

Fraser Island Defenders Organisation's

Diary

Bush Regeneration Week — Eurong

15th to 21st February 2015



Summary

- Very significant area of Coral Creeper infestations were dealt with by spray on the plateau above the Fire Station, near Problem Corner and west of the Public toilet Block to the dingo grid. Lesser infestations were cleared manually wherever sighted augmenting the chemical treatment areas.
- Many other weeds were also dealt with in the course of the week including Brazilian cherries (over 100 in Second Valley area), Brazilian nightshade, Singapore daisies, Easter cassia, Green panic grass, Mossman River grass, Siratro, Syngonium, Madiera Vine, 2 Umbrella Trees, Corky Passion vine, Mile-a-minute, Mother of Millions.
- New plantings were undertaken mainly in the Resort gardens and Eurong roundabout which were cleaned of weeds and carefully tended.
- The work was impeded by the approach of Cyclone Marcia. However this enabled some closer visual monitoring of actual sediment movement along the roads and in the deposition areas.
- The weed situation at Eurong continues to improve. We are on top of the problem but need to continue.
- **229 Hours were worked by the volunteers during the course of the week.**

Day 1
Sunday 15th February
Brisbane to Eurong

The trip up from Brisbane was quite uneventful. When we picked up Christian and Liz at Lake McDonald a minute away from our morning tea stop our part of 9 was complete.

It was then an express trip to Maryborough where we refuelled the vehicles and filled our tummies in Queens Park. We bathed in the historical heritage of Maryborough — centre of the access to the Gympie goldfields, the main port for the Kanaka trade, the centre for much steam engineering and the best remaining assemblage of Queensland vernacular architecture. Having feasted on the diversity of ornamentation and variations of these old wooden houses we then headed off to the ferry at Mary River Heads.



Maryborough’s Kanaka monument where many “black-birded” South Sea Islanders were landed



There was enough time at Mary River Heads to take in the views and consume a small carton of ice-creams before boarding the ferry to Wangoolba Creek that we shared with two other small 4WDs and two very large and loaded 6 x6 trucks with a water tank and new generators for Eurong Resort.

Our excitement began when we got off the ferry and had to follow those two trucks across the island to Eurong. They were cutting up the already dry road. That was exacerbated by the on-coming traffic racing Thursday Island catch a barge. Once past the Eastern Break the dry road became increasingly challenging. The first stoppage was negotiated by unloading all passengers and getting them to push. This didn’t help in the second occasion when we were required to use our bog boards. On the third occasion we needed more and deflated the tyres still further. We finally made it to Eurong with the trailer. However Su driving TAHKA got through with no problems. It was a very pleasant sociable night with Happy Hour flowing into dinner with hardly a break in conversations until bed time.

Hours worked on the field: Total 0

Day 2
Monday 16th February

Weeding Eurong and Beach trip to Maheno

The day began at 7.00 am when the group set off on an hour plus orientation of Eurong and identifying weeds that are the principal target species. Beginning at the shed we learnt that the gloves and tool belts and several hand tools were missing. Probably three plastic storage boxes. This was both disappointing and also an impediment to hand weeding that ensued later. It raises a question of trust for the equipment stored. Also missing were bundles of recyclable garbage bags that had been placed in the shed in December.

The weather was perfect for spraying and we went to outline where the need for spraying of coral creeper was most critical west of the toilet block. The inspection also looked at the gardens and the roundabout before moving down the southern side of the Resort to check out the urgency and priority for various tasks. There is a need to control more of the green panic in Problem Corner and spraying should be a task before it gets out of control. In Second Valley we recognized the problems with Mother in laws tongues and Singapore Daisies that we were already aware of. We inspected Second Valley, ran into David and Marion Anderson and saw the regeneration of Brazilian Cherries as well as some Cherry Guavas that were and unexpected turn-up. Then it was back to the toilet block and back to real work.

The work focussed on the women cleaning up weeds near the toilet block with their main target weed being Coral Creeper. Meanwhile Christian went to work with the spray pack attacking the coral creeper that was very thick near the dingo fence west of the Council toilet block.

The other men went to work on eliminating Brazilian Cherries that had suckered in Second Valley. We had been invited by resident Tony Gaunt that we could remove the hedge that had been previously jealously

guarded by a former owner. There was a lot of work that we were able to use the chainsaw on and a couple of runs to the dump.

