

Fraser Island Defenders Organisation's

Diary

Bush Regeneration Week — Eurong

24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May 2015



Summary

- Coral Creeper now presents a very significant threat to the natural integrity of the environs surrounding Eurong. Its windblown seed has been carried well north of the dingo fence.
- 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.
- Easter Cassia has now been almost completely eliminated
- Many other weeds were also dealt with in the course of the week including Brazilian, Brazilian nightshade, Singapore daisies, Green panic grass, Mossman River grass, Siratro, Syngonium, Mother of and Millions.
- 84 new plants from the QPWS and Kingfisher nurseries were planted out mainly in the Resort gardens and Eurong roundabout which were cleaned of weeds and carefully tended.
- 32 plants were potted (12 figs, 12 cypress and 8 pigface) were delivered to the QPWS Nursery.
- While most weeds at Eurong are being contained the situation with Coral Creeper deteriorates.
- **307 Hours were worked by the volunteers during the course of the week.**

**Day 1  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February  
Brisbane to Eurong**

Setting off from Brisbane at 7.45 Supe made great progress on a warm fine sunny May day. There was a slight hiccup when we sailed past the exit nominated by Barry because it wasn't as he had described but once aboard great progress was made to Forest Glen alas without the mini wasps that we had hoped for to counter the assaults of Jamella on the Eurong Pandanus. However Jane had put in some hours on the eve of the safari with another volunteer assessing option for obtaining to wasp for release before it was too late for some. Alas their assessment was that more research was needed on what might be carried with the pandanus leaves and the project was put on hold.

The weather continued to be very enjoyable as they partook of morning tea at Gympie and even heading down to rendezvous with Maree at Wallu. Then there was another worrying hiccup. Although Supe was supposed to be drawing on the Reserve tank it had almost drained the main tank dry and it required a detour to Tin Can Bay to obtain enough fuel to continue. We made it. So far, so good.



Maryborough Heritage Centre

We also made it to Maryborough only about 10 minute after Su and the others and had a great lunch in Queens Park. However as we started to head out of the car park we discover a major problem with Tahka. It seemed like a major mechanical problem because one pulley was jammed. The RACQ was called but they couldn't be certain to even arrive before 3.00 pm so a decision was made to off-load as much gear as possible and all passengers into Supe so that at least they could be sure of reaching the ferry and

Eurong on time. However the RACQ man arrived soon after they had taken off diagnosed the problem removed the belt from the air-conditioning compressor and had TAHKA mobile in minutes. A major disaster was averted and we made the barge comfortably although by now the weather had changed and looked quite ominous with us passing through a heavy squall on the way to River Heads.

Another minor hiccup added to the adventure when the trailer became disconnected from Supe just as we were getting on the way but that was soon fixed and we arrived at "Talinga" about 5.30 pm with just enough light to find the ropes to unwrap the trailer

It wasn't long before we were unpacked, all the goods stowed and we were indulging in Happy Hour and a preliminary briefing. Su served up a lovely won-ton prawn soup at 7.30.

OH&S (12 x 20 mins) 4 hours



Illegal dump in Jarvis Street

**Day 2  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February**

The day began with lots of wind and light squally. It was obviously unsuitable for spraying. At 7.30 we all assembled in two cars and did an inspection of the village. In doing so we spied three cassias in full flower that will be targetted during the week. It was a useful orientation.

During the inspection we made contact with David Andersen who later teamed up with Chris and Barry to work on Easter Cassia, mother of millions coral creeper and other weeds he had identified. Due to the combined efforts of David and some residents, the Fraser Coast Regional Council and FIDO volunteers, the Second Valley looks ever much cleaner of weeds now. The exception is the

continual dumping of garden waste opposite the brick block near the Taxi house. Later Maree and a team returned there and during the day collected three trailer loads of rubbish with much bulk from except coconut fronds. An approach will be made to the Fraser Coast Regional Council for a sign to be located at this very offensive site that harbours weeds particularly Madiera vine. It is also a photo monitoring site.

Back at the shed we located and equipped ourselves with tools and gloves and then embarked on an emu hunt between Easton Street and the dingo fence to pick out and the coral creeper and Brazilian nightshade. Bags of weeds were removed and over 1000 each of the targeted weeds as well as other lesser incidental weeds encountered including Green Panic.

