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Summer Edition Newsletter issue 52 - December 2022

MRL win major local Environmental Award

Mooloolah River Landcare are very proud to have been awarded 'Environmental Leader of the Year' at the Fisher Community Awards Ceremony. This year Andrew Wallace, the local Member for Fisher, launched The Fisher Environmental Awards to celebrate the work of local residents and groups working to protect our unique environment.

Coordinator Karen Schmidt accepted the Award, on behalf of MRL, at an Awards night in October. A great achievement for our community, members and supporters; and testament to the hard work delivered by the team and our dedicated volunteers.



Karen congratulates Leesa on taking on the MRL Coordinator role

Enviro champions leading by example

By Sonia Isaacs

ENVIRONMENTAL community group championing Mooloolah River Landcare (MRL) have recently been acknowledged as 'Environmental Leader of the Year'.

The registered non-profit land care group has been kicking some serious goals over the last few years, and will be starting as a small community grassroots initiative in the late 1890s. It was inspired by a dynamic volunteer-powered organisation that delivers a thriving native plant nursery, Sunshine Coast Biocontrol facility, numerous community educational programs and conservation projects.



MRL Coordinator Karen Schmidt accepting the award on behalf of the group with Andrew Wallace MP.

"The group, which is made up of enthusiastic community members, nature lovers and environmental advocates were recognised at the 2022 Fisher Community Awards with a newly created special category award presented by Andrew Wallace MP. Mr Wallace told GCM News that MRL did tremendous work to educate and empower the community, while also protecting the Mooloolah waterways."

"From Wicked Weed Warriors, Carp Trap Challenges, and Bug Club, Mooloolah River Landcare inspire all generations to play their part in preserving and protecting our pristine environment. They can be very proud of their Native Plant Nursery, Biocontrol facility, and all the great work done by expert staff and passionate volunteers," he said.

"MRL coordinator Karen Schmidt said the team was absolutely 'humbled to win' and it was a great tribute to the efforts of the MRL team and wonderful to know others recognised the work the group have been doing to improve the Mooloolah River catchment."

"The other finalists, Watt and Poppo who are making a substantial difference to coastal environments and marine reserves, should also be equally as proud to see MRL. With environmental work, it's

everyone's efforts combined that will make a lasting change," she said.

Currently approximately 150 volunteers help with various tasks and projects, with around 50 who attend on a regular weekly basis. Volunteers come from all areas and backgrounds including retirees, parents, students, plant enthusiasts, and some who are just keen to socialise on a weekly basis while doing something productive.

MRL manages a flourishing native plant nursery and a biocontrol facility at their Glenview Headquarters which are open to the public for sales and tours. The group also run education events, and many hands-on/long-term projects in the catchment such as seed collecting, water monitoring, macro-invertebrate monitoring, and revegetation projects.

One of their latest environmental ventures is a good they have set for the following 12 months descriptively called '20,000 More!', where the facility will seek to produce 20,000 more native plants, and 10,000 more biocontrol agents for time voted control than the previous year, in a bid to make an even bigger impact.

The team are also very excited about their most recently funded project 'TreeSustainers', which has received funding support from the Queensland



The Mooloolah River Landcare Team.

Government's Community Sustainability Action grant program.

Karen said the project sought to promote community climate awareness and provide opportunities for meaningful climate action through workshops, field products, classroom activities, planting days, and 20,000 more trees going into the ground. The native plant nursery will also be issuing carbon sequestration certificates with the trees for the public to directly see the positive impact made by each tree.

"We have found that while many in our community are keen to act, they're uncertain as to what they can do to make a difference. TreeSustainers fills this gap by providing information and support for action. TreeSustainers focuses on community and trees, for when our communities plant trees they help reduce the impacts of climate change in our local area - and around the world," said Karen.

Mooloolah River Landcare is located at 2010 Creech Creek, Glenview. To find out more or to get involved call 0484 8071 or follow their Facebook page Mooloolah River Landcare or visit their website at mrl.org.au



Leesa Bostel with Mooloolah River Landcare volunteers.