The Fearless Leader absented himself to go to the QPWS office to sort out some problems and for general liaison. He returned though with over 20 plants ready for planting with the prospect that there could be a few more available.

The group then continued working in the area west of the Council toilet hand weeding the thousands of coral creeper plants with any Brazilian nightshade seen also removed as well as any convenient Corky Passion vine. The Emu parade through this area has it now well cleaned although there will continue to be the need for follow-ups. While the group was finishing this operation it was joined by Kath Nash from BMRG who soon found herself doubled up on this weedathon. As 12.30 Fearless Leader called a halt and the group adjourned for lunch. By then we had also been joined by Luke and Maree from the Cooloola Coast and our group was now up to 12.

During the lunch break there were unsuccessful efforts to track down the mysteriously missing tool belts gloves etc. missing from the tool shed. This there was a decision after lunch to obtain some tools and gloves from our store of equipment at Happy Valley. We were soon all aboard the vehicles and headed for Happy Valley on the low tide. Eli Creek seemed incredibly crowded (3 large buses and 20 vehicles) so in the vain hope that the number might reduce we went o to the Maheno. Here we were privileged to have the whole scene to ourselves until as we were preparing to leave more than 60 back-packers arrived.



We retreated to Eli Creek where the three large buses remained standing guard over more tan 50 prone bodies sunbaking on the beach beside the creek. After a swim in the crystal waters we left this contradictory scene and returned to Happy Valley where we had afternoon tea and made an inspection of Abrus. Christian also sprayed some of the Abrus pests along to Moon Point Road. Unfortunately the job was much larger than time

would allow. Meanwhile Fearless Leader had not only gathered some tools and gloves but had discussed with the caretaker how and where to fit the new rain gauge intended for Happy Valley and installing it on an annexe at the back of the main shed that is more accessible and suitable than the main shed roof. It was too late as we headed south to have adequate time in Rainbow Gorge so we all happily returned to Eurong to prepare for Happy Hour at the end of this golden day.

Hours Worked:

Bush Regeneration: 47

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|---|-----------|
| Orientation 9 x 1.25 | 11.25 |
| Spraying 20 litres on Coral creeper west of Eurong toilet block & 5 litres spraying Abrus west of Happy Valley 1x 5 | 5 |
| Weeding coral creeper and Brazilian nightshade west of Eurong toilet block 5 x 5 = 25 + extras | 5.25 |
| Hand Weeding Happy Valley = | 5 |
| Brazilian Cherry Eurong Tony ?? 2 x 4 = | 8 |
| Su afternoon review of work and John Sinclair Organizing | 6 |
| Total | 48 |

Day 3

Tuesday 17th February

Weeding Eurong and Southern Lakes

The day began with lovely fine weather. However the wether forecast was predicting heavy intense rain for Wednesday and Thursday and therefore it was decided to alter our plans to work in Central Station and stay in Eurong to get as much spraying as possible done while the weather was suitable and defer working in Central Station for another day (Thursday).

The work began for some at 6.45 and for the rest soon after. One full trailer load of garden waste was removed from Easton Street and taken to the dump to discourage more casual dumping in our rehab area.

Garden waste continues to be a problem at the resort. Having cleaned up Problem Corner on the beach end of Surfside Units has again become the repository for months accumulations of coconut palm fronds we also noted that garden waste continues to be deposited on public land in Second Valley despite many trailer loads being removed from there on previous working bees.

The main tasks we dealt with today was spraying because a light shower during the night and the weather forecast made us aware of the urgency to get as much spraying as possible undertaken while there was a suitable opportunity.

Once the full team was ready to go we all went to Second Valley. We started operations from the Fire

Brigade base. The hill to the east was covered in many weeds including Asparagus vine, pink periwinkle, *Callista repens* and Moses-in-the-cradle *Tradescantia spathacea*. There were lesser infestations of other weeds including lantana and Easter Cassia. Due to other priorities alas the agenda and oversight we didn't spray this infestation of *Callista repens*.

At the top of the hill though there was an area of about 25 metres by 25 metres where the ground cover was almost wall-to-wall Coral Creeper that needed to be sprayed. F.L. and Christian dispensed about 40 litres of made up Round up in the area. Meanwhile the hand weeders, Kath, Maree, Liz and Meryl treated the area on the outside of the pink ribbon perimeter where the infestation was less severe. Further down the hill Kathie and Anamaria worked on pink periwinkle, Moses-in-the-cradle and cut and painted Syngonium.



