

## FIDO Volunteers Bush Regeneration Diary Eurong — 9<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017



The team and a new garden changing the Eurong landscape

### A week of accomplishments

- Established a new garden of native plants at Eurong Resort transforming area to produce a more natural landscape amongst the built environment.
- All of the 200 plants planted out in the garden and around the busiest hub on Fraser Island (Kgari) were raised in the QPWS Eurong Nursery with assistance of FIDO volunteers
- 500 plants were potted up in the nursery as FIDO volunteers progressively expand the nursery capacity and variety of stock on hand that are suitable for residential areas.
- Continued weeding east of the Eurong toilet block and removing Brazilian nightshade, Pangola grass and Siratro planting more plants to suppress weeds.
- Thoroughly purged the declared Green zone inside the dingo fence from the back of the toilet block
- The group contributed 301 hours of on-ground voluntary work. This takes no account of travel preparatory or administrative time contributed.

## Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> March The Advance Party

The advance party of Suzanne Wilson, Su Dawson and the Fearless Leader made a pleasant uneventful trip from Mt Coolum to Rainbow Beach for a early lunch before rolling on to the ferry and catching a perfect low tide to travel up the beach.

At Eurong the first port of call was the nursery where some additional nursery supplies including perlite, pots and fertilizer were unloaded and an assessment made of the nursery stock before heading to the Resort and settling into our third floor apartment where we could look across to the back of *Talinga*. We were able to consult with Greg Hilton about the siting of the proposed new garden between the Tradewinds block and the administration Restaurant block. The originally proposed garden could interfere with a lot of underground infrastructure including lines for the disposal of treated sewage effluent. The alternative site was the other end of Tradewinds where there are no effluent lines to worry about. An inspection suggested that the site leant itself to a crescent shaped garden.

An inspection was then held of the Green Zone area where we later identified Su's mystery plant as *Breynia*. The Su went weeding and Suzanne went seed collecting while FL worked on Emails until a wonderful dinner of salmon rice and salads.

**Hours worked: 10**



**Su checking out and marking weed infestations to return to later.**



**Coral Creeper Irrigated and enriched by treated effluent ran amok outside the dingo fence.**

## Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> March The Advance Party

The formula for the day was fairly simple. From 7 to 12 Su worked on the area from the tennis court to the dingo grid eliminating and emergent weeds and any strays missed in previous sweeps of the area. The work was very systematic and thorough

FL and Suzanne went to the nursery and spent the morning cleaning out the potted plant of weeds. Many had large begonias, or grasses and other weeds that had to be cut out. FL sprayed the floor of the hardening up area with glyphosate before setting up a pallet under the top bench to place as many pandanus germinants as possible to free up bench space. The work also identified ways to create more bench space and the need for some repairs to the irrigation system. During this period many plants were removed from the nursery to be given a new home in Eurong village. While most went to the site of the new Resort garden, some that were too large a species for that garden site were found homes round the village such as beside the drainage line.

After lunch and a short recovery time in the horizontal the trio went back to work with FL and Suzanne undertaking some planting neat the laundry and adjacent to the tennis court and drainage line. Some volunteer plants were salvaged from the bus was area including several casuarinas and taken to the nursery



Su undaunted and alone in her favourite patch of bush continued on her mission of eliminating all weeds from the western end of her declared Green Zone

**Hours worked: 20**



**Black Breasted Button Quail platelettes**

**Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> March**

**(a) The Advance Party**

It was hot and dry. Unsurprisingly Su undaunted and alone worked in her favourite patch of bush continuing on her mission of eliminating all weeds from the western end of her declared Green Zone. Suzanne went to the Nursery and continued sorting through the stock and tidying it all up. Fearless Leader went to work on the shed concentrating on replacing rusty nails with galvanized screws. He had thought that 100 countersunk wood screws would fix all of the loose palings. However the job will require twice that number of screws. He then sprayed the area of the proposed demonstration garden to minimize the emergence of grass when the garden is established.

**(a) Arrival of the Main Party**

The main party arrived at 3.00 pm and after settling into Talinga went on an orientation tour starting in Easton Street bush opposite Weerona then passing into the Green Zone that Su had just cleared. They then moved into the Resort area starting with the demonstration gardens at the back of the tennis courts before moving into the area where the new garden is to

be established. Then will TAHKA the group surveyed the Residential Valley to learn of the progress and remaining problems there. Finally they were introduced to the Nature Walk before returning to Talinga just in time for Happy Hour. Throughout this time Su worked on between Roundabout and the Dingo fence.

