bird chicks and reshaping entire ecosystems.

For K’gari, they pose a significant threat to our ground dwelling and nesting birds like the Black-breasted button-quail (Mur’rindum) and Ground parrot, but other threatened species including water mouse, long-nosed potoroo, three-toed snake-tooth skink, common death adder, blind snake, acid frogs and nesting loggerhead and green turtles.

The ants were recently recorded by Fraser Coast Council in new locations. In Hervey Bay, the most recent finds were at the dog park on Vista St, Urangan which has spread from an industrial block on Becks Road, and an area around the entrance statement into Maryborough and Ellengowan Street, which has spread from the Cicada Lane site. An earlier site in Maryborough at Anzac Park around Ululah Lagoons has also spread across Alice St into EB Uhr Park.

While these yellow crazy ant colonies have been treated and are included in a biannual management program, full eradication by Council is unlikely for now. The council has a long-term plan to tackle the problem but lacks state or federal funding to support its efforts.

The increase in colonies is a concern. Most ant species build colonies with a single queen. Yellow crazy ants can build *super colonies* with multiple queens (up to 300) and multiple nests, some of which are the largest of any ant species worldwide extending over 150 hectares, with densities of 20 million ants per hectare recorded on Christmas Island.

Unless there is an intervention, the outlook for K’gari, the island’s ecosystems species and tourism industry if (when) the ants make it across the water is dire. The Queensland Government’s Invasive Animal Risk Assessment (2016) for yellow crazy ants states that “Habitats most at risk are offshore islands with dense forest, monsoon forest/rainforest and plantations along the tropical east coast (generally shady, moist habitats).

We are asking the Fraser Coast community and visitors to K’gari to be vigilant and help us watch out for yellow crazy ants. If you find a potential nest on your property, please contact Council’s customer service team on 1300 79 49 29.

*Compiled by Sue Sargent, FINIA with input from Fraser Coast Regional Council*



## The Indian (common) Myna bird is no minor threat to K'gari

You may have noticed an added little black bird species in the last five years around residential areas of K'gari and on the adjoining mainland. These are [Indian Myna Birds](#) who are very territorial, social and flock together causing aggression and home loss to native species. These intelligent, admittedly noisy, and adaptable birds have been introduced around the world and have made their way to our World Heritage-listed island.



*Indian myna – an invasive pest found on K'gari (Photo: ABC).*

Myna birds are passerines or songbirds and are a type of starling (Sturnidae family) - Latin for starling (*Sturnus*). The well-known Australian noisy miner bird (bush alarmist!) is a honey eater (Meliphagidae family) native to Australia and is pale grey coloured compared to the introduced dark Indian myna species. Mynas are monogamous and can breed from about one year old. Depending on the species, they can live from four to 25 years!

To combat the island's Indian myna bird invasion K'gari residents and stakeholders have teamed up to manage the situation through a state funded **Collaborative Common (Indian) Myna bird program** with initial funding available for a workshop, cages, and associated equipment. The workshop held at the Orchid Beach community shed provided by the Orchid Beach Association and hosted by QPWS provided information to 24 attendees keen to hear more about control options for this invasive bird species.

Jesse Wojtala from Wedgetail Solutions delivered an informative presentation outlining the species' origin, invasive capacity and importance of controlling these adaptable birds as well as highlighting animal control welfare.

Andrew and Simon from FCRC outlined control efforts on the mainland and potential support options for K'gari. QPWS staff highlighted the distribution for K'gari and collaborative options for control and support including using [Myna Scan](#) to assist with recording control effort.

The workshop finished with a cage trap demonstration, cuppa and knowledge sharing session. It was very interesting hearing from residents who have already been working hard at cage trap building and control options to outsmart these clever birds.



*Orchid Beach's Collaborative Common (Indian) Myna bird program workshop participants (Photo: QPWS)*

It is important these birds are not feeder-fed or encouraged to increase in population. They carry parasites, are vectors for invasive weed and pest species (potentially even including fire ants). The common myna bird will "ant" by dropping onto a fire ant nest to dust bathe or pick up the ferociously stinging ants and drop them onto its feathers. The ants' formic acid helps to kill parasites like mites and ticks.