After smoko the manual weeding team lead by Su headed up the hill to deal with other weeds she had identified the previous day. They removed about 12 lantana, about 25 Easter Cassia, much Brazilian nightshade, a bag of mother of millions, a domestic Passion fruit and about 20 asparagus ferns. The target area though was a large fig in the middle of the USL between Second Valley and the Resort's Problem Corner. Fig birds drop the seed of umbrella trees and Brazilian Cherries from the branch. The team cut and painted and hand pulled about 40 Brazilian Cherries and two quite large Umbrella trees.

Meanwhile F.L. and Christian had shifted their spraying operations from Second Valley to Problem Corner where there was an extensive area of Green panic grass dealt with as well as a lot of Coral Creeper both inside and outside the dingo fence that Christian vaulted over to deal with. However also in the area was a very significant re-emergence of Syngonium. F.L. sprayed this and any other weed in

Problem Corner encountered. It will be a priority to review the success of this spraying when the group returns in May. It was noted that previous spraying of green panic was remarkably effective.



F.L. then turned his attention to the infestation of Singapore Daisy in front of Daniels House. Here despite a heavy spraying by the Council the Singapore Daisy was regenerating. It is hoped that this follow up spray will knock the Singapore Daisy right back so that if necessary a knockout blow can be delivered when FIDO returns in May.

Meanwhile over on the other side Don and Tony were labouring with crowbar and shovel cleaning out any re-emergence of Brazilian Cherries in Anderson Street. A new resident, Ian showed them a Cherry Guava that they removed. Much of the action was captured on camera for posterity by Luke. They also made a new friend of Ian one of the newer permanent residents of Second Valley.

After another amazing Su lunch of wraps all but Su headed off on an excursion to the Southern Lakes. Su remained behind to continue her personal project of ridding Eurong of its only infestations of Madiera Vine and Mother of Millions.

There was a brief look in at Dilli Village where we met Mike Hefferan and Russell from the University of the Sunshine Coast for the first time. They were to join us for a Happy Hour and dinner later at Eurong. We went on to Lake Boomanjin that wasn't quite as enchanting as usual before proceeding to on Lake Birrabeen where seven of the group cavorted about in the water while the wind was freshening.

Then it was home for Happy Hour another splendid Su dinner and finishing off a lively discussion about the future of Dilli Village and Bio Blitzes. Then followed some camera recording for the record as part of the BMRG program "Keeping the Great Sandy Great"

Hours Worked:

Bush Regeneration:

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|---|-----------|
| Manual weeding between Second Valley and the resort (7 x 5) | 35 |
| Spraying 40 litres on Coral creeper near the house tanks above Fire Station and 35 litres around Problem Corner and the Singapore Daisy patch (2 x 5) | 10 |
| Brazilian Cherry Eurong (2 x 5) | 10 |
| Su afternoon review of work and weeding | |
| Madeira Vine | 4 |
| Total | 59 |



**Day 4
Wednesday 18th February
Weeding Eurong**

The predicted heavy rain from an approaching cyclone still hadn't eventuated by 5.00 am when the Fearless Leader set off with the two USC people to beat the tide and make it to Cornwalls Break before the tide peaked. They did that and had breakfast there before continuing on their way to Bogimbah and then via the fens to Lake Allom where they had lunch before returning to Eurong on a low tide. It was a successful outing to assess the potential sites to support potential research projects on Fraser Island.

The Bush Regeneration team emerged a little later and after another pleasant breakfast set to work at various starting times from 7.00 am to 7.30. The tasks undertaken included cleaning up unfinished jobs from the previous day. The light scuds and strong wind rendered the option of spraying out of the question, much to Christian's relief as his back was feeling effects of two days carrying a heavy backpack. This didn't deter him from ripping out several Siratro plants by the roots in the course of the morning.

A fig was planted in front of Mike West's place. It is hoped that this will take off and eventually form a canopy across the road with the fig on the opposite

side. Maree showed everyone how to use the new matting that has been donated to FIDO by Bio-degradable Products for a demonstration and trial. The mats were soaked and the tree and creepers were planted in the hope that there approaching rain will help sustain the new plantings to get them established strongly enough to survive without maintenance. This should improve survival chances.

The clean-up team eliminated the other Cherry Guava and more suckering Brazilian cherries and took two trailer loads of garden waste to the dump with another already loaded. One of the loads was almost filled with loose dragon fruit.