**Hours worked: 30**



**The Team at the Harold Charles Barracks, Lake Allom**

**Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> March**

**Easton Street and Lake Allom**

It was determined that this day had the best tide of the week to go to Lake Allom. Therefore it was resolved to work a split shift — taking off after morning smoko, having lunch at Harold Charles Barracks and returning on the low tide to put in a couple of hours work in the cool of the afternoon.

The morning shift began with Maree taking the main team down Easton Street to clear the area between Talinga and the toilet block of weeds. The main weeds found and targeted were Brazilian nightshade and Siratro. It was a busy chatty morning with lots of laughs as the group cleared out about 60 metres in a wide strip of bush.

Fearless Leader took Suzanne back to the nursery where she continued the big tidy up and between dodging the automatic sprinklers and a very light shower she assessed the state of the irrigation system to determine which nozzles were working.

Back at the shed F.L. prepared many drums of glyphosate while waiting for the conditions to dry out. When he thought it was OK he discovered he had to wait a little longer. He started work just outside the dingo fence gate opposite Weerona and worked to spray as much of the area outside the fence as had been reached by the treated effluent. The main target species here were also Siratro and Brazilian Nightshade that were running amok. His work was stopped though by a light sprinkle of rain so he turned his attention to other weeds and manually weeded inside the fence.



**Jan dealing with Coral Creeper under a Cypress.**

Su set out to establish sites for planting pandanus and other plants in open areas between Talinga and the dingo fence. This will help utilize some of the large specimens filling the nursery and suppressing weeds and grass in the Talinga precinct. She then turned to weeding the overgrown garden with the woody pear tree.

After smoko while lunch items were being sorted out the three men wrestled the heavy delver into the back of Tahka and loaded the supplies and other equipment to go up to Lake Allom.

The run along the beach was pleasant but F.L. noted that all of the rocks at Poyungan and Yidney had been exposed by the heavy seas in just one week. Seven days earlier they were covered in sand and he had he driven right over them.

After a relaxed lunch at Lake Allom the group made a return on a lower tide but decided to look in at the Happy Valley dump to assess how some of the mature trees at the nursery might

be used to screen of the dump from the road. However before we could reach the dump a car pulled up. Gemma Cronin had recognized Fearless Leader. Her car was full with daughter son-in-law and children. There was a very friendly and supportive exchange and Gemma and her family would like to be involved in future FIDO work programs because she now lives on the island. She will be notified in advance of any work parties FIDO is sending to the island. It was a very fortuitous encounter.

Back in Eurong by 3.30 the group went to work. Because Fearless Leader was spraying outside the Dingo Fence near Easton Street the main team turned its attention to weeding and cleaning up the Demonstration gardens and worked until 5.30

**Hours worked: 45**



**Suzanne and Su sorting out weed problems at Talinga**

## **Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> March**

### **The Great Garden and Southern Lakes**

The morning session was the result of great planning and preparation. It started at 7.00 am and finished at 12.00. In that time a huge cooperative effort without anyone barking orders or issuing directives all came together to produce an amazing result. The plants were laid out in a general concept; the edge of the garden was defined and the soil used to build up the garden. While this was going on cardboard was being collected from the kitchen and soaked in buckets and bins.





Laying out the garden before planting

All of the time holes were being dug for the 100 plants that had been laid out. This was thought not to be dense enough so more stock was gathered from the nursery bringing up to 120 plants altogether based on the number of pots. Suzanne advised that 18 species were planted in the new garden. Another seven species have been planted in other places nearby. It is already an impressive display because so much of the stock is already advanced.

All of the time someone was watering the holes and soaking the sand to overcome the water repellence resulting from the extremely dry conditions. Only then after all of these preliminary preparations been done and did the actual the planting begin.



Once work began everyone was fully engaged

While the women sat on their tails establishing each plant into its allotted and by now very well watered hole with water crystals, the males went on a hunt for brush matting to cover the cardboard blanket. They found one useful source in Problem Corner and the prunings

from the demonstration Garden but there is still much more cover of the new garden is needed to suppress weeds and to stop the couch grass from coming through.



Proud Maree with the task almost complete

It was a most satisfying and rewarding morning and is already drawing very favourable comments from staff and visitors.

