

Community Nursery and Landcare

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

Box trailers for hire.
Pick up and return, 19 Kullaroo Close, Kuranda. All plugs catered for.
Text or call Cathy 0419 624 940 to book.

What can you see in the creek?

Healthy waterways is an aim we could all aspire to, given our dependence on good quality water to keep flowing to our precious Great Barrier Reef. In the Kuranda district we could check out our local creeks. But how would we know if we're having an impact?

The health of a freshwater creek can be monitored through a combination of physical, chemical, and biological assessments which are often considered the most comprehensive way to monitor the health of a creek. This is because they reflect the current and historical conditions. While chemical and physical assessments can provide snapshots of the creek's health at a given moment, biological assessments can capture the cumulative impacts of various environmental factors over a longer period.



Habitat assessment at Jumrum Creek in September 2020.

Biological assessments involve examining the organisms that live in the creek. Macroinvertebrates, fish, and algae are often the focus of these assessments. Macroinvertebrates, namely insects, crustaceans, molluscs, and worms large enough to be seen with the naked eye, are crucial biological indicators of water quality. Their sensitivity to environmental changes, and their inability to easily escape unfavourable conditions, reflect the immediate health of their habitats. Species such as stoneflies, mayflies, and caddisflies are sensitive to pollutants and thrive in clean, oxygen-rich water, suggesting good water quality. Conversely, midges and certain worms can survive in lower oxygen conditions and their abundance can indicate pollution or degraded habitats.

Macroinvertebrates can also indicate physical creek changes, such as sedimentation, temperature variations, or altered flow patterns. Monitoring these creek bugs is a great part of freshwater conservation and pollution control, helping assess water quality over time. This valuable information helps with creek management and reduction of human impact efforts on these precious ecosystems that support our creek breeding creatures of the Wet Tropics including the Kuranda Tree frog.

If you'd like to be part of this exciting new monitoring project (starting around September), please express your interest and email info@envirocare.org.au

Plant of the Month Lime Berry – *Micromelum minutum*

This small shrub of 2–4m is an attractive nectar source for many butterflies and the host plant for the Orchard, the Ambrax and Fuscous Swallowtail butterflies. It has attractive showy white scented flowers which are held upright, followed by bright orange/red fruit. It prefers full sun and can tolerate drier lowland forest conditions, but will also grow on rainforest margins and in part shade. It flowers in its second year makes an attractive edge plant with its light green leaves. It's suitable for screening and can be trimmed for hedging.

A few plants available at the nursery. \$3 per plant and all proceeds go to wildlife habitat conservation.



• Date Claimers •

Friday 21–29 July – Monthly frog monitoring fun starts at new time 6.30pm. Check Facebook or text Cathy 0419 624 940 to join the group texts and emails.

Nursery volunteering – Mondays and Thursdays 9am till noon and Saturdays 10am till noon. New volunteer roles available. Seed gathering and propagation roles still available, also watering systems monitoring.

We are the invasive resist-ants



L-R: Pietro Valaguzza (Wet Tropics Management Authority staff), Sylvia Conway (Community Taskforce Coordinator), Andrew Piccone and Alex Sinchak (Wet Tropics Management Authority staff).

Rotary FNQ Field Days 2023

All things agriculture was the theme at Rotary FNQ Field Days where the Community Taskforce joined the Wet Tropics Management Authority's Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program to talk to local farmers and residents about yellow crazy ants.

This bi-annual event was their biggest and best event yet, run over three days with thousands of patrons attending. The live ants on display captured people's interest as well as the fun face masks and stickers. A walk around the grounds gave us an opportunity to talk to more people and hand out extra brochures spreading the message even further.

The Protect Your Patch display demonstrated how residents can protect their yards and farms from invasive

ants by quarantining potted plants.

There are no known yellow crazy ant infestations in the Mareeba area, so this was a fantastic opportunity to speak to locals about being aware of yellow crazy ants, in the hope that they will recognise and report any suspect ants.

EcoFiesta 2023

It was epically eco and the smiles said it all. What a fun event!

The Taskforce joined with the Wet Tropics Management Authority to meet the faces of Cairns' eco warriors, all coming to learn more about what they can do to protect and preserve our natural environment. The interest was immense from young and old, many came to see the live yellow crazy ants, check out the maps of where infestations occur in the Cairns and Kuranda regions and learn about the huge impacts invasive ants have to our precious Wet Tropics biodiversity.

As always, the Protect Your Patch display showed residents what they can do themselves to protect their yards from invasive ants by quarantining pot plants via water bath or bare rooting. Our new Community Taskforce stickers were also a hit.

A big thanks to our Taskforce volunteers, Chelsea Scanlan and Tim Brown for helping us get the yellow crazy ant message out to our wider community. And a huge thank you to Cairns Regional Council for putting on another awesome EcoFiesta event.



Community Taskforce's Mikhaela Jacoby and volunteer Chelsea Scanlan showing off our new stickers.

Survey sessions for the Kuranda Tree frog

No invasive ants were detected on our third survey for the year. Our next survey will be along the banks of Mantaka Creek on 29 July.

If you would like to join us, please do get in touch. No

experience necessary and lunch will be provided.

Be the change you want to see and this is your chance get involved in local conservation actions.

The crew ready to survey the second section of Queens Creek in May 2023.

The Kuranda Tree frog (*Litoria myola*) is critically endangered, and under threat from invasive ants. Photo: Rhys Sharry



On a final note

To report illegal dumping contact Mareeba Shire Council on **1300 308 461**.

Report yellow crazy ants call **1800 CRAZY ANT**.

To volunteer with the Yellow Crazy Ant Community Taskforce call (07) 4093 8989, email coordinator@communitytaskforce.org.au or visit @ycacommunitytaskforce Facebook page.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

FREE Toolbox talk

Learn about the risks and impacts invasive ants have in your community.

WHERE: In your workplace or school

WHEN: Get in touch to make a time

Kuranda Tree frog habitat (KTF) monthly survey

Volunteers wanted for our survey crew.

WHERE: Kuranda creeks

WHEN: Saturday 29 July — 8am–12pm

Saturday 26 August — 8am–12pm

Saturday 23 September — 8am–12pm

Join the invasive resist-ants

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