After smoko the team dispersed. Some continued west of the toilet block, some went with David Andersen, some went with Su clearing the Demonstration Garden While Maree and a team led the rubbish detail to clean up the rubbish and weeds that had been bagged. After consultations with the QPWS staff at Eurong, the Fearless Leader set off on a mission to remove some isolated Green Panic west of the roundabout but found himself in the midst of a Brazilian nightshade infestation and searching under a fig tree uprooted more that a dozen Brazilian Cherries all growing under a big fig tree. Also amongst the mix was a small Cocos Palm. It was a busy productive morning.



Dilli Village's new bridge across the swimming hole

The after noon outing was another adventure of a special kind. After lunch the group headed down the beach to Dilli Village where everyone met the new caretakers made a brief assessment of the facilities and walked over the new bridge to the site

where sandmining finished on 31 December 1976. The group paused on the way to Lake Boomanjin to get a brief geomorphology lesson from the Fearless Leader. After a foray at Lake Boomanjin with most anxious to stretch their legs, FL dropped everyone as M2 expecting to see them walk around the shores of Lake Birrabeen. He waited and then realized that the route of the great walk would take them on the eastern side of the lakes so he rushed off to the M3. Because they were not there he set off expecting to encounter the group but after 20 minutes they were still not in earshot. Then to his astonishment in an area where mobile phones rarely work, he received a phone call to say that the group was waiting at the M2. Alas instead of walking north the group had headed in the opposite direction from the M2. There was a happy reunion.

We all returned safely to Eurong arriving more than an hour later than scheduled. Luckily Su soon had a very welcome meal on the table after a truncated Happy Hour. Her efforts as the Quiet Achiever though did not pass unnoticed. On behalf of BMRG Kath Nash presented her and FL Certificates of appreciation for their efforts in leading so many weeding operations.

**Hours Worked:**

**Bush Regeneration: 47**

Orientation 12 x 1.20	15.0
Various work weeding from 9.00 to 12.30	
3.5 x 12	42.0
Su afternoon review of work and John	
Sinclair Organizing	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>

**Day 3  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May**

The day began with a very heavy shower at 7.15 with a heavy downpour that threw proposed program the rest of the day into doubt but at 7.30 it had cleared a little and so we rang Linda Behrendorff, the QPWS Natural Resources Ranger and agreed to link up on the trip to Happy Valley to assess the areas of mutual concern particularly with respect to Abrus. The first hiccup of the day was that Tahka had a flat tyre so there was a rapid change of vehicles to the BMRG Hilux. This unplanned alteration meant that the mobile phone chip that was to have been tested at Happy Valley

was left behind. Su stayed behind to pursue her passionate interest of fixing up the resort gardens.



**Dingo watching beach traffic**

Before we left Eurong we met a couple of dingoes monitoring the beach from a vantage point and succeed in getting some great photos. Leading into Happy Valley we had a small exposure to the extent that Abrus could colonise and dominate small areas. Then in Happy Valley we walked with Linda up past the Ambulance Station to see an area tackled by Peter's team in his recent Abrus assault. This was important to see because Kath was carrying out an inspection of the area.

After ascending a very steep hill to see the areas of concern and recent work we tried to re-enter Happy Valley by another gate. Alas it was all very difficult and we were forced to walk the long way round to return to our vehicles. While this caused us to get wet there was the compensation of getting up close to a Carpet python that was crossing our path.



**Collaborators: Kath Nash (BMRG), Linda Behrendorff (QPWS) Marree Prior and John Sinclair (FIDO) discussing the Happy Valley program.**

FL was able to get photographs of the area for the new weather station and establish that he could get five bar reception right throughout Happy Valley.

After morning tea we farewelled Linda and venture on to Eli Creek where some brave souls went for a swim before going on to the Pinnacles (Coloured Sands) and the Maheno before returning to Eurong as promised for lunch at 12.30.

Following lunch most of the group went to work on the gardens at the back of the tennis courts. Bob Burnett had delivered a load of woodchip but before it could be spread the ground had to be cleaned of weeds and Su used her special licence to enlarge the gardens to make it easier for mowers as well as finding plants to fill the expanded gardens. There were showers throughout the afternoon ranging from drizzle to solid but this didn't deter or disrupt the work that only finished when it was too dark to continue. Most of the gardens are now covered with woodchip but another load is still needed.

Over a late afternoon tea there was a sad farewell to Kath Nash who was an enthusiastic member of the team but who had to return to continue BMRG business there.

In the meantime Barry and Chris were assigned to cleaning out Lantana and Easter Cassia between the Daniels house and the Surfside units. It was rough steep country with a degree of difficulty but they managed to make a significant inroad although more remains to be done.

