



Newsletter
**Moreton Island Protection
Committee Inc.**

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Wildfire started by lightning



Wildfire – Photo from entrance to Blue Lagoon carpark. 22nd Feb 2018

A lightning strike near blue Lagoon started a wildfire which burnt for over a week. Areas burnt were mostly to the North of the Bulwer to Ocean beach road. During the day the intensity of the fire flared but then reverted to a cool fire during the night. This difference of fire intensity results in a greater diversity of plants species.

Since the fire there have been good regular rains which has meant a lush regeneration of plant communities. *Banksia aemula* (Wallum Banksia) seedlings germinated on tracks where they would be trampled and so some have been collected and potted at the North Point nursery by volunteers.

Annual General Meeting

1 pm Thurs 20th September

Toowong Community Meeting Place, Josling St, Toowong.

Doors will open at 10 am to set up. Bring a plate to share before the meeting. Tea and coffee provided (note there is no street number – east of Perrin park in BCC depot)

Moreton Island Protection Committee Inc.

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Executive Members

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Secretary: Pam Schindler

Treasurer: Peta Frampton

Executive Committee:

Helen Sutherland *minutes secretary*

Annette Allen

Leonie Hegvold

Greg Curtis

Janet Dovers

Statement of Aims

1. To promote the preservation of Moreton Island as a natural area to be managed for public recreation and enjoyment provided always that the recreational uses are consistent with conservation aims.
2. To foster the conservation of the vegetation, fauna and natural features of Moreton.
3. To facilitate public awareness and appreciation of Moreton Island as a natural area and encourage support for its preservation and management in accordance with these objects.
4. To co-operate with, or promote co-operation by any means with and among persons, trusts, corporations, firms, associations, institutions, governments, instrumentalities or government, municipal authorities and other bodies in the Commonwealth or its Territories or elsewhere for the purpose of carrying out any object of the organisation.
5. To oppose any development or usage of Moreton Island which is contrary to the preservation and good management of the island in accordance with these objects.
6. Generally, to take such lawful action as it considers necessary or appropriate in the interests of promoting the preservation and good management of Moreton Island in accordance with these objects.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Moreton Island Protection Committee or its members.

Contributions to this newsletter are welcome, but the editors accept no responsibility for alterations made to articles.

Edited by Alan Gennings, Peta Frampton

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Reply from The Minister

Following the re-election of the Government a new Minister for Environment and Great Barrier Reef, The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP was appointed.

MIPC wrote to the Minister to congratulate her to her new position. In the letter we stated "MIPC also has concerns for political ramifications for the island – such as amendments to *The Nature Conservation Act 1992*. These amendments have the potential to negatively impact National Parks by allowing private leases, tourist operations and commercial activities which might be attractive for financial gain, but not necessarily in the best interests of the National Park."

The Ministers response written by her Chief of Staff on 16th May stated, "The Nature Conservation Act 1992 also provides for development of privately owned, low impact, purpose-built ecotourism on national parks. The implementation Framework- Ecotourism National Parks provides a robust and transparent model for the assessment and approval of proposals for ecotourism facilities on national park. The Queensland Government is committed to encouraging environmental best-practice ecotourism. Nature-based experiences delivered by accredited tourism operators committed to and passionate about unique areas that showcase and contribute to the preservation of the natural landscapes and the cultural heritage and wildlife of Queensland's protected areas."

Previously when we had sought Right to Information regarding applications for tourist ventures within the National Park we were essentially prevented from finding

out any details of the applications due to information being "commercial in confidence". We are aware the National Parks Association has serious concerns about private developments within National Parks with in Qld.

Watch this space!

Email List

MIPC now has a functioning email list courtesy of Google groups. If you received a hard copy of this newsletter but not a recent email, then advise us by email to

mipc@moretonisland.org.au

We will continue to send members a hard copy as this the best format to keep members and their friends informed. Two newsletters a year is now the aim, so costs will be nominal. We print extra hard copies to distribute on the MICat, as it is important to get our messages out.

Membership list.

The expiry date of your membership according to our records is printed on the address label of your newsletter.

Donations to MIPC

MIPC welcomes your tax deductible donations. These are used solely for conservation activities. Membership is not tax deductible. If you would like to contribute more please add a tax deductible donation with your membership payment.

EFT Details

BSB: 633 000 Bendigo Bank
Account #: 141368456
Acct Name: Moreton Island Protection Committee.

Enter your name in the reference box. Please notify us by email, phone or mail of your payment. Make it clear to us how much of your payment is to be used for forward membership payment and how much is a tax deductible donation.