Afternoon tour was a revelation of the impact of the severe dry weather. Nearby Maryborough has record its driest year yet for 2016 but the extremely dry January and February are seeing a number of trees die in the bush. The most common of these was brush box and to a lesser extent Monotocca. However there are also a few scribbly gums and Banksia on the threshold of death or already dead.



Lake Boomanjin has fallen to its lowest level in more than 50 years exposing more beach and driftwood

Lake Boomanjin was the lowest I have ever seen it and the three creeks that once flowed into it have completely dried up. More disturbing is th

fact that private vehicles have driven around the chain and on to the beach. The water in Lake Birrabeen hasn't retreated as far as Lake Boomanjin but the water levels have also dropped here.

While we were enjoying the Southern Lakes and the Dilli Village swimming hole Su continued with her plan carrying on more weeding and also some supplementary planting in the Easton Street area adjacent to Talinga.

**Hours worked = 50**

### **Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March Various Tasks in Eurong**

Various tasks were assigned to the team for the day which was hot humid and enervating turning to light showers in the late afternoon. It was so enervating that everyone was happy to opt not to go on the afternoon outing that was proposed to be a walk in and out to Wabby Lakes.

Maree and Ashleigh went on a survey of the weed problems in Singapore Alley and Residential Valley identifying tasks for the morrow.

Suzanne took Dorothy and Jan to work at the nursery. They potted up about 70 Banskia into tube stock and a similar number of Glochidions (Cheesetrees) into tubes that were pricked out of trays and planted into tubes.

The male members of the team set about planting in five additional larger plants on the terrace below the new crescent garden where their height would not be a problem. They also planted more plants in the garden beside the Laundry. After smoko Mark and John E. went on rubbish runs and gathered more brush matting material. Then the Fearless Leader returned to dealing with the weeds outside the Dingo fence. The spraying three weeks earlier had knocked back many weeds but the Coral creeper hadn't yet succumbed so another spraying was timely. He pumped out 30 litre over about 60 metres extending west of the pedestrian gate but by noon he had another 20 litres and about 45 metres to go when he felt he needed a break from the heavy work to return to it on the morrow.

**Hours worked = 50**



### **Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> March Various Tasks in Eurong**

It rained overnight. The rain was most welcome but the 11.6 mm still leaves an enormous rainfall deficit in Eurong and elsewhere on the island. It looked ominous in the morning so any thought of finishing the spraying was cancelled although it didn't rain at all during the day which remained hot and humid.

It was another day of multiple tasks. With three groups working on different parts of the village. The Nursery team of Suzanne, Ashleigh, and John E. set off early worked until 12.30 because in the flurry of activity picking them up by others was overlooked. Su had lodged some plant orders overnight and these were loaded and taken back to start filling in some blank spaces on the landscape. 34 plants were loaded to be planted.

Suzanne and Co, also measured up the nursery to see how the bench space in the hardening up area might be expanded. 170 cm of shade cloth should cover the area. There are at least five down nipples in the overhead irrigation system that need replacing. The galvanized 25 mesh on the existing benches is approx 93 cm wide. If the benches are to be extended another 5.5 metres in three sections already covered by the overhead sprinkler system. The eastern table in the shade house can be extended 1.5 metres at one end and 1.2 metres, while the western bench can be extended 2.8 metres. Four pieces of pipe and six Besser blocks were needed for each extension — 4 of 1.8 metres, 4 of 1.5 metres and 4 of 3.1 metres. An additional 3



pieces of 90 cm were needed to sit on the Besser blocks at each end. A total of 27 metres of pipe is needed cut into the right lengths and in addition to the shade cloth a minimum of 18 besser blocks.

They then got very busy with potting up 320 plants from “the tunnel” into larger pots. 160 Midyims were potted into tubes. These were from seeds planted out in October. 160 crinum lilies were potted up into 120 mm pots. During the long morning they received a very welcome visit from and Marion Anderson who were surprised at the throughput in the nurser since they saw it with FINIA less than two weeks earlier.

Back in the Resort Valley the Fearless Leader delivered the plants to Su and was then engaged for the next five hours in planting out the stock obtained from the nursery. About 10 plants were located in the bus wash area. This is one of the larger gaps in the tree line surrounding the resort. It was hot and humid and a lot of water had to be carried by buckets to ensure that the plants were well watered. The larger plants were pandanus, some creepers and a Quinine. They then turned their attention to area between the shop and the Dingo Fence where the Fearless Leader removed manually some of the regenerated Green Panic to make space for the new plants that included a large banksia five Pandanus, a mystery unidentified plant that turned up in the nursery, some fan flowers, goatsfoot creeper and Blue tongue. It is hoped to transform this entrance to the village to a more natural area as they grow taller.