In between other chores the Fearless Leader managed to dispose of another three trailer loads of material. Most of this was illegal garden waste dumped over the road from some houses in Second Valley rather than taking this rubbish to the dump. However many bags of weeds collected from the gardens were also included in the bumper loads.

The day ended as usual in a very convivial Happy Hour followed by a wonderful fish curry



**Abrus prectorius (Var Africanus)**

**Hours Worked:**

**Bush Regeneration:**

Manual weeding between and extensions to the demonstration gardens at the resort the resort (4 x 9)	36
Working on cassia and lantana between problem corner and Daniels (4x 2)	8
Su work on garden	3
<u>Rubbish disposal three trailer loads (2 x 4)</u>	<u>8</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

**Day 4**

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May**

The planned program was stalled while the flat tyre of yesterday was being repaired and while that was happening people set off in many directions. Many worked on the area next to Easton Street and the sign shelter finding all sorts of weeds and things. Once TAHKA was mobile Fearless Leader dashed off to the QPWS to retrieve some bags promised by Linda. While there he also grabbed some plants that had been set aside at the nursery for filling the gaps in Eurong.

Returning he gave Su the plants and instead of just leaving them to plant on the morrow within half an hour most were planted.



**Greenhood Orchids**

The two vehicles eventually set off at about 8.45. There was one stop to examine the Coolooli Monitoring site where there were lots of greenhood orchids were found. If the alluvial plume (24 cm deep since the pole was placed there) continues to expand these will be lost. Some nets have been set up around the monitoring post to contain sediment. This may have been done as part of the USC project and will be discussed with Brodie Hare.

At Central Station at 10.00 am there was a quick morning tea before two contingents set out on

different missions. Four went in pursuit of Clivea Lilies while the rest dispersed in pursuit of the dreaded Rats Tail (*Sporobolus sp*) with great success. Sadly timing for the day precluded this continuing after 11.00 am when everyone but the drivers walked beside the magical Wangoolba Creek and then through the Syncarpia (*Pibin*) forest to Pile Valley where Maree and Su were waiting. Then the party set off for Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) where we had lunch and swim while Fearless Leader filled a bag with rats tail growing inside the dingo fenced lunch area.



Then it was off to Kingfisher Resort along the solid tracks. This was convenient since we were dragging a trailer behind Supe already almost level with weed bags.

At Kingfisher Resort while most dispersed to the pool or beach Su, Maree and FL were rifling through the nursery where they procure ??? plants. There aren't many nurseries that supply with such generosity and goodwill and we are deeply appreciative of the continuing support of Kingfisher for their support given to the projects that is worth thousands of dollars.



**Stuck at the end of Cornwall's Break**

It was 4.00 pm when we set off to return but the overcast conditions made it seem quit dark as we followed home along Cornwalls Break. It was a good run on a hard track until we reached the beach where abruptly Supe sank in loose sand. However with a pull we did get mobile and home in daylight



Lunch at Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora)

**Hours Worked:**

**Bush Regeneration:**

Eurong (12 x 1.5)	18
Central Station (12 x 1)	12
Kingfisher (12 x 1.5 include some travel time)	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>

**Day 5  
Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May**

Having had 7.30 am starts for the last three mornings, this was to be a very relaxing start to the day. Further it was scheduled to be a fine day and we were looking forward to being able to use spray packs and herbicides. However there had been a heavy shower during the night and it was after 9.00 am that we were able to don the backpack sprays and begin the challenging task of controlling Coral Creeper that is as challenging in Eurong as Abrus in Happy Valley.

Areas of coral creeper that had been sprayed in February were almost as thick as ever because of the masses of seedlings to germinate since the first spraying. An inspection of the plateau area and the area between the resort and tennis courts and the dingo fence are badly infested and there is evidence that it has crossed the dingo fence and fire-break and invading USL on its way into the National Park.

Meanwhile a huge plant-a-thon was underway placing the plants acquired from the QPWS and

Kingfisher nurseries in the ground. It lasted all morning with varying numbers but finding the right locations for the various species where they would be seen to best effect was a challenge in ecological understanding. However Su and helpers placed them along and around Easton Street, (15) in front of the Eurong Resort reception (5) near the Coral Sea Units (5) behind the Bakery (1 Tecomanthe) and the reception (3). There were many also in the demonstration garden area. There were still six banksia left over so late in the day these were taken to Second Valley where they were place in Anderson Street near Honey-eater Lodge. According to the number of empty pots returned to the shed we had plants 84 Plants in the ground in one energetic effort.