Su, Liz and Anamaria worked meticulously tending the resort garden. A few plants were relocated. A Kath and Meryl cleared around the Easton Street lawn-clipping bin and progressed west. At the end of the day they could declare a large section of the area north of Easton Street purged of weeds mainly Coral creeper and Brazilian nightshade with a small patch of Purple Joyweed. The area cleaned has now been defined with pink ribbon.

After working up to and a bit beyond 12.30, it was a late leisurely lunch that was just ending as the Fearless Leader returned from his northern expedition. He returned in time to farewell Luke from Goorie Vision and Kath from BMRG who had to return to their respective mainland responsibilities. The overcast windy weather was not encouraging for the planned afternoon excursion to Rainbow Gorge (Kirrar Sandblow) so everyone relaxed and rested.



Potential to assist Fraser Island Research — Bogimbah Hill

There was some angst amongst others that we were in danger of being isolated by the approaching Cyclone Marcia. However none of the group had any strong anxiety for their welfare or safety. Thus the decision to stay on despite some urgings to get out while the going was good. The wind continued to howl through the night but there was not much of the predicted heavy rain.

Hours Worked:

Bush Regeneration:

The work down in the absence of the Fearless Leader who was away with University of the Sunshine Coast team inspecting potential sites for research support was mainly cleaning up unfinished tasks from the previous days and planting out of the stock obtained from the QPWS nursery. The cleanup filled three trailers. The number of weeds addressed is unknown

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| Hours 5.2 x 10 | 52 |
| Total | 52 |



Governors Falls Happy Valley

**Day 5
Thursday 19th February
Weeding Eurong & Central Station**

Despite the howling gale and raging sea outside there was little rain delivered at Eurong overnight and the promised atrocious conditions have not yet impeded our activities.

Work started as usual at 7.00 a.m. with there being little more than a light drizzle. There seemed to be no urgency to don raincoats. However as the morning progressed so too did the intensity of the rain. At 10.00 am it was so consistent and everyone was so sodden that the Fearless Leader called a halt to work. What was surprising though is that the soil less than 15 cms below the surface was bone dry. However there were still unfinished jobs to be undertaken and F.L went out to plant out the plants stock that had been gathered up. He was quickly joined by the three other men and Su.

They made great progress finishing off defining the largest of the resort gardens near the tennis courts. They planted a Moreton Bay ash, some Melaluecas. Midyim and Pigface as well as breaking up and transplanting some of the Dionella that is doing very well in the conditions. After an hour and a half

during which time all except Su were thoroughly saturated they had proudly finished weeding, defining and propagating in this and two other gardens with the knowledge that they will be well watered if Cyclone Marcia continues on its current course.

In the first session Fearless Leader and Maree had an orientation session examining the village for potential problem areas needing to be addressed by future working bees. They identified the problems of the corner near the taxi house where they again found a few isolated Coral Creeper. They looked at the photo monitoring sites and went to the QPWS office where they obtained the key to the gate to access the Central Station rain gauge. They then obtained some plants from the nursery and returned to join the main group.

Meanwhile Don and Tony were busy cleaning up rubbish with over a trailer load taken to the dump. They also removed a dead banksia near Weerona. The rain prevented them carrying out planned mowing operations in Easton Street and at Talinga.

The main group was busy working on the gardens adjacent to the tennis courts. They were all cleaned of weeds and edged which has shown to assist plant growth as well as help save them from destruction by the casual staff employed as resort groundsmen.

One of the other tasks was following up the weeding between the resort road and the dingo fence on the southern side. This had previously been a wall of Coral Creeper. Su estimated that numbers removed were only 10% of the population encountered when weeded previously. Likewise while there was still a significant number of Brazilian nightshade, Stinking Passion Flower, Siratro and Mossman River Grass, the numbers of weeds in the area are reduced.

By lunch everyone was intensely interested in the Cyclone as the rain was falling faster than it could be soaked up and it had started to leak into several areas of Talinga especially in the downstairs section. However F.L. was determined to use the key and read the rain gauges at Central Station and Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) so a few volunteers went into the wagon and set off, capturing images of the water flow down the tracks sluicing sand with it. Alas wen they reached Central Station and opened the gate they discovered that the connection cable to download the data from the rain gauge and the replacement battery were missing from the car. So the task wasn't completed and the plans to go to Lake McKenzie were aborted for the day but some excellent photos of the sand being transported down the road by heavy rainfall event was well captured on camera.