*Working together for K'gari.*

*Contributed by Linda Behrendorff QPWS Senior Ranger NRM K'gari*

## FINIA Field Trip 2025

It is incredible to think that this year, marks 20 years since the formation of FINIA and their first weed workshop held on K'gari. Weeds and biosecurity are still a massive (and growing) issue for the World Heritage property and an area that concerns many of our partners.

This year we reminded all members about the importance of *Come Clean, Go Clean* and the basic biosecurity measures that are incumbent on us all – especially when we access areas that most visitors to K'gari may never get to visit. *Come Clean, Go Clean* serves as a reminder to make sure you check and wash all boots, clothing (including your socks, baseball caps and hats), vehicles, camping and other equipment before coming onto K'gari.

With growing interest in the Field Trips, we also implemented a convoy procedure for our vehicles (with thanks to member Joe Elmore and the Ipswich 4WD Club). While FINIA has always practiced 'Tread Lightly'

principles and encourages car-pooling, radio handsets in each of the vehicles kept everyone well connected and ensured that the itinerary ran to schedule.



FINIA members painted with three lines of ochre to remind them of the three lores (Photo: FINIA)

After a warm welcome to country by the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation's Myles Broome, Kodi Womal, Jason Booth and Miriyan Sandy, participants were each painted with three lines of ochre to remind us of the three lores while we visited Country:

What's good for the land comes first.

Do not touch or take anything that doesn't belong to you.

If you have plenty you must share.

First up on the itinerary was a WetCAT demonstration by Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers at Lake Allom. Members got to see the Wetland Condition Assessment Tool in action, including a close look at the lake's macroinvertebrates, and the BAC's new *Galangoor Gung* data tool (developed in conjunction with Everick Foundation).

Cane toads were also on the itinerary and although out of season for tadpoles (found over Summer), cane toad tadpole trapping was demonstrated at Govi Creek, with members constructing cane toad tadpole traps in the evening. These simple traps can be made for <\$10 and then deployed overnight with a [tadpole lure](#) (which also prevent bycatch of native fish and other species). Three partner groups signed up to FINIA's Cane Toad Challenge and took away a free trap and supply of baits for next season.

As the day ended, Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers took FINIA members out to deploy trail cameras checking habitat for the Vulnerable Mur'rindum, Black-breasted button quail (*Turnix melanogaster*). Although not captured on camera overnight, the cameras did pick up several other species of K'gari wildlife including a bandicoot and goanna.



BAC's Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers demonstrated a WetCAT assessment at Lake Allom (Photo: FINIA)



QPWS Rangers Russ Simkins and Olivia Lemma demonstrate Wongari trapping equipment (Photo: FINIA)

On Day 2, FINIA members were provided with fascinating talk and demonstration of Wongari trapping equipment by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's Russ Simkins and Olivia Lemma. Members even practiced blow-darting a target for themselves (noting this was undertaken under strictly controlled conditions with a static target).

Following the wongari demonstration, FIDO's Eurong Weeding Team (led by Su Dawson) took FINIA members out to the 'Deer Farm' (so named for its high chainlike fence – which has never housed deer). Used as a temporary storage area and adjacent to the Eurong dump, the area had a rich assortment of weeds including coral creeper (*Barleria repens*), corky passion vine (*Passiflora suberosa*), and

*Praxelis* – all of which were marching into the National Park. FIDO intervened, starting to clear a vegetation buffer between the fence line and the bush. The buffer is now naturally regenerating with beautiful native pink nodding and tiny green hood orchids. Su and the team had set up an informative display with information about the 15+ species of weeds they had identified and the ongoing work on-site.

The final site visit for the trip was to the new pathway between First and Second (Residential) valleys in Eurong. The old pathway traversed a newly transferred Aboriginal Freehold block of land at Eurong, so the new pathway now carefully winds around the block and over the ridges to ensure that residents and visitors still have pedestrian access between the valleys. Largely constructed by long-term resident and FINIA's Deputy Chair, David Anderson, the pathway includes steps with materials donated by 'Mitre 11' – aka the Eurong tip.



Organisations taking part in this year's field trip included: Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation, Eurong Community Association, FIDO, 4WD Queensland, Happy Valley Community Association, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Sandy Cape Lighthouse Conservation Association/Lower Mary River Land and Catchment Care Group, University of the Sunshine Coast, and Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council.

