

# Diary

## Interim Weed Management Program Eurong

10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017



The Mystery Plant of Eurong that has so far defied efforts at identification

### Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September

We got away from Brisbane on schedule at 7.00 am and had comfortable run to Mary River Heads for ferry to Kingfisher Resort.

With negligible rain for over two months the roads have become increasingly more difficult to negotiate. Fortunately the road out of Kingfisher Resort had been watered which helped make a smooth run across what otherwise would have been a very loose track.

We stopped at Pile Valley where, apart from being awed by the forest giants, some interesting plant identifications were made. This set us on a quest to put names to plant species we previously didn't recognize.

At Eurong at 3.00 pm the first stop was the Nursery where we were all impressed at how high the survival rate had been and how the work done last July has held up.

Once settled in our rooms Su and Suzanne set off on a reconnaissance of the area inside the fence bringing back more specimens for identification

### Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> September

The day was fine and clear. Prior to setting off to work we visited the QPWS Ranger Station to discuss the nursery and the fires that were occurring on the island. Then Suzanne and Rosalind spent the remainder of the day working in the nursery, tidying up and progressively moving through the pots removing the highly invasive Flick weed.

Su went to work on the area behind the Bus-wash and in Bampi removing weed while Fearless Leader sorted through the shed and mixed up chemicals in readiness for spraying on the morrow when he was assured that the sprinklers would be turned off on the grey-water zone. He then prepared an improvised plant press using cardboard and a drum

of water to weigh it down before watering the new planting at the Deer Farm.

After lunch FL went to work clearing the weed management track between Resort and Residential Valleys that had become overgrown. As he descended into Singapore Alley, he manually weeded many Coral Creeper adjacent to the Mother of Millions area that had been meticulously cleaned up last time by Dorothy so that only a few could be found. The same couldn't be said of Coral Creeper.

## **Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September**

Suzanne at the nursery continued weeding the pots for Flick weed, a task that has taken two days so far. There was some relief immediately after lunch when Fearless Leader took her down to see a *Caesalpinia bonduc* that he had discovered at the entrance to the Residential Valley. Growing beside the *C bonduc* was another mystery plant. Some leaves were collected and it is to be taken to the Herbarium for identification. That foray included everyone and extended into a more detailed inspection noting the tasks that lay ahead for the October working Bee. It was a foray that resulted in sheer panic by F.L. when he later discovered that he had lost his iPhone.

Rosalind spent the morning photographing in a patch of bush that we have now dubbed Bampi because "bampi" is the Butchulla word for forest

Su was busy working on pulling out the big weeds in the grey-water zone but inside the fence.

F.L. had negotiated with Acting Maintenance Manager, Baxter, to have the irrigation turned off for the morning until mid-afternoon to assure a window for spraying. He went to work on the very healthy cocktail of weeds on the maintenance track adjacent to the dingo fence that were availing themselves of the regular doses of grey-water. The spraying was most timely because the most common weed amongst them was Glossy Nightshade, that was laden with fruit but none of which had ripened. It was encouraging to discover that the previous treatment had greatly diminished the numbers of the once dominant Coral Creeper and Brazilian Nightshade.

After lunch and the unbeknown loss of the iPhone Rosalind began watering the new plants along Easton Street, Suzanne returned to the Nursery and Su continued on the manually weed and spray between Easton Street and the grey water zone. Fearless Leader went on a quest to remove three young rogue coconuts in the Problem Corner area and a lone Easter Cassia along the ridge of the weed

management track before tackling the lantana outside the dingo fence also in the Problem Corner area. He then donned the backpack and dosed the emergent *Syngonium* at Problem Corner and the coral creeper. Since the pedestrian gate on the dingo fence was only dummy locked he was able to go outside to deal with Easter Cassia outside the Dingo Fence before collecting Suzanne. That was when he discovered his iPhone missing.

The iPhone recovery was an amazing experience because with "Find my iPhone" it took no time to recover.

## **Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> September**

The nights are warmer and the extended dry continues but except for the dry loose sand and the vegetation beginning to wilt it was a wonderful weather to be working, not cold nor overly hot.

Su started showing Fearless Leader the lantana then down to the Bampi working first in the grey-water zone and then sprayed in the grey-water zone part of Bampi for the rest of the morning.

After disposing of the lantana on the hill and somewhere some time during the next two hours Fearless Leader, lost his glasses. He was oblivious of them missing until he washed his face and tried to put them back on. His next task was spraying in the no-man's land on the north side of the dingo fence where he completed all of the area in the grey-water zone. He roamed out further and found Coral Creeper half way up the next slope before running out of Coral Creeper. The Fearless Leader went to the Nursery where he sprayed the nursery floors to rid the nursery of Flick weed. By the end of the morning between Su and F.L. they had already dispensed over 90 litres of glyphosate mix for the two days

With bodies weary from the morning exertions for all but the ever-resilient Su it was a late and a long lunch break. Following lunch Su went off to work in Bampi but in the area clear of the grey-water zone. Eventually the others went back to work. Suzanne went back to the Nursery and F.L. went off to unsuccessfully look for his glasses. He rang through to have a pair waiting for as soon as possible after getting home. Then while Su was using up glyphosate Fearless Leader took a small 7.5 litre spray bottle of Picloram to deal with the Mother of Millions near the Children's Playground.

It was a productive day

## Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September

The wild fires of the south seem to have picked up momentum. Yesterday we learned that the fire was burning off to behind Lake Benaroon. This morning smoke filled the air at Eurong. Luckily we have finished the spraying yesterday because the strong gusting Westerly wind would have prevented any spraying today.

