

Community Nursery and Landcare

Caring for Kuranda's environment
"by standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before"

Box trailers for hire.

Contactless pick up and return. All plugs catered for.
Text or call Sarah on 0499 588 145 to book.

Calling all wildlife enthusiasts

Frogs are in a bit of trouble in areas across Australia. As sentinels for our ecosystem health, frog decline is concerning and we'd like to create a snapshot of our Kuranda district frog numbers as a record of our local ecosystem health.

Various people have mentioned how green tree frogs and other frogs seemed to disappear last year and now it's time to investigate. So our citizen science "across Kuranda area survey" is kicking off and our aim is to survey the whole of Kuranda district for frogs by recording their presence (that's Kuranda town, Myola, Speewah and Koah areas).

We're asking you, the residents, to join us by surveying the area around your own residence, forest including creek or waterbody if you have one. We'll get the best picture of what's happening if we all survey at roughly the same time of year (and weather conditions) and use the same method so we're planning for this two week survey in November this year. We're kicking off now with residents registrations for our survey later this year. We'll be providing training in the simple, but effective survey method, and creating a Frog Friendly Force of volunteers to help other neighbours and residents survey their own area. We'll be asking you to join in if you're able.

We'll be out on country with the Bulmba Djabugay rangers who have been frog monitoring alongside us over the last few months. If you'd like to register to learn more about the survey, please email Kuranda.envirocare.citizen@gmail.com or citizenscience@envirocare.org.au

Plant of the month – "Blue flax lily"



Photos: Vern Hansen

Another low growing, shade tolerant, but also sun tolerant, native plant as a filler for your garden or path edging. A hardy and very easy care clumping perennial plant, growing mostly to 50cm high and wide. It has delicate sprays of small blue purple flowers in spring and summer, followed by edible bright blue purple berries. Be quick though as the birds usually spot them and gorge before you do. It grows from an underground rhizome, so it can be cut back to tidy up if needed and it will resprout. It grows well on coastal sites, good for stabilising sand but tolerates clay soils equally well. Frost and drought tolerant once established. Grows in sun to shady spots.

Available now at the nursery \$3 each, along with a range of smaller plants for your garden.

Great Barrier Reef Catchments Water Quality Project – David Orr

David Orr, Acting Senior Scientist (Water Quality) from Queensland Dept of Environment and Science will speak on this long running project with a focus on all aspects of the water quality within the Barron River catchment. Please come along with your water quality questions. All welcome Thursday 4 August 7–8pm, Kuranda Recreation Centre, Fallon Road. Light supper. All welcome.

• Date Claimers •

Saturday 30 July Educational planting – 9am.

Thursday 4 August Guest Speaker – 7–8 pm. Speaker meeting presented by David Orr of GBR Catchments Water Quality. Kuranda Recreation Centre. Light supper. All welcome

Saturday 13–21 August Science Week – Check our Facebook page for events.

20–27 August Frog monitoring. Monitoring fun starts after 6.30pm *new time*. Check Facebook or email Ed at kuranda.envirocare.science@gmail.com



We are the invasive resist-ants



Volunteer for our Kuranda Tree frogs

Do you want to do something great for your local environment? The Community Taskforce are helping to protect our critically endangered and endemic Kuranda Tree frog by surveying for yellow crazy ants in the lower reaches of creeks that run into the Barron River. Yellow crazy ants spray formic acid onto their prey and target other insects their size, reptiles and marsupials. They have been known to forage in mature forest canopy and impact nesting bird populations. Invasive ants are a huge threat to our Wet Tropics biodiversity.

Our monthly Kuranda Tree frog creek surveys are ongoing, so come along and donate a few hours of your time to a great cause. Volunteering can help you feel better about yourself by improving your self-esteem and confidence. Share your talents, learn new skills and create a better work-life balance. Other benefits include combating stress, loneliness, social isolation and depression, and help you meet new people, which can help you feel more connected and valued.

Our next surveys are in Ripple Creek on 30 July and 20 August. Please get in touch if you would like to sign up. Volunteers Rock!

Check your pots and protect your patch

The Community Taskforce recently launched an awareness raising video called *Protect Your Patch* which demonstrates methods of quarantining a pot plant—this is an important message for all gardeners, seedsavers and plant enthusiasts.

The two methods to quarantine are as follows:

Bare rooting

Bare rooting is taking a potted plant and removing the pot and soil, leaving the roots bare. Bare roots remove any ants, nests, or eggs that could be hiding in the soil.



Bare rooting

Water bath

A water bath is submerging your potted plant in a container of water for some hours and checking the water for suspect ants.

For larger pots, you can position the pot in a moat of water, essentially creating an 'island'. The roots don't get wet, but ants cannot escape the water. Plants quarantined in a moat of water can be left longer than 24 hours.

Check plant material for invasive ants before selling, swapping or sharing. Yellow crazy ants are found at three areas near Kuranda and Electric Ants at many more.

To help stop the spread we all need to take responsibility for moving ants around. We rely on community support to prevent yellow crazy ants from spreading. Your contribution in our efforts to eradicate this pest are greatly appreciated. Do your bit and protect your patch.

If your group would like a demonstration, please get in touch and we can come to you and show you how to quarantine your own pot plants.

What does a yellow crazy ant look like?

Yellow crazy ants are named after their distinctive erratic, frantic, movements when disturbed.

Appearance:

- Slender body, usually 4mm long (about half the size of a green ant)
- Long skinny legs
- Long antennae, equal to or exceeding the length of the body (11 segments in total)



- Head is distinctly longer than broad
- Golden-brown body, with a darker brown abdomen, sometimes striped
- Day and night time foraging (they are less active in intense heat and heavy rain)
- Spray formic acid (do not bite or sting)
- Tend to be found in large numbers rather than by themselves.

Lifecycle stages:

- Eggs hatch after 18–20 days
- Worker larvae develop in 16–20 days
- Pupae of workers develop in 20 days, while queen pupae develop in 30–34 days
- Total lifespan of a worker ant is approximately 76–84 days.



Right: Life cycle of a yellow crazy ant. Photo: Mark Bloemberg

Below left: Yellow crazy ant workers with larvae. Photo: Jurgen Freund (WTMA)

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Surveys in Kuranda Tree frog habitat

We need your help so please get in touch if you would like to assist with the survey. Morning tea and lunch provided.

WHERE: Lower reaches of Kuranda creeks.

WHEN: Monthly survey 8am–12.30pm

Saturday 30 July – Ripple Ck (Jarawee Rd)

Saturday 20 August – Ripple Creek (Kuranda Heights Rd)

Steiner Spring Fair

Volunteering opportunities available to help at our information stall.

WHERE: Saturday 27 August

WHEN: Cairns and Hinterland Steiner School, Boyles Rd, Kuranda

Sylvia

Join the invasive resist-ants

Yellow Crazy Ant Community Taskforce
communitytaskforce.org.au
coordinator@communitytaskforce.org.au