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Plant of the season— *Myrsine variabilis* (Muttonwood) purple fruit



Glasshouse Country & Maleny News provided a 2 page spread on the Award in the November edition

Nursery opening: Mon. Tues. Wed.—8.00am to 4.00pm Sat.—9.00am to 1.00pm

Volunteer days: Monday & Tuesday **MRL phone:** (07) 5494 5074

Nursery email: nursery@mrwl.org.au **General email:** coordinator@mrwl.org.au



Coordinator's corner

The MRL team has undergone some changes: meeting the demands of extended nursery hours, peak bug harvest time and new project work. A big welcome to new coordinator Leesa Beutel who has a Business & Environmental Management degree, is a self confessed bird and bug nerd, and is happiest with camera in hand. Leesa is already familiar with MRL and is well placed to support the team and the organisation.

We are very sad to say goodbye to Karen Schmidt, MRL coordinator of 3 years, as she pursues other opportunities with her family. Karen displayed dedication and leadership as she worked closely with the extended MRL community, the committee, volunteers and staff to help make MRL the vibrant organisation that it is. We will miss having Karen around and wish her and her family well.



Nursery musings

MRL, sadly, says farewell to Gemma who has taken on a role with Qld. Parks and Wildlife Service. Sincere thanks for the very positive impact you have made to operations Gemma.

It's getting hot in here! MRL's nursery staff are excited as heating mats have been installed in the propagation tunnel. It might be hard to imagine, as you read this on a steamy summer's day, but plant production really slows down in winter. The nursery will now produce a higher volume of plants over winter, by applying warmth directly to the propagation mix, providing better quantities and variety of seedlings in early spring, when many of our members are keen to plant.



Ally and Gemma prepare foam insulation (left) and the installation completed (right)

Fast Facts:

New role changes at MRL

- ◆ Coordinator—Leesa Beutel
- ◆ Nursery Manager—Marc Russell
- ◆ Project Officer—Jessica Raintree
- ◆ Catchment Officer—Francesca Greggery
- ◆ Biocontrol Assistant—Tiki Philp
- ◆ Nursery Assistants (Saturday)—Ally Hayes-Hatten & Ann Clark
- ◆ Administration and Accounts—Karen Meers

Fast Facts:

- ◆ The nursery heat mats are proudly supported by the Sunshine Coast Council's grants program
- ◆ The grant funded the purchase of:
 - heating mats
 - associated equipment
 - repair/upgrade of an adjacent outdoor power point by a licensed electrician
- ◆ the foil heating mat is laid on foam insulation, with poly sheeting protecting the heating foil elements
- ◆ heating mats use negligible electricity and will result in more native plants available for our community
- ◆ a big thank you to Coolum Community Native Nursery who inspired us and provided us with advice

Small trees for the garden

Eucalyptus curtisii, Plunkett Mallee - Ideal ornamental small gum for coastal areas or inland, with small size and shape. Listed as Threatened. Scattered distribution across SE Qld.

Photo: Gemma Cotterell



Abrophyllum ornans, Native hydrangea - Fast-growing, open and typically found in shaded, moist gullies. Separate male and female plants. Edge/pioneer in rainforest restoration.

Photo: Alan Fairley, Australian Plants Society NSW



Banksia spinulosa, Hairpin Banksia - Upright shrub/small tree with serrated leaves. Many popular nursery cultivars have been bred from this species including 'Birthday Candles'.

Photo: Ally Hayes-Hatten



Davidsonia pruriens, Davidson's plum - Long foliage with hairs that can be irritating. Popular bush food plant. Its slender growth habit is ideal for urban and suburban settings.

Photo: Gemma Cotterell



Fast Facts:

The MRL nursery has more than 160 species for sale, with more than 7,000 tubes growing or available.

[CURRENT NURSERY STOCKLIST](#)

Plunkett Mallee

- ◆ To 5m, adaptable, part to full sun
- ◆ Multi-stem, responds to pruning
- ◆ Creamy white blossoms, late spring and attracts bees

Native Hydrangea

- ◆ 3 to 8m, part-sun to part-shade with moist soil preferred
- ◆ Small perfumed flowers in early summer followed by purple berries
- ◆ Attractive to birds
- ◆ Can be pruned and kept as a shrub or grown as an indoor plant

Hairpin Banksia

- ◆ To 3m, hardy, full sun, well-drained position
- ◆ Multi-stemmed with rich golden orange flowers that are highly perfumed in autumn to winter
- ◆ Sunny position provides best flowering

Davidson's plum

- ◆ To 10m (often smaller in gardens) part-sun to part-shade, moist, rich soil preferred
- ◆ Narrow form—great for gardens
- ◆ Fruit is tangy and best used in jams and drinks

In other news

MRL welcomes Francesca and Jess as our new Catchment Officers undertaking the Drinking Water Supply Protection Program in partnership with Seqwater. If you would like to know more about this project and how to get involved, contact Francesca on 0432 529 556 or email:



catchmentofficer@mrwl.org.au

Eligible landholders must reside within Ewen Maddock Catchment and have a willingness to actively participate in projects to enhance their property and provide a community wide benefit of safe water quality.