Cane Toads found

The Brisbane City Council sponsored Steve Austin to work with his cane toad detecting dogs between 5th and 10th April this year.

On the second day Becky found a toad located in the under-struts of bins at the Cowan transfer station. Presumably the toad was brought to the island with the bins. After the oil spill (2009) two toads were found at The Wrecks campground and were thought to have also been brought over with rubbish bins.



Cane Toad detecting dog Becky in front of the bin where she found a cane toad in the bin strut at Cowan transfer station. Photo 6th April 2018

On the 5th day the team was notified by a camper at CB15 that they had killed and buried a toad that they had brought over in their camping gear. They were uncertain where it was buried but Becky was able to find the carcass to confirm that it was a cane toad. The camper from northern NSW would not have known Moreton Is. is cane toad free without the portable sign that the Brisbane City Council has placed at the entrance to the MICat terminal.

Searches were conducted at Tangalooma, Cowan, Bulwer, The Cape, Eagers Creek and NPWS campsites between. Water samples were also collected for testing for presence of Cane Toad DNA.

We believe a greater effort must be put into reducing the risk of toads stowing away in bins being delivered to Koorngal, Buwer and Cowan also.

The entry point for cane toads to Moreton Island is via the MICAT ferry. It has already been identified that cane toads can travel in vehicles, firewood, camping gear and building materials going to the island.

It is obvious that rubbish bins to the Waste Transfer Stations are a high risk. Having a Cane Toad Detection Dog check everything going to Moreton Island would appear to be a common sense approach to maintaining the island's cane toad free status and avoid "the tipping point".

Unless something more is done Moreton Island will

eventually succumb to the cane toad invasion and subsequent decimation of its' wildlife.

Thanks to Trevor Hassard from Tangalooma for his enthusiastic support, Tangalooma Resort for providing accommodation and an educational platform for the campaign at the resort and the Moreton Rangers for their co-operation. Thanks to the Brisbane City Council for funding the regular Cane Toad Detection programme.

Greg Curtis

Greg's report is at

www.moretonisland.org.au/reports.htm

Bitou Bush control

A team from Biosecurity Queensland, Dept of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry visits Moreton Island twice a year to assist Parks with surveillance and management for Bitou Bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *Rotundata*). There are a number of historical infestation locations that are reinspected for re-emergence and a general survey of the island is conducted for any new infestations. Quad bikes are used to access the foreshore.

In March 2017 two small seedlings were found on the foreshore just south of Rous Battery. In March this year a single flowering plant was found on the foreshore about 200 m west of the vehicle access road to North Point. The next survey is planned for Oct/Nov. The team is interested to hear of any suspected sightings. Contact parks or MIPC with any sightings. Bitou Bush has taken over large areas of foreshore in Northern NSW where it was used to rehabilitate sand mined areas.



New Bitou Bush leaves are covered in fine hairs which can be used to distinguish it from wide leaved Geebung and Singapore daisy.

Pandanus Dieback

In March 2017 large populations of the leaf-hopper *Jamella australiae* were found on Pandanus in Bulwer and at North Point. The insect has been responsible for significant mortality of Pandanus on the Sunshine and Gold Coasts and Stradbroke Island. The centre of the infestation appeared to be at North Point where a wild-fire and a controlled burn had left mature Pandanus stranded without neighbouring vegetation. A Pandanus at the Blue Lagoon carpark was also found to be infested later in the year.

Leaf-hoppers belong to the Order Hemiptera which includes the bugs, the aphids and cicadas. Once a population is established the success of new generations is significantly enhanced. There are 5 juvenile nymph stages. Early nymphs do not have fully formed mouth parts and feed on the sugary honey dew secreted by later nymph stages and adults. Egg rafts are white, disc shaped containing 50 to 80 eggs. Leafhopper adults are 8-10 mm long.



Leafhopper on Pandanus – Adults arrowed. Nymphs white and fluffy. Photo by Joel Fostin

Pandanus dieback was first recorded on the Gold Coast in 1993 and the Sunshine Coast in 1995. Mortality rates of up to 45% in two years were recorded. Honey dew secretions that collect in the base of the leaf-sheath lead to proliferation of fungal pathogens. This fungal rot spreads resulting in live tissue damage, death of the growth head and finally death of the plant.