After Smoko he Fearless Leader engaged the three musketeers, Gray, Ross and Peter to find any remaining Easter Cassia and eliminate them. They started near Daniels House and worked their way on to the Plateau where the Fearless Leader having delivered another flat tyre for repair was inspecting the impact of the February spraying of Coral Creeper there. They continued on their task and arrived back where the demonstration garden planting was concluding.

The greatest challenge of the day though was the attack on the Coral Creeper especially where it poses the greatest threat to the natural integrity of the National Park. While Barry and Chris were spraying on one side of the pink line and ever growing emu parade was manually removing seedlings that had germinated since FIDO's weeding bee in February.

Su had notified that it would be a late lunch but at 1.15 pm only four people had partaken of lunch and Fearless Leader had to summons the workers to abandon their task for a while. Barry and Chris though took a further half hour to get back to lunch.



Loading up at Kingfisher Nursery

After lunch the efforts continued. Maree rejoined the group after her video-conference and recharged the drums of chemicals for the next attack.

One of our problems is that the Metsulfuron we had asked to be sent to Eurong is not in the shed. Thus we aren't able to spray Singapore Daisies as planned. We made a request to QPWS for a small supply to deal with the infestation but the chemicals won't be available today. Thus we decided to use the extra spray-pack to disperse Roundup to spray the Plateau area above the Second Valley Fire Station. This allowed Lansing to pursue his ambition to use a heavy spray pack and he followed up the spraying undertaken in February.

Meanwhile the flat tyre had been repaired and FL was able to use TAHKA for the last duty of the day recovering the workers in the Second Valley who apart from spraying and planting had eliminated a few more volunteer Brazilian cherries.



Singapore Daisy out of control

While some finished work at 4.00 pm and got in a swim it was 5.30 when Barry found it too dark to continue spraying. Late in the afternoon Chris went to the other side of the dingo fence to assess mark and spray infestations of Coral Creeper extending far beyond the dingo fence.

A most successful and productive day was rounded off with a much more relaxed Happy Hour although there was much more enthusiasm for the wine than for the provision of nibbles

**Hours Worked:**

**Bush Regeneration:**

Planting, spraying and weeding work (mainly Easton Street, the resort gardens and south of the helipad near the dingo fence (average 7 hours x 11 people )

**Total** 77

**Day 6  
Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May**

This was a day of high action compress into what was supposed to be four hours from 7.30 am to 11.30 a.m. It stretched to a very productive time until noon when everyone had to clean up for our invitation lunch at the resort. This summarises the actions.

We had found a number of seedlings in seedlings found in unusual places. For example a strained on a water tank actually had 12 small figs germinated. These were separated and potted. Another 12 pots were filled with cypress seedlings. A further 8 pots were filled with pigface. In all 32 pots were returned to the QPWS nursery to be nurtured into more advanced plants.

The weather was perfect for spraying despite the overnight shower and everyone was busy with spraying. Lansing emptied his tank on Coral Creeper on the Plateau near the fire station before handing his backpack to Maree who had obtained some Metsulfuron from the QPWS specifically for work on the Singapore Daisy. Having dispensed 15 litres on this problem she took up the challenge on the Syngonium and fishbone ferns near Problem Corner so that we can check on the impact before we return in July.

Meantime Barry had begun work in another part of Problem Corner where he discovered still another large infestation of Coral Creeper. However he needed more chemicals to deal with the Green Panic. Barry estimates he estimated that he pumped out between 45 and 48 litres of Roundup in the vicinity of Problem Corner.

Chris meanwhile had worked on the Coral Creeper that had escaped to the north of the Dingo Fence. Chris estimates that it is over the second ridge north of the dingo fence and it requires a lot of treatment and monitoring.

Meanwhile the manual weeders had been split into two detachments. Gray and Ross went off to continue the battle with emerging regrowth of Brazilian Cherries in Second Valley. On the way they dealt with some Ester Cassia between the two Valley and inside the dingo fence. In the same area Su eliminated more than a dozen Sisal plants as well as some well established Asparagus fern. Su returned to work on the area near the Coral Sea Units while Gray and Ross eliminated not only Brazilian Cherries but mopped up some dragon fruit.