The field trip and meeting were proudly sponsored by Sealink Kingfisher Bay, and K'gari Research Station (Dilli Village) with catering provided by Auntie Suzie Gala (Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation). Thanks also to Su Dawson and the members of FIDO's Eurong Weeding Team who generously provided Day 2's morning tea.



David Anderson leads the way on the new pathway between First and Second Valley (Photo: FINIA)

*Article contributed by Sue Sargent, FINIA*

## Cyclone Alfred Clean-Up Efforts on K'gari

In the wake of Cyclone Alfred, large volumes of marine debris washed up along K'gari's eastern beach, posing a serious threat to the island's fragile ecosystem. In addition to rubbish, leatherjacket fish also washed up, a phenomenon reported on many beaches along the east coast of Queensland and New South Wales. These environmental changes highlight the urgency for this type of conservation work on K'gari.



*The aftermath of TC Alfred with eroded dunes and marine debris (Photo: Hana Robinson)*

Despite K'gari Adventures' best efforts, we were unable to secure emergency clean-up funding from government or private sector sources. Thankfully, the Fraser Island Association has generously donated once again to support clean-up efforts. Their contribution enabled Team Drop Bear to recruit six volunteers to spend a week on the island dedicating five hours a day to targeted clean-up operations between Dilli Village and Poyungan Rocks.

As a limited company, K'gari Adventures' eligibility for grants is quite restricted, but we have applied for all programs available to them and launched a *MyCause* fundraising page to continue raising support for the Keep K'gari Pristine Project. We welcome any opportunity to "talk rubbish" and establish partnerships with conservation groups or community associations who are willing to partner with us on the Keep K'gari Pristine Project.

Team Drop Bear has of course stepped up as part of our deep commitment to the Butchulla people's first lore - what is good for the land must come first. So far, we have removed 527kg of rubbish, thanks to the incredible efforts of our team and community. Our passionate crew, including Mumma Bear, contributed over 30 hours, and all our tour guests also rolled up their sleeves to help keep K'gari clean too.

Team Drop Bear remain dedicated to the cause and continue to provide both in-kind support and \$10 from every direct ticket sold to help fund this incredibly important mission. We are committed to protecting this precious island and will continue to do all we can - together. Monetary donations are appreciated, as too are volunteer hours. To find out more and contribute, please click on this [link](#).



*Team Drop Bear has already removed 527Kg of rubbish after TC Alfred (Photo: Hana Robinson)*

*Article contributed by Hana Robinson, K'gari Adventures and Keep K'gari Pristine Project*

## K'gari's planned burning program ignites for 2025

The flames of protection and renewal are lighting up K'gari as the island's annual collaborative planned burning program sparks into action. After a soggy start to the year, including the weather impacts of Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred and a bustling Easter holiday season, this year's planned burn season is underway.



*Fire-trained personnel attend briefing before lighting up at Dundubara (Photo: QPWS)*

In late April, the first planned burn was carefully conducted at the Dundubara camping area. Over a two-day operation, rangers expertly applied low-intensity fire to reduce fuel loads around the popular campground, office, residences, and visitor use area within the dingo exclusion fence. The result was a safer, more resilient landscape – better prepared for bushfire season and the next phase of the annual aerial planned burning treatments assisting ecological recovery post Duling wildfire.

From now through July, fire-trained Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) rangers and their firefighting partners will be undertaking planned burns and supporting other fire managers

across key areas of the island to safeguard its unique ecosystems and protect vital infrastructure.

Fire management is a complex beast with many factors to be considered – like seasonal wildlife movements, peak visitor periods, recent and long range weather patterns, and understanding the importance of timing and ecological balance to ensure every burn benefits the environment and the community.

Planned burns play a critical role in the long-term fire management strategy. By creating a diverse mosaic of burnt and unburnt areas, these efforts help reduce bushfire intensity, support biodiversity, and promote healthier ecosystems across the K'gari section of Great Sandy National Park.

Residents, stakeholders, and visitors to K'gari over the coming months are encouraged to stay informed, respect Ranger instructions, and look out for signage related to fire operations.