Sediment moving from road to Coolooli Monitor site

Hours Worked:

Bush Regeneration:

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|--|----|
| The weeding work before smoko (mainly Easton Street, the resort garden and south of the helipad near the dingo fence (6 x 3) | 18 |
| Orientation (Maree and F.L.) 2 x 3 | 6 |
| Clean-up team (2 x 3) | 6 |
| Planting in the rain (5 x 1.2) | 6 |

Monitoring

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <u>Assessment of sand movement along roads</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Total | 41 |

**Day 6
Friday 20th February
Eurong to Brisbane**

Something amazing happened during the night. The howling wind abruptly ceased along with any rain. There was barely a rustle in the trees as daylight dawned and stars were glimpsed in the pre-dawn while Cyclone Monica, now a Category Five system moves ever closer to the Central Queensland coast. Plans for heading home earlier that had been discussed the previous evening seemed to have lost urgency because it now seems possible that we might put in a very productive day but we will assess the situation when we can communicate with the outside world.

Despite the fine weather Fearless Leader Booked the group on to the 2.00 pm ferry from Kingfisher to Mary River Heads because of concern that roads on the mainland might be flooded separating us from our homes. That allowed the group to put in three productive hours of work prior to morning tea after which there was a scramble to pack up and clean up and be "All Aboard" by 12.00 noon.

The work done was for Fearless Leader and Kathie to attempt to again attempt to read the rain gauges at Lake McKenzie and Central Station. The attempt was unsuccessful as the rain gauge was not registering as a device on the computer. Meanwhile

back at Eurong the team was scurrying in all directions. Christian and Liz returned to their self appointed task of removing Siratro with Anamaria and any other weeds encountered near the Roundabout. Tony used Talinga's mower to tidy up around Talinga and along Easton Street. Others were finding weeds that had previously escaped attention. Amazingly the fine benign weather continued throughout the morning. Su and Meryl worked on another garden in front of the Resort reception and gave special attention to the *Tecomanthe hillii*, (Fraser Island Creeper) that we want to become a feature plant.

It was a trouble-free drive to Kingfisher Resort where the every prepared Su served up our last meal together before we caught the ferry to Mary River Heads. There was a brief deviation then to re-inflate tyres at the Hervey Bay Airport and then we went our separate ways. Su, Don, Meryl and Anamaria made an express run direct to Brisbane. F.L. drove dropped off volunteers in Tin Can Bay (Maree), Cooroy (Liz and Christian), and Alexandra Headlands (Tony and Kathie), to arrive home in Brisbane at 8.30 pm It was amazing to note that while many places in South East Queensland were being drenched, he encountered no more than just two light showers between Hervey Bay and Brisbane.

Hours Worked:

Bush Regeneration:

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|---------------------------------|----|
| The weeding work before (8 x 3) | 24 |
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Monitoring

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| <u>Checking rain gauges (2 x 2.5)</u> | <u>5</u> |
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| Total | 29 |
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Lillypilli growing at Eurong Resort carpark

Jobs to be tackled prior to and during Eurong working bee 24— 30 May

1. Replace stolen tools and equipment tool belts and rubbish bags plus yellow paint to better brand equipment.
2. Get a new supply of gloves to replace those stolen.
3. Obtain new lockable wheelie bins, locks and chains to store equipment in securely.
4. Purchase another new Solo backpack spray and spare parts.
5. Get more wetting agent plus metsulfuron-methyl for Singapore Daisy.
6. Arrange to get an urgent reading of the rain gauges and for volunteers to install the new rain gauge at Happy Valley.
7. Purchase a new rain gauge and ancillary equipment to operate from Happy Valley
8. Install new photo monitoring sites for area west of Bus wash and the resort gardens as well as in Second Valley.
9. Take new Photo Monitoring shots at Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) and for weed monitoring sites showing
10. Follow up the spraying undertaken in the Plateau area, Problem Corner, Singapore Daisy patch and west of toilet block
11. Check on the impact of mats etc. supplied by Biodegradable Products
12. Provide more propagation material for the nursery. A mini green house was given to David Anderson to facilitate the propagation that he and Marion are undertaking
13. Plans to weed at Central Station and the walk to Wabby Lakes were prevented by disruptive weather. These are on the agenda for May.
14. Deal with the Mother-in-Laws Tongues in front of Second Valley



Sediment movement observed at the intersection of Central Station Eurong and the link road to Lake McKenzie