

## Diary for FIDO's November 2011 Bush Regen Week

*The week was timed to coincide with the Fraser Coast Regional Council's availability, the availability of suitable plants and the availability of a team from FIDO. The main objective was to install a demonstration garden (s) in Eurong to encourage residents and landholders to opt for native plants in their gardens as an alternative to maintaining exotic plants, many of which have escaped from gardens to become major weeds on Fraser Island. The project was endorsed by FINIA (Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance — comprising representation of local government, state government agencies and NGOs with an interest in Fraser Island).*

*The site chosen for the garden(s) was Eurong which is most visible and seen by more Fraser Island visitors than any other modified site and to help landscape the resort area. Another objective was to focus on removal of lantana from the township area. Lantana is a weed of national significance. The FIDO team was also keen to clean up some of the roadside rubbish resulting from people removing garden waste from their properties and placing it on the road reserves in Eurong.*

### **Monday, 14 November:**

We began work at 7.30 am with a survey of the town area up to the junction of the in and out roads. We were particularly trying to appraise the distribution of lantana. What was notable was the fact that lantana was sparse in areas that had been subject to recent burning. That raises the interesting question of the use of fire as a weed management tool.

8.00 am We separated into two groups to weed until 10.00am when we proposed to regroup for Smoko. Group 1 worked along the dingo fence from Talinga to the Toilet block. The weeds found in this area were corky passion fruit that was widespread, and Brazilian Nightshade that is spreading rapidly in the area as well as sundry other weeds. In the illegal heaps of garden waste it was noted that many coconuts were germinating.

Meanwhile the four people in group 2 started at the rubbish tip and focussed on lantana. Two worked on the western side of the road and two on the eastern side where they located and removed more than 150 lantana plants. THERE is still a lot of lantana there as they worked only between the gully and the road. However despite the challenges at 10.00 am they ceased work to focus on the Garden Project as the Council team had just arrived.

After the break the group joined the council team in removing the grass from the Eurong roundabout. This was heavy work and took two hours but by 12.30 the site was prepared.

After lunch the group left for Lake Birrabeen at 2.00 pm where while some enjoyed a swim. Michael began collecting seeds for the FINIA 'Home Gardens' project utilising his own seed collection permit. The group returned to Eurong via Lake Boomanjin and Dilli Village collecting many seeds en route.

**Total hours worked — 42 hours**

## Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> November

At 7.30 am we rendezvoused with the Council team at the roundabout. Matthew and Col had already prepared the site and had laid out the many Midyim plants that were used to divide the circle into three sectors in the shape of the sign of peace. There was some initial delay in getting the work under way while waiting for some larger Midyims to be delivered by the QPWS and while trying to get the ground wet to plant in because there was so much water repellance. Another frustration is that the water supply from Eurong using treated effluent was on a time switch. This meant that water for the plants was not always available when needed. However soon the work was under way and planting of the Midyim progressed.

Another team hived off to work on a second garden under a Casuarina tree and develop a concept design for a third garden around the healthy Pandanus tree there. In addition the perimeter of the area was planted with large trees mainly *Allocasuarina littoralis*. It was a hive of activity with people preparing ground for planting, gathering mulch and planting and watering.

In the roundabout garden the three sectors of the peace symbol were planted up with exclusively pigface on the western side and mainly yellow plants facing north and almost exclusively Dianellas facing south with a few fan flowers distributed amongst them.

By 12.30 after a heavy day the roundabout was completed with almost five cubic metres of woodchip spread over the ground and most of the garden below the Casuarina planted but without anywhere near enough wood chip and some of the former lawn remaining to be removed.

There was a discussion on the naming of the gardens. In the end it was resolved to give all of the gardens appropriate Butchulla names. The garden in roundabout was named "**Midyim**" after the dominant plant in the garden and because the Butchulla names for the other plants hasn't been recorded. The garden under the *Casuarina equisetifolia* was decided on as "**Billarr**" a Butchulla name for Casuarinas and the garden yet to be fully developed under the Pandanus was named "**Winnam**".

Work finished at about 12.45 am and the FIDO group made a trip to Wabby Lakes later in the afternoon for a swim and appreciation of many Fraser Island values.

**Total hours worked: 42**

## Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> November

Work consisted of finalizing the work on Billarr and tidying up that area. The Council team placed some posts in both Billarr and Midyim, the roundabout garden with the tree names.