For your safety and the safety of others:

- Never enter closed areas
- Only light campfires in designated zones
- If smoke is present, stay indoors, close windows and doors, and keep respiratory medication handy.

For the latest updates, visit the QPWS Fire Management webpage or stay connected via Park Alerts and @QldParkAlerts on X (formerly Twitter). Working together for K'gari.

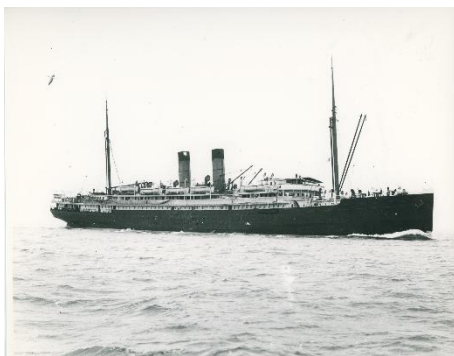


*Sven Lavender (IC) and Jeremy Thompson supervise fire activity in the Dundubara campground (Photo: QPWS)*

*Contributed by Linda Behrendorff QPWS Senior Ranger NRM K'gari*

## The TSS Maheno – Lest We Forget

K'gari's most famous shipwreck is that of the *TSS Maheno* on the island's eastern shore. The *TSS Maheno* was owned by the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand and more significantly, it was designated as the NZ Hospital Ship *TSS Maheno* (HMNZHS No 1) in WW1.



*The Twin Screw Steamship (TSS) Maheno was launched in 1905 (Photo: NZ Maritime Museum)*

Launched in 1905, the *TSS Maheno* was used as regular passenger ship primarily on the trans-Tasman run between Australia and New Zealand. The *TSS Maheno* held the speed records for the crossing for almost two decades.

At the start of WW1, the *Maheno* was chartered by the New Zealand Government, converted, and named HMNZ Hospital Ship No. 1. Much of the *TSS Maheno*'s medical equipment was funded by successful public appeals to the New Zealand people.

The first voyage of the *Maheno* as a hospital ship was from 7 July 1915 to 1 January 1916, arriving at Anzac (Cove) on Gallipoli for the first time on 26 August 1915.

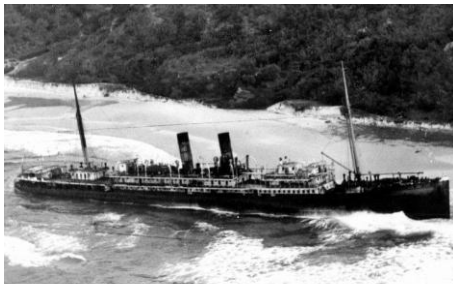
The military records show that the *TSS Maheno* retrieved the injured of all nationalities, with most soldiers being Australians.



From Gallipoli, the ship carried these soldiers to hospitals at Lemnos, Malta, Alexandria, and Southampton before eventually returning to New Zealand with the most severely wounded from that country.

From her arrival at Anzac on 26 August until 8 October 1915, the *Maheno* embarked 2,350 cases of which 331 were New Zealanders. After Gallipoli, the ship served between ports in France and Belgium carrying the wounded and dying from the major battles on the Somme and around Ypres. By the end of the war, the *TSS Maheno* had transported 14,361 sick and wounded soldiers.

After WW1, the *TSS Maheno* was refitted as a passenger liner returning to the trans-Tasman run. Sadly, because of the Great Depression and increased efficiency of the newer ships, she was laid up from 1931 to 1934 before being retired in 1935.



*The Maheno runs aground during a storm off K'gari in 1935*

The ship was sold soon after to a Japanese company for scrap metal. In July 1935, while being towed to Japan, a winter cyclone caused the tow line to break and the *TSS Maheno* was pushed onto the eastern beach of K'gari where, after several unsuccessful attempts to refloat the valuable hulk, it remains today.

The *TSS Maheno* had one further use in a time of conflict - in WWII, the wreck was used for commando training by the Z-Force Commando (a precursor to the SAS) and for bombing practice by the RAAF.

The wreck of the *TSS Maheno* serves as fitting focal point for one of K'gari's Anzac Remembrance Services (hosted by Rotary Club of Brisbane Highrise) held on 25 April every year.