Mother-of-Millions. Meanwhile Mark cleared some areas for potential planting and freed some existing plants such at Goatsfoot convolvus that were being smothered by Pangola grass.

Maree focussed on removing basket asparagus fern. It was hard but satisfying work as Maree reflected on over dinner when recalling that when she became involved Singapore Alley was over-run with Singapore Daisy and that has now been reduced to just some isolated plants.



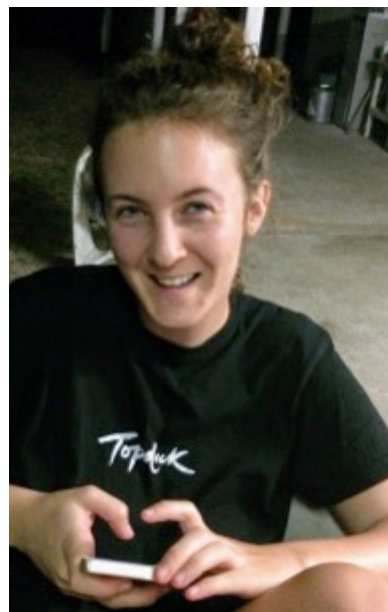
**Dorothy removed countless Mother of Millions**

Over a late lunch the Fearless Leader wilted after the heavy morning’s work and opted out of the run through to Central Station to do the walk along Wangoolba Creek to Pile Valley that everyone but he and Su enjoyed. However Su drew her satisfaction by putting in a few more hours cleaning up in the Bus wash area.



**Mark amongst the smothering Pangola**

Maree took Dorothy, Jan and Mark to Singapore Alley where Dorothy and Jan removed a million



**Ashleigh developed FIDO’s Facebook Page**

**Hours worked = 52**



**FIDO has established four Photo monitoring stations on the shores on Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) to compare Lake levels, vegetation changes and usage over extended time. This is one of three sightings from Boorangoora 3**

### **Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> March Various Tasks in Eurong Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) & Wabby Lookout**

It had rained a little overnight and the weather looked ominous but luckily it didn't rain and this allowed F.L. to finish the dispersal of another 20 litres of glyphosate on the Coral Creeper and other weeds on the northern side of the Dingo Fence bring a total of 70 litres sprayed on this area that had been left off the radar for too long but which had started to get away as a result of the treated effluent dispersal.

The roster changed today. Mark found himself helping Suzanne at the Nursery. They received a visit from the locals today, David and Marion Anderson who were surprised to discover how many plants had been shifted out of the nursery.

Su was busy as ever doing a comprehensive job of weeding. However she had some assistance from the Fearless Leader who helped her do some planting in the bus wash area. This is one of the areas where the tree-lined landscape is broken and where she aims to fill in with new planting. The other area she is working on is opposite Weerona where the Pangola has out competed all of the previous attempts to establish plants there.

Suzanne and Mark worked in the nursery and continued to pot up more small plants into tubes or larger pots and to tidy up the area in

anticipation of the next trip when it is proposed to increase the nursery bench space. They measured up the requirements to extend the area to take full advantage of the existing overhead sprinkler system.

Su and Ashleigh continued weed removal in the bus wash area until smoko after which they focussed on placing the remaining plants from the pots brought down from the nursery in the ground.

Dorothy meanwhile continued working diligently on removing fine minute seedlings of Mother-of millions and coral creeper in upper Singapore Alley.

After watching a You tube video on how to remove Basket Asparagus Fern, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYjIHxuXAHs>) John and Jan set out on FIDO's Weed maintenance circuit track purging this pest to end up in the Singapore Alley area.

After dropping off Dorothy, Jan and John at their respective sites, Maree and Ashleigh went to the Fire Station to hand pull fishbone fern but there were too many bull ants and a paper wasp nest for efficient removal and that method was aborted. Maree sprayed fishbone fern near the Fire Station David Anderson later advised that this area was sprayed three weeks earlier but there was no sign of die-back. Disturbed paper wasps caught Ashleigh unawares, but the area treated.

Marie then went to the shed and loaded up with spray while Ashleigh hitched the trailer and took the previous days bagged weeds (asparagus, coral creeper, mile-a-minute) plus Talinga domestic, bus wash weeds to the rubbish dump.