Su was eager to start another slippery slope adjacent to the Resort workshop rather than waste a moment while F.L. delivered Suzanne to the Nursery. Then she joined F.L. to locate and treat Mother of Millions opposite the Taxi House in Residential valley with Picloram. That done Su was joined by Rosalind to scour Bampi removing weeds and identifying everything interesting and photographing for future identification anything that wasn't known.

Meanwhile up at the Nursery Suzanne finally made contact with Barry (aka Baz) a QPWS Ranger who dabbles in the nursery on behalf of Parks. The discussion opened up some lines of communication that had been lacking and stalled by the fire-fighting going on.

Fearless Leader spent the morning starting with looking for his lost glasses before heading to the shed continuing to tidy up there, wash and clean the sprays and filling five drums with glyphosate mix ready for the team next month. Unfortunately due to the plastic becoming brittle one of the drums split when putting it away. In future only drums with white plastic that seems more durable should be used.

After lunch Su and Suzanne began busily planting with stock from the nursery. They place 13 plants in the garden in front of Reception and 37 in the gray-water zone.

## Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September

Just when it was thought that the work was finished, Su realized that there were still some plants that hadn't been delivered from the nursery. So after packing up and cleaning the room these Blue Tongues were retrieved and placed in the ground in the gray-water zone. Then while that was happening Rosalind made a foray up the weed management track to inspect and photograph the Big Fig while Fearless Leader liaised with Wayne over the work done and discussed plans for the Resort to establish its own nursery.

Following coffee and muffins at the bakery the group went to Central Station where to their shock and horror the site was being "tidied up". Two volunteers had raked over the whole area and a leaf

blower was being employed to strip the sand and leaves expose the crust along the old tramline

After lunch and showing Rosalind Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) It was time to head to the ferry.

In Hervey Bay the group met with Jenni Watts and Peter Duck to inspect the 4WD that they have offered to donate to FIDO. It was a short visit because they then had to attend the Art Exhibition opening at the Hervey Bay Cultural Centre where the RATs team were exhibiting their paintings from the Beach to Birrabreen BioBlitz. It was a long day.

### Summary:

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- Suzanne showed remarkable dedication and spent the whole week mostly on her own purging the plants of flick weed taking infinite care to try to stop more seeds being flicked around the nursery in the process. However there were some plants removed.
- Su planted out 56 plants (13 in the reception gardens)
- Rosalind is working on a comprehensive photographic record of plants and the work to be placed on line via Picasa for public viewing.
- 90 litres of Glyphosate and about 5 litres of Picloram (used only on the Mother of Millions) were dispensed.
- The development of collaborative relationships continues to grow

FIDO's teams working on the weeds of Eurong are being complemented by the work of some residents, particularly David Anderson. Last year he found an infestation of Coral Creeper in USL outside the dingo fence on the western side of Residential Valley. He recently returned to follow up and removed 1,213 plants. His spot spraying around Residential Valley is showing a remarkably obvious improvement in weed reduction. He was called away to the mainland for family matters and wasn't present during this working week.

The Weed Management Track that was becoming overgrown has been significantly opened up to provide easier access. A small track has been opened up from Easton Street opposite Cousin Shirley's house and marked to provide clearer access to the pedestrian gate and the road outside the dingo fence. Other maintenance work included maintenance work on the fence outside the shed where several palings were coming off due to nails rusting through

## **Jobs for October**

The priority work agenda is to keep the weeds in the grey-water zone under control. The strategy is to ensure that as far as possible any weeds that crop up there are not allowed to produce viable seed. A second part of the strategy is to prevent any weeds from being able to establish themselves due to competition. This is starting to work inside that dingo with some areas now with a carpet of snake vine and thick forest cover suppressing light. This is more difficult in the open outside the Dingo fence. However it is noted that on the road at the eastern edge of the gray-water zone the weeds had difficulty competing with the dense couch grass and we need to encourage couch along the road to suppress the weeds.

- If possible install the new shelf in the shed as planned.
- Check to get the new Halogen portable light working.
- There are 90 litres of mixed glyphosate mixed and this need to be used to follow up the spraying on the road immediately north of the dingo fence. Notify Wayne or Baxter that the gray water distribution needs to be turned off from 7.00 am to 2.30 pm and spraying needs to begin by 10.00 am to get uptake.
- Using FIDO's new Garmin we need to GPS the area outside the dingo fence to determine the area (a) of the road surface and length and (b) of the Coral Creeper infested area beyond the road;
- If possible walk the perimeter of the Big Banyan Fig between the two valleys to establish the spread of its canopy;
- Using the water drums (blue) from the shed, water plants near Deer Farm;
- Use the long hose from the shed to connect to the tap outside Cousin Shirley's house to water all the new plantings opposite there;
- Remove all lantana and Sisal between Problem Corner and the Weed Management Track;
- Replace some of the panels in the Sign Shelter with new pages that should be in the left side door pocket of the car;
- Install bench and bathtub for Suzanne at the nursery at appropriate height using besser block bases. Keep an eye out from the start for any stray besser blocks around Eurong that might be scavenged for that purpose;
- The main weeding work needs to be focussed on Singapore Alley and in front of the Residential Valley. To avoid missing plants, form an emu parade across the valley

and methodically work up towards the water tanks manually removing any Coral Creeper, Mile-a-Minute and Singapore Daisy. A two or three person emu parade straddling the valley should remove all or most of the remaining weeds.

- Check for and remove all weeds between the western dingo grid and the roundabout between the road and the southern dingo fence.
- Weed all of the resort gardens that FIDO has established.