Each year we lose more of the Maheno to the sea that holds her. But she will continue to live on in the memories and millions of photos taken by her visitors. #LestWeForget

*Article compiled by Sue Sargent, FINIA*

## Freshwater Food Webs on K'gari

During a recent weed control trip to Happy Valley, FIDO volunteers took a swim in the magnificent Wyuna Creek north of Dundubara, on the advice of my good friend Myles Broom from the Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers. Myles introduced me to this little piece of paradise as "Little Eli." A most appropriate name.

The March flies were in abundance! And vicious!! Our volunteers slapped them in defence and threw them into the water. They were rapidly snapped up by small jungle perch (*Kuhlia rupestris*). This entertained us for quite some time, much to the delight of both us and the jungle perch.

Later in the day we repeated the activity in Eli Creek.

Jungle perch live in fresh water streams on the East Coast all the way from Cape York to Northern New South Wales. They are amazing little hunters, rising at lightning speed to snatch any insect that lands on the water surface.

Later that trip the group visited Lake Wabby late one afternoon at dusk. There was no one else there which was wonderful. While sitting quietly in the warm water, we were joined by a school of about eight quite large catfish, the lesser salmon catfish (*Neoarius graeffei*) that I have seen in Wabby on many occasions, but always at a distance. They came within touching distance of us.



*Frequent visitors to K'gari will recognise the March fly (Photo: FIDO)*



The March flies were again highly active and we offered them to the catfish, which they relished. Unlike the jungle perch, their approach was somewhat slow and cumbersome, but they gulped them down with glee. When we threw the dazed March flies onto the water surface, they attracted a feeding frenzy of very small fish, which in turn attracted the large catfish that cruised in and gulped down the catch.



*Lake Wabby's catfish appreciated a symbiotic session with FIDO's volunteers (Photo: FIDO)*

Most of the lakes on K'gari are perched lakes that depend entirely on direct rainfall for replenishment. There are no inflowing streams. Consequently, they are very low in nutrients and support a low level of aquatic life. The water in perched lakes is always clear, though in some cases is stained brown with tannins from peat in the lake bed.

Lake Wabby on the other hand is a barrage lake, formed by an encroaching sand blow that has blocked a waterway. It has a constant inflow of water and nutrients that accumulate, making it able to sustain much more aquatic life.

Wabby has a green tinge from microscopic algae that thrive in the higher nutrient level water. These single-celled algae photosynthesise by trapping ultra-violet rays from the sun and absorbing carbon dioxide from the water, forming sugars and the base of a food web providing an opportunity for higher life to exist in the lake. Hence the large catfish in Lake Wabby, which are not present in the low nutrient perched lakes.

This is another example of the wonderful diversity K'gari has to offer. The darting jungle perch thrive in the fast flowing, crystal-clear streams, while the lumbering lesser salmon catfish have found a niche in Lake Wabby. Unlike us, both species of fish love the March flies, and welcome the human involvement of helping them catch their natural food.

*Contributed by Peter Shooter, FIDO*

## Weed Alert - *Ardisia elliptica*

A weed recently discovered at Eurong (yet to be formally identified) has the potential to pose a significant threat to K'gari's environment.

While the flowering stage of the plant was not observed, it now has hundreds of berries ranging from pink to black. Eurong resident, David Anderson has alerted Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Fraser Coast Council, the Weedspotters Network and submitted a sample for verification by the Queensland Herbarium.

Suspected to be *Ardisia elliptica*, the plant is commonly called shoebutton ardisia, China shrub, duck's eye, jet berry and shoebutton. It is listed in the IUCN Global Invasive Species Database where it is among the top 100 of the world's worst invasive alien species.

Native to India, Sri Lanka, Indochina, Malasia, Indonesia and New Guinea, it thrives in warm, moist environments and has been spreading in Northern areas of Australia as well as in the tropical and sub-tropical areas of Eastern Queensland.

As a shade-tolerant and rapidly growing plant, it grows rapidly and so densely that it prevents the establishment of all other species. The plant can grow up to 13 metres tall but is usually much smaller.

Brisbane City Council lists it as an environmental weed and suggests that should it reach its potential it would be at the expense of indigenous species, stating "Due to its high reproductive output and high shade-tolerance, very dense carpets of seedlings can form underneath adults in ideal conditions."