Bugs to the Rescue...And Rescuing Bugs (supported by the Queensland Government, Office of Chief Scientist, Engaging Science grant): A fantastic year of citizen science activities thanks to this grant. The last community event funded was a 3 day invertebrate habitat study of the



Mooloolah River National Park.

Since the launch of Bug Club in April, exciting finds include the Wallum Sedge-clicker and Naskreckis Bush Katydid—both are great records! Bug Club is especial-

ly designed for amateur or budding entomologists; getting outside and marvelling at the fascinating world of invertebrates with fellow insect enthusiasts! The club citizen scientists collect field-based data on insect populations, conduct pollinator surveys, etc. The aim is to inspire a new generation of natural scientists and insect ambassadors to help care for the land. MRL is currently looking for corporate sponsorship, donations or partnerships to help us continue this program in 2023. Contact Jessica if you think you can help.

MRL's Macroinvertebrate Monitoring Program has another round of Unity Water- CommUnity funding! This means the continuation of community healthy waterways engagement activities. Conducting macroinvertebrate studies (identifying which waterbugs are in the water) is a way to monitor river health. Stay tuned for the announcement of a series of community macroinvertebrate events in the New Year.

Fast Facts:

The Ewen Maddock Water Supply Protection Program aims to:

- ◆ Empower & assist landholders to make positive change on property
- ◆ Financially support landholders to undertake projects such as
 - revegetation works
 - weed management of transformer weeds (Madeira, Cat's Claw and Chinese Celtis)
 - erosion repairs and controls
 - fencing for livestock

Bugs to the Rescue 2022:

- ◆ Launch of the Sunshine Coast Big Butterfly Count
- ◆ Bug Club field science program which has observed 193 'Bugs' from 130 species (including 30 different species of spider)
- ◆ Hosted another successful Bug Day Out
- ◆ Special events included: 'Citizen Science Saturday' surveying invertebrates at Ferny Forest for the Great Southern Bioblitz and "Get to know your local butterflies and bees" morning celebrating Pollinator week

Community healthy waterways engagement activities will continue until the end of July 2023. Remember that the health of our river also reflects the health of our forest riparian zones.

Photo Gallery

Beerwah's Hinterwonderland 12 November 2022



MRL Volunteer Christmas Party 14 December 2022



Wishing you a very
Happy New Year



A big thank you to each of our volunteers.

The MRL nursery team: Francesca, Ally, Suzanne & Gemma.

Plant of the season:

Myrsine variabilis — Muttonwood

Myrsine...from Greek name used by Dioscorides for the common myrtle

variabilis...for the variable leaf shape

Previously *Rapanea variabilis*. Small tree (6-12 m) which can grow to create a dense screen. May sucker from roots if damaged. Found in dry rainforest & littoral rainforest.

Image: Gemma Cotterell



Muttonwood Fast Facts:

- ◆ Known for its variable leaf shape as well as variable habitat
- ◆ Food plant for white-banded line-blue butterfly
- ◆ Profuse blue-purple fruit attractive to fruit doves, lorikeets, fig birds
- ◆ Important dry rainforest regeneration species

Hinterwonderworld Display



Hinterwonderland at Beerwah on the 12th of November was a fantastic community event. MRL manned

- a Nursery Stall where our expert nursery staff were kept very busy fielding enquiries and
- an interactive Macroinvertebrate Stall which was very popular with the kids

The floral display of local natives

The MRL stalls showcased :

- ◆ everything plants, and promoted memberships and volunteer opportunities
- ◆ our community river education projects and how we can use “bugs” to give us a snapshot of the health of the Mooloolah River

MRL's participation was funded through our Unitywater program

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