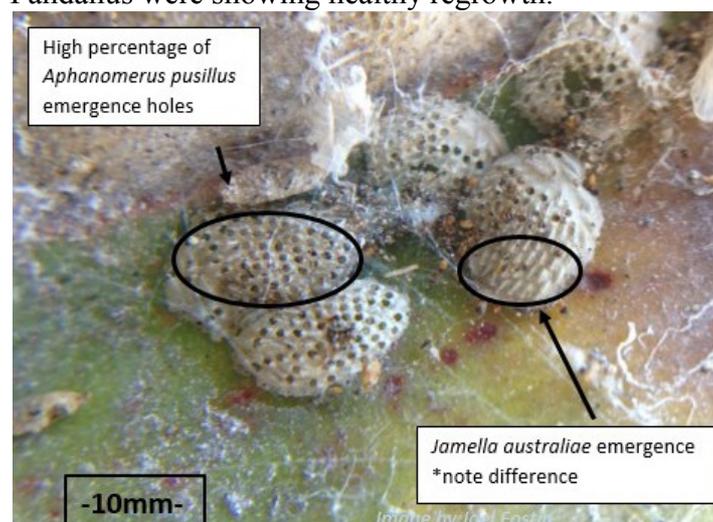
It is thought that the leaf-hopper *Jamella australiae*, a native of North Queensland, was introduced and spread into Southern Qld and Northern NSW through movement of potted Pandanus.

In North Queensland the impact of the naturally occurring leaf-hopper does not cause noticeable mortality as these insect populations are controlled by two egg parasitoid wasps, *Aphanomerus pusillus* and *Ooencytus sp.* These wasps complete their life cycle within one egg ~ adults are less than 2 mm. It is possible to identify the emergent holes left by the wasps when hatching.

Managements actions available are:

- biological control using egg parasitoid wasps
- stripping dead leaves from affected leaf sheaths
- systemic insecticides

Biological control: Two species of parasitoid wasps from North Qld were released in 1998 in the Noosa Heads National Park and Burleigh Heads National Parks. Only *Aphanomerus pusillus* established successfully. *A pusillus* has also been used to control an Australian insect species *Siphanta acuta* which had decimated forests on some Hawaiian Islands. This species comes from the same family as the leaf-hopper, family *Flatidae*. So although not Species specific the parasite is Family specific, though it may turn out to be Species specific given there is some suggestion in the literature that there are differences within *A pusillus*. Last year *A pusillus* wasp activity was seen at North Point and it was anticipated that eventually wasp populations would build thus controlling the leaf-hopper populations. By May this year some of the affected Pandanus were showing healthy regrowth.



Leaf hopper egg rafts showing the difference between emergence hole of nymphs and parasitic wasps. Photo by Joel Fostin.

Stripping dead leaves from affected leaf sheafs:

At North Point in September 2017, students from Nudgee College striped affected leaves from Pandanus

that were still alive, encouraged by Ranger Joel Mulcahy on site. Progress was slow as care was needed to avoid being spiked by the leaves. Stripping and disposal of affected leaves can reduce numbers of leaf-hoppers and reduce the exposure of the plant to fungal rot. Logistics prevented us from destroying the leaves on site. In May 2018 the plants that were striped were recovering well.

Systemic insecticides: This method has not been used in the current outbreak. Applying the recommended Confidor systemically poisons sap, pollen and nectar feeding insects as well as the targeted leaf-hopper. It poses a threat to the trees by providing an entry point for fungus and disrupts the plant's vascular connectivity. It is also a highly labour intensive method.

Source: *Joel Fostin provided MIPC with two comprehensive articles on Pandanus dieback. One of these reports by can be found at www.moretonisand.org.au/reports.htm*

Note: It is quite common for mealy bugs (wooly aphid) to occur on Pandanus. They also produce a sticky substance that attracts ants which protect them. The sticky substance also promotes growth of sooty mould. Mealy bugs can affect the health of Pandanus but does not generally kill them.

CTO permits renewed.

In March CTO operators had their permits renewed for 12 months with their current conditions thus maintaining the status quo for CTO's in the short term.



Two dolphins synchronised swimming at the Cape. Photo Easter 2018 Neill Butler. Volunteers spend a lot of time "being there " and so often experience unique wildlife encounters.