This could result in more than 400 plants per square metre.

Until it can be formally identified, David Anderson has removed an ice cream container full of berries. If identified, the plant will be removed and a search for other plants undertaken.



*Could this be Ardisia elliptica – recently discovered in Eurong?  
Photo: David Anderson*

*Article submitted by David Anderson, Eurong Community Association*

## Voices of K'gari: Research, Respect and Responsibility 2025 Conference

The biennial K'gari conference will be held again this year at UniSC's Fraser Coast campus on the 10-11 November. Voices of K'gari: Research, Respect and Responsibility 2025 Conference is, once again, a joint initiative of UniSC and FIDO.

The conference will be delivered with the support of the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) and the Butchulla Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (BNTAC). The conference will bring together stakeholders to discuss and share research on K'gari and the broader Great Sandy Region. The research will include Citizen Science, Cultural Knowledge, monitoring, and academic and student research.

The program will be collaborative, with an emphasis on knowledge sharing and learning by the participants. The aim is to work together to share current research, Butchulla knowledge and Citizen Science. The result should be a shared understanding of the management of K'gari and the needs, including research, in caring for Land and Sea Country going forward.

A program, links to the website and registration will be available soon. For further information please contact Kim Walker, [kwalker4@usc.edu.au](mailto:kwalker4@usc.edu.au).



*Dr Kim Walker facilitates an earlier K'gari Conference workshop (Photo: FINIA).*

*Article contributed by Dr Kim Walker, University of the Sunshine Coast*

## Dates for the Diary

**What:** **Bush Regeneration and Monitoring**  
**Where:** Eurong, K'gari  
**When:** 11-17 May, 15-21 June, 17-23 August, & 19-24 October.  
**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 *Talinga*, 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, who provide 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](mailto:weeding@fido.org.au).

**What:** **Weed Management**  
**Where:** Happy Valley, K'gari  
**When:** 18-24 May, 13-19 July, & 16-22 November.  
**For:** Peter Shooter leads these trips to help tackle the heavy weed infestation around Happy Valley. A group of up to eight will share *Kurrawa*, a comfortable holiday house in the Centre of Happy Valley. The group work to contain a particularly aggressive weed with poisonous seeds, *Abrus prectorius* Var. *Africanus*. This weed heavily impacts local vegetation but is not found anywhere else on Fraser Island. The team also focus on large woody weeds, Easter cassia and lantana. Note - 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](mailto:weeding@fido.org.au).

**What:** **FIDO Pandanus Restoration Program**  
**Where:** East Coast, K'gari  
**When:** 22-28 June, & 2-9 August  
**For:** FIDO's bushfire recovery project 2022-25 is being conducted on the east coast of K'gari. Volunteers are restoring the low coastal vegetation complex on the foreshore and undertaking Pandanus recovery works by monitoring, seed collection and on-ground works, including restoration.