Then while the Council team worked on another project for a couple of hours the FIDO team began the mammoth task of removing the heaps of garden waste that had been tossed over Easton Street from several houses on the northern side of Eurong. Four trailer loads of rubbish each piled high were removed and taken to the dump. At about noon we retreated for a group photo at the roundabout.

The team from the Fraser Coast Regional Council consisted of Colin Zemek, Juliet Musgrave, Matthew ?? and ?????.

The FIDO Team comprised John Sinclair, Michael Lowe, Tokiko Dawson, Jane Minor, Pat Turner, Russell Close, Helen Moriarty and Harold Charles.  
Start @ 7.30 and finish at 12.00.

**Total hours worked: 42**

## **Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> November**

The quest and the conquest of the day was to clear up the whole of the rubbish along Easton Street. Another three very full trailer loads were removed and with the area now cleared of alien Pangola grass that had invaded the area was prepared for planting. Then the holes were dug and fertilized and planted using FINIA stock plus the pigface sourced locally. Michael distributed the plants. Only the plants along the front were bagged. But all were staked. In all 65 plants were placed in the ground in a most impressive and energetic effort.

Russell and Harrold replaced the rusty screws in the FIDO sign shelter with stainless steel screws and also replace some of the posters.

The Eurong Resort management has been watering the Midyim (roundabout) garden all night and all of the plants in the Bilarr garden. There is no water though to the trees that are planted around the perimeter and Russell gave these a good drenching,

**The FIDO Team** comprised John Sinclair, Michael Lowe, Tokiko Dawson, Jane Minor, Pat Turner, Russell Close, Helen Moriarty and Harold Charles.

The eight started at 7.30 and finished at 12.00. except for Michael Lowe who continued in his quest for seed from Fraser Island for plants suitable for growing in Fraser Island gardens while others in the party had a swim and loitered at Dilli Village in the afternoon.

We think that the new garden should be called "*Wallum*" considering that it is growing along a strip where banksias are dominant.

**Total hours worked : 42**

## **Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> November**

By mutual agreement the work was to start earlier 7.00 am and finish earlier 11.00 am so that we could go to Central Station and Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) and enjoy a picnic lunch after knocking off.

Work continued tending and watering the small plants and tidying up the area. We returned the superfluous plants to the Eurong Nursery and while at the QPWS borrowed herbicide and a spray to spray the Green Panic in the area in the hope of knocking it back ready for the full assault at the public toilet end of Easton Street next March. We befriended some of the adjacent property owners and obtained enthusiastic endorsement for the work begun, a pledge not to place any more garden waste across the street, an indication that some coconuts might be removed and permission to remove lantana from the property that was formerly owned by Les Greensill.

With the latter green light the group swung into action swiftly eliminating a number of Lantanas and making a big impression on the block. Another two trailer loads of garden waste were removed to the dump and the group got so carried away that they didn't stop work, even then reluctantly, until 12.00 noon with Fearless Leader continuing to

1.00 pm and Michael continuing to spend additional additional hours on his seed collection project.

After a late lunch at Central Station five of the team walked to Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) via Basin Lake (where some swam) and then on to Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) where only Michael swam and he had the whole lake to himself.

**Total hours worked: 42**

**The total hours contributed to the project was 210 hours** when the volunteers contract was only to contribute 160 hours. The extra 25% was a bonus than made a huge contribution to transforming Eurong and the landholders attitude to native plants and disposing of garden waste.

The tally of hours doesn't take into account all of the hours right into the night spent by Michael Lowe sorting out, cleaning and cataloguing the seed collections he had made during the course of the week.

The whole team left feeling very happy and justifiably very satisfied with their achievements for the week.

There is no description of the working conditions except that it was hot, the March flies were ferocious and there was not any precipitation during the week. At the end of the week, South East Queensland had just chalked up the longest spell of dry days in November on record. The result was that the condition of the tracks started off as difficult and ended up as appallingly dry.

On behalf of the FIDO team Russell Close composed the following entry placed in the "Talinga" Visitors Book that summarized the week:

*From Fraser Island a call went out  
To make a garden at the Eurong Roundabout  
Of native plants and shrubs and flowers  
A job that took about five hours.  
And then the plants the Council brought  
Were placed to hide the Tennis Court.  
The weeds were pulled, the rubbish cleared  
All done by those who volunteered —  
Pat & Jane, Helen & Harold, Michael, Russ, Su and John —  
A week well spent, a job well done,  
Not just hard work but lots of fun.*