Total Plantings at The Big Gully plus

2018	Casuarina equisetifolia	Pandanus tectorius	Other	Total
Total 2017	66			66
Total 2016	29	100	148	277
Total 2015	230	134	192	556
Total 2014	487	28	74	589
Total to date	812	262	414	1488

Plantings at Casuarina Grove

2018	Casuarina equisetifolia	Pandanus tectorius	Bsnksia integrifolia	Gound cover	Total
11-13May	50				50
2017	37				37
2016	105	14	55		174
Total to date	192	14	55		261

Plantings at Cape carpark

2018 (nil)	Casuarina equisetifolia	Pandanus tectorius	Bsnksia integrifolia	Gound cover	Total
2016	120	40			

Plantings at North Point

2018	Casuarina equisetifolia	Pandanus tectorius	Bsnksia integrifolia	Tuckero	Total
9 Mar-	24			1	25
23 Mar-		15			15
21 Apr-	55	15		3	73
11 May-	150	8			158
2017	167		25	10	202
Total to date	396	38	25	14	473

Park Volunteers Hours Jan to Jun 2018

	No persons	Weeding hours	Rubbish hours	Propagation hours	Total hours
23-25 Feb	5	11		40	51
9-11 Mar	9				
23-25 Mar	9	41	3	37	81
1 Apr	6		1	15	22
16-17 Apr	1	9			9
20-22 Apr	8	6	11	46	63
11-13 May	18	81	5	81	167
20 May	1	6			
Totals	51	154	20	219	444
2014 totals	101	277	28	635	1041
2015 totals	118	507	0	646	1153
2016 totals	130	429	121	491	1041
2017 totals	149	750	101	788	1304

Whats on ... !!!!

Aug 24-26 Volunteers at Blue Lagoon (limited places)

Aug 31-Sep 2 Volunteers at Blue Lagoon

Sep 14 - 16 Volunteers at Blue Lagoon

Sep 20 Thurs AGM 1pm. Rooms open 10 am

Oct 19 - 21 Volunteers at Blue Lagoon

Saturday departure If unable to come on Friday it is sometimes possible to come on Saturday. Please nominate at least 2 weeks in advance so we can confirm availability of a vehicle for your transfer to Blue Lagoon.

Volunteer nominations

****Please book at least 1 week in advance****

Alan 0428783781 (text only please) *or email*

alan@moretonexperience.com

call MIPC's answering service on 33211463

DEPART from 14 Howard Smith Drive, Port of Bris.

Friday 8.30 am Arrive by 7.50am for orderly loading of luggage. Meet at the back of the Caltex truck stop in Howard Smith Drive where your luggage can be transferred into a vehicle.

Sat 8.30 am Your luggage will travel on the deck of the MICat.

At the MIPC ticket office do not pay for your MICat fare as your fare is to be paid by account.

Parking MICAT charges \$15 per day for parking. Car parking on the street is recommended. Do NOT park where there are yellow lines.

If parking on the street, it is OK to drive in to drop your luggage and then park on the street. Street park past the MICat terminal as for all return trips your luggage can travel in a vehicle and the vehicle will turn right into

Howard Smith Drive to unload.

RETURN departure from The Wrecks 4.30pm Sunday.

BYO sleeping bag, food, plates, mug, cutlery and esky. Camp kitchen and tents with stretchers provided.

Volunteer work at Blue Lagoon

This season work will include planting out at the Cape, propagation at the North Point nursery; weeding Prickly Pear & Mossman River Grass and rubbish. This season's work is by volunteers and MIPC.

Too busy to volunteer? - a tax deductible donation to support volunteers is great way to contribute.

Volunteer Costs

Volunteers for 3 day trips are required to pay an annual fee of \$50 as a contribution towards ferry fares for the year. The one off annual contribution is required when nominating for first trip. Volunteers who return within 12 months can do so free of charge. Volunteers attending for 3 days work for 9 hours.

Volunteers for the two day trip are required to pay a one off annual fee of \$80. Subsequent trips within the year will require payment of \$40 for each trip. It is only possible for volunteers attending for just two days to complete 6 hours work. A special 90 min return trip is required to transfer volunteers arriving on Saturday. Thus MIPC asks 2 day volunteers to pay a larger portion of their transport costs to attend.

Recreational Weekends at Blue Lag

Prefer not to volunteer? You are welcome to come on a volunteer weekend. A trip to the Cape is included. Cost \$180.

Membership form

Name

Address.....

..... Post code

Email

Phone..... Mob

I consent to my photo, taken during MIPC activities, and my name being published in the public domain (cross out if you do not wish photo of you to be published)

Signed _____ Date ____ / ____ / ____

Annual fee \$10 Household \$15 Pens./Conc. \$5

\$..... for years membership.

\$..... as a tax deductible donation;

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

The MIPC Public Fund is a public fund listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1.1 of subsection 30-55(1) of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*

Circle method of payment;

EFT transfer cheque money order cash

BSB 633 000 Bendigo Bank Acct # 141368456

Acct Name Moreton Island Protection Committee.

Please enter your name in the EFT reference box.

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