- More info: For more information or to register your group's interest in this activity, please get in touch with Mark Dwyer at [mdwy.dbq@gmail.com](mailto:mdwy.dbq@gmail.com).
- What:** **FIDO Wide Bay Locals**  
**Where:** East Coast, K'gari  
**When:** 27-29 April, 29-30 May, 19-21 August, & 9-11 October  
**For:** In 2025, FIDO is launching a new offering with shorter trips aimed at locals that can commit to 2-3 days of weed management and revegetation activities. If you think this may suit you, please contact FIDO.  
**More info:** Please send any questions to [weeding@fido.org.au](mailto:weeding@fido.org.au).
- What:** **K'gari 4WD Cleanup 2025**  
**Where:** K'gari  
**When:** 23-26 May 2025  
**For:** 4WD Queensland's annual K'gari Clean Up has been running since 2001. Participants must be a member of a 4WD Club for insurance purposes.  
**More info:** [www.4wdqld.com.au/kgari](http://www.4wdqld.com.au/kgari)
- What:** **FINIA Meetings**  
**Where:** Town Hall, Maryborough  
**When:** Tuesday 12 August 2025  
**For:** FINIA's partners meet quarterly to provide updates and collaborate on projects. Three meetings are held on the mainland, generally at Maryborough Town Hall (in February, August, and November), with an annual field trip to K'gari each year.  
**Cost:** Free  
**More info:** To register for the meeting, please email Sue Sargent at [contactFINIA@gmail.com](mailto:contactFINIA@gmail.com).
- What:** **Cooloola BioBlitz and STEAMzone Twilight Science Market**  
**Where:** Cooloola  
**When:** 22-24 August 2025  
**For:** Put this date in your diary as you will not want to miss out! Cooloola BioBlitz 22-24 August 2025, incorporating STEAMzone Twilight Science Market on 23 August for National Science Week.  
**Cost:** TBA  
**More info:** [www.cooloolacoastcare.org.au/projects/bioblitz](http://www.cooloolacoastcare.org.au/projects/bioblitz)
- What:** **K'gari Clean Up Great Walk**  
**When:** 3-15 October 2025  
**For:** Volunteers can sign up to join the team on their great walk from Sandy Cape to Hook Point over the 12 day program. You will be equipped with collection bags, PPE, accommodation, meals, and sunscreen. Drop Bear Adventures is providing all transport over to the island and accommodation at their Eco Retreat! Volunteers can expect to walk approximately 20km over 3 days (5-10km per day).  
**Cost:** FREE  
**More info:** Please email Hana, [hana@kgarifraserisland.com.au](mailto:hana@kgarifraserisland.com.au)
- What:** **Voices of K'gari – Research, Respect and Responsibility Conference**  
**When:** 10-11 November  
**For:** SAVE THE DATE! The biennial K'gari conference will be held again this year at the University of the Sunshine Coast's Fraser Coast campus. A joint initiative of UniSC and FIDO, the conference will be delivered with the support of the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation and the Butchulla Native Title Aboriginal Corporation. The conference will include Citizen Science, Cultural Knowledge, monitoring, and academic and student research.  
**Cost:** TO BE ADVISED  
**More info:** Please email Dr Kim Walker, [kwalker4@usc.edu.au](mailto:kwalker4@usc.edu.au)



## Funding Opportunities

**What: Gambling Community Benefit Fund**

**For:** Provide one-off grants for not-for-profit organisations to help provide community services or activities that benefit the Queensland community. Maximum grants for the upcoming super round are \$100,000.

**When:** Round 124 opens on 9 June 2025 and closes on 18 July 2025.

**Email:** [cbf@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:cbf@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Phone:** 1800 633 619

**Website:** <https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/community-grants>

**What: Wettenhall Environment Trust —Small Environmental Grant Scheme**

**For:** Objectives of the Small Environmental Grants Scheme (up to \$15K) 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 23 June 2025 for funding in August 2025

**Phone:** (03) 5472 1316 or 0431 219 980 - Elizabeth (Beth) Mellick, Executive Officer

**Email:** [beth@wettenhall.org.au](mailto:beth@wettenhall.org.au)

**Website:** <https://wettenhall.org.au/grants/small-environmental-grants/>

**What: Purves Environmental Fund**

**For:** Support 12-month proposals of up to \$50,000, that meet the Fund's current focus areas: degradation of wilderness, over exploitation of natural resources and pollution. Grant applications are through an EOI process.

**When:** Applications are open year-round.

**Website:** <https://www.purvesenvirofund.org.au/funding>

## Thank You to Our Sponsors!

FINIA – the Natural Integrity Alliance for K'gari is a non-incorporated, not-for-profit umbrella organisation for its partners. As a non-incorporated organisation with no dedicated funding to support our meetings, administration, barge transfers, or accommodation, we rely on our partners to support activities on the K'gari (Fraser Island) World Heritage site. We acknowledge Fraser Coast Regional Council, Sealink – Kingfisher Bay Resort & K'gari Explorer Tours, the University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, and our outstanding contributors, volunteers and donors for their generous support.

Without this generosity, FINIA's activities would not be possible.

*Thank you*



Visitors to K'gari are reminded to 'Be dingo-safe!' at all times:

- Always stay close (within arm's reach) of children and young teenagers
- Always walk in groups and carry a stick.
- Camp in fenced areas where possible
- Do not run. Running or jogging can trigger a negative dingo interaction.
- Never feed dingoes.
- Lock up food stores and iceboxes (even on a boat)
- Never store food or food containers in tents, and
- Secure all rubbish, fish, and bait.