The other contingent of manual workers (Alison, Peter Nemyra and later Su and Landis) went to work between the Coral Sea Units and the Dingo fence. They also tackled Mossman River Grass. However for the most part Nemyra was outside the dingo fence working on Coral Creeper that had escaped into the USL. She filled four bags but said that there was much more to be done there. She did an excellent job and overcame anxiety about dingoes to work on her own. However Peter and Alison were busy on Mossman River burr especially near the bus wash area. Many bags of weeds were collected.

Fearless Leader busied himself delivering people and supplies to various areas of work, taking rubbish to the dump, plants to the QPWS nursery and in between removing the odd Cassia, Coral Creeper and Asparagus fern.

After the appointed hour (11.30) everyone was scrambling to finish their task and take up the generous invitation from the resort manager John Wilkin to have lunch there. It was a most productive morning and covered more area than any other day in the total area sprayed, the number of weeds removed and the impact.

After the resort lunch we continued with chores until 2.00pm when we headed off to Wabby Lakes but our work wasn't complete. F.L. had permission to remove the isolated clumps of an alien grass that has become established along the former walking track. However the clumps were harder to remove than he thought and more prodigious than he remembered. Only a fraction of the grass clumps were uprooted and a note has been made to take a mattock next time as this is a more efficient tool.

The walk along the track revealed the potential of the orchids to be anticipated next month and helped everyone to have a better understanding of the geomorphology. At the lake most immersed themselves and because the backpackers had departed we had the place to ourselves.

However as usual while the rest were out exploring the island Su was back at Talinga, cleaning up, packing up and pursuing weeds.

**Hours Worked:**

<b>Bush Regeneration:</b>	
<u>12 people from 7.30 am to noon (12 x 4.5)</u>	<u>54</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

**Day 7  
Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May**

The day was fine and wonderful. However there was a dense fog hanging over Great Sandy Strait and it was little visibility from the shore or later the barge across the water.

The morning began earlier than usual packing up and cleaning the house. There were plants to be watered, the Singapore Daisy site to be GPSed, stuff taken to the dump, and the toolshed checked and packed.

It was a particularly challenging morning for Chris. Besides GPS-ing the Daisy site he had hard choices to make on his walk for the next week. After leaving Talinga our first stop was Central Station where we farewelled Chris as he set off to walk alone south via the Southern Lakes to Dilli Village in a roundabout way to a ferry next Saturday.

At the ferry terminal there was a frenzied attack on Mossman River grass illing a large bag. Many other weeds Phaseolus and Sideratusa were also uprooted. After losing sight of all land as we crossed the relatively narrow strait we headed off to Maryborough. Here we refuelled and parted in two contingents. Su and party in TAHKA headed to Brisbane via Gympie. Supe made a detour journey via Wallu to drop off Maree and then to Kin Kin and Pomona.

At Pomona Fearless Leader was interviewed for the "Keeping the Great Sandy Great" BMRG project by Luke Barrowcliffe of Goorie Vision. It was all about FIDO's weeding program on Fraser Island (Kgari) All except Chris arrived to their respective safe and comfortable abodes for the night. It was a fine end to a great and productive trip but there is still much more work to be done.

**Hours Worked:**

<b>Bush Regeneration:</b>	
Eurong work (8 x 0.5)	4
Pomona interview include extra travel	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>



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

**Note:** *There are many tasks identified February still waiting to be proceed with (#)*

1. Ask Council for a sign to be placed at the Second Valley to stop the illegal dumping of garden waste.
2. Write to Drop Bear Tours seeking their cooperation in controlling Painted Spurge around their base camp.
3. Work more aggressively on .
4. Get more metsulfuron-methyl for Singapore Daisy to replace our missing supply Plus other new areas identified particularly those outside the Dingo fence.
5. Arrange to get an urgent reading of the rain gauges and for volunteers to install the new rain gauge at Happy Valley.
6. Install new photo monitoring sites for area west of Bus wash and the resort gardens as well as in Second Valley. (#)
7. Take new Photo Monitoring shots at Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) and for weed monitoring sites showing. (#)
8. Follow up the spraying undertaken in the Plateau area, Problem Corner, Singapore Daisy patch and west of toilet block plus new areas since added in May 2015, (#)
9. Check on the impact of mats etc. supplied by Biodegradable Products and respond to John Hall.
10. Provide more propagation material for the nursery. This has been done but it requires ongoing follow-up. (#)
11. Take Mattocks to eliminate invading grass along the Quad Track to Wabby.
12. Deal with the Mother-in-Laws Tongues in front of Second Valley. (#)



BMRG gave F.L and Su certificates as this was their their last trip leading bush regeneration trips to Eurong