Morning tea was at at Singapore Alley with others. Later David Anderson gave Maree maps while Ashleigh spot sprayed 1m sq areas pangola grass in Singapore Alley for planting in July. 2 bags of asparagus crowns were picked up nature trail green waste (all gone now) to rubbish tip. Back at the shed the backpack sprayer was triple rinsed while Ash returned trailer to Talinga.

They returned to Singapore Alley and assisted the final weed removal- painted spurge and help carry bags of Mother of Millions and coral creeper and asparagus fern and assisted in final



weed removal- painted spurge and help carry bags of Mother of Millions and coral creeper and asparagus fern.

**Outing:** There was a lot of productive work done during the day's afternoon outing. While some water nymphs held an immersed D&M conference and a nameless person admired the statuesque backpackers the F.L. did a round of his monitoring stations taking photos of the Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) beach to show the volume of usage and the low water levels.

It was a long rough drive to the Wabby Lakes top car-park. Here there was a healthy growth of Abrus in the roundabout in the middle of the carpark — the only know outbreak of Abrus outside the Happy Valley -Yidney area but fortunately there were no flowers or seeds. The spray was missing but the base of the larger plants were located and treated by the cut the cut and paint method. The area will need to be treated again only next time the small emergent plants need to be sprayed.

Back in Eurong after a Happy (quarter) Hour at Coral Seas Suite 321 the group settled for diner at the resort restaurant. It would be the last night for half of the group. While it pleasant dinner where none of the group had to cook or wash up, the greatest joy was the thunderstorm that ended dinner. It was a tropical downpour that delivered 28 mm and left everyone feeling happy for the 200 plants we had established



**The quick walk to the Wabby Lakes lookout revealed a lake without people**

**Hours worked = 52**

Singapore Alley may now be a misnomer because the Singapore Daisy that once dominated the site has been almost completely eradicated.

**Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> March  
Various Tasks in Eurong**

There was a bouyant mood after the heavy overnight rain had delivered 28 mm of very welcome and overdue rain to Eurong. However the weather was fine and sunny in the morning.

Suzanne and Mark returned to the nursery where they continued to plant out smaller plants into larger pots to be more advanced for future working bees. They also measured up the benches with the view to extending the bench space to take full advantage of the overhead sprinkler system. During the morning they were visited by the Acting 2IC of the Eurong QPWS John Dargusch who was interested to know how QPWS staff might become more involved in the nursery

Su and Ashleigh worked on weed removal in the bus wash area and outside roundabout area as well as near the "deer farm" until smoko. FL meanwhile busied himself tidying up the shed and washing out any spray packs as well as liaising with the management and making yet another dump run before joining Su and Ashleigh for smoko and vacating their apartment. Then much energy was put into placing the last of the plants brought down from the nursery into the ground. The work had to be finished by 12 noon to get on the way back to Brisbane.

Dorothy, John and Jan spent the morning weeding the garden below Eurong Resort units. Annual weeds were removed and exotics pruned cut back away from native plantings and to provide to access to the garden along retaining wall.

Maree returned to Singapore Alley to emove (half) Mother-in-law tongue, orange honeysuckle, coral creeper etc in S.A. (bag, cut and paint). She used up diluted weed killer in cut and paint bottles on areas of pangola grass for planting in July and adjacent to native plantings/recruits e.g. pigface, dianella, beach-bean, pandanus.

After a pleasant and nostalgic farewell lunch at the BBQ in the rotunda by the tennis court of Japanese okonomiyaki omellette/pancakes. The two Johns, Jan, Su and Suzanne departed.

While others had a break, Maree picked up bags of weeds from the morning's work at resort units plus Talinga rubbish and shed rubbish delivering this to the dump. She also deliver 1 pandanus, goatsfoot, scaveolas to Dropbear backpackers resort for to place in their garden.

Back at Talinga big decisions were made and clean-up / pack up tasks assigned. Gloves and tools were washed, sorted and packed. All gear returned to shed and locked, including 2 hoses outside. Talinga stores were packed; the house was thoroughly cleaned, swept and mopped; trailer packed ready for 5:30am departure

**Hours worked = 44**

**Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> March  
Departing Eurong**

By mutual agreement the remaining quartet resolved to make a very early start departing at 5:30 am.



There was time for coffee at Elbow Point prior to catching the 6.30 am barge.

