

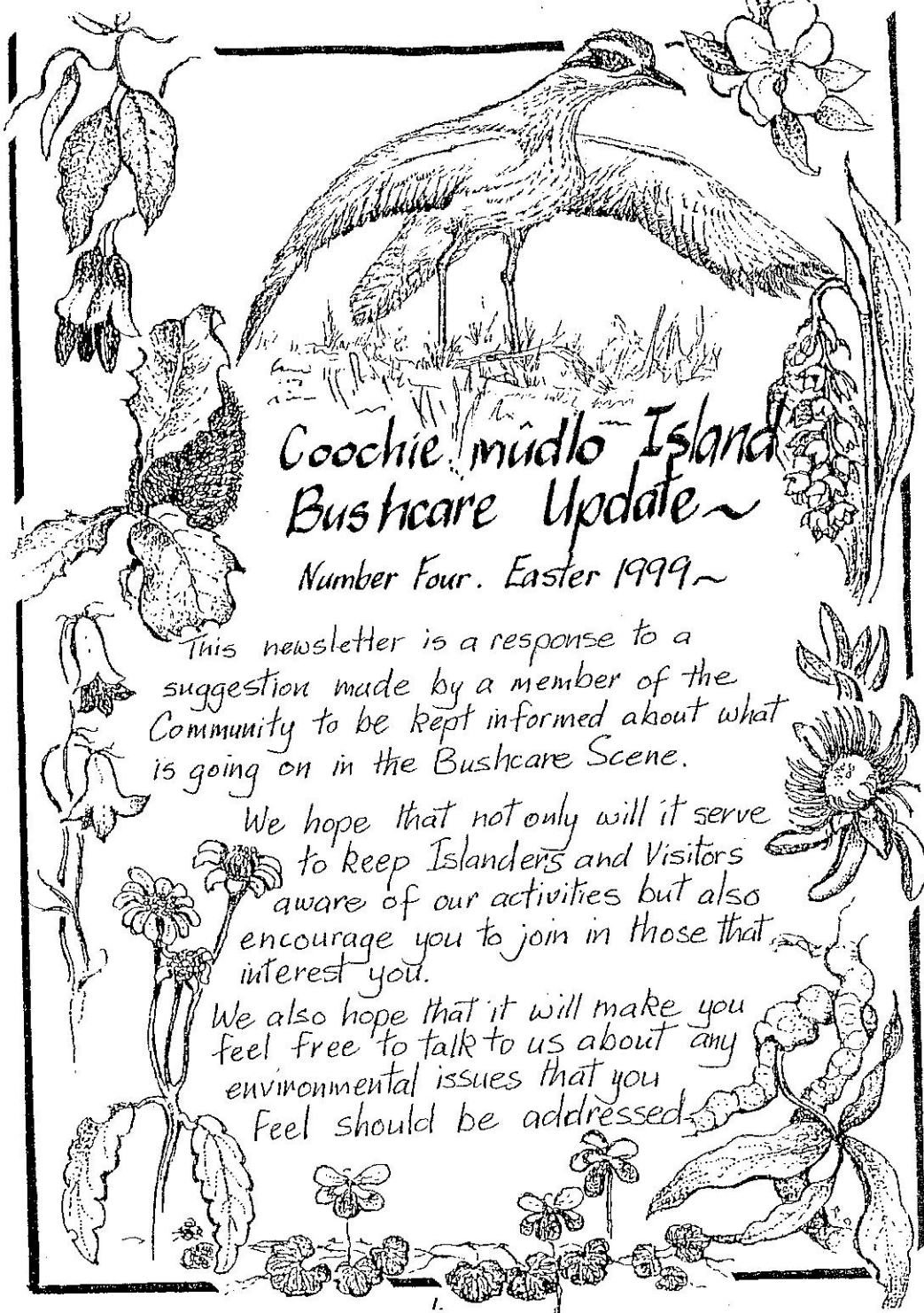
# Coochie mudlo Island Bushcare Update ~

Number Four. Easter 1999 ~

This newsletter is a response to a suggestion made by a member of the Community to be kept informed about what is going on in the Bushcare Scene.

We hope that not only will it serve to keep Islanders and Visitors aware of our activities but also encourage you to join in those that interest you.

We also hope that it will make you feel free to talk to us about any environmental issues that you feel should be addressed.



# LOCAL PROVENANCE COMMUNITY NURSERY.



For sometime now we have recognised the need for an improved nursery facility on Coochiemudlo Island for propagating our own rootstock, and planning is now underway to bring this bold dream into reality.

As a first step Tony and Richard visited Stuart Neal, the Greening Australia extension officer for Caboolture Shire, to look at three nurseries that he is responsible for. Stuart turned out to be a very inspirational character - brimming with knowledge and enthusiasm - and, as a result, we now have a very good idea of the sort of facility we need to develop.

The next stage, which is now underway, is the costing and detailed planning of an ideal nursery with a view to securing a grant - probably from the National Heritage trust.

In the meantime it is proposed that our propagation activities will be extended to collect and catalogue seeds, establish seedlings and create a viable stock for the nursery.

The Propagation Group's work will have to be carried out on a weekly basis and so we need lots of volunteers to help spread the load.

On the up side, the work will be light, satisfying and, hopefully, very social too!

LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE INTERESTED.

# COOCHIEMUDLO BUSHCARE GROUP WINS LORD MAYORS AWARD.



Coochiemudlo Bushcare Group was presented with the Community Education Bushcare Award in December. The Mayor spoke at length about our achievements in this area including meetings, newsletters, joint ventures with other Island Groups, work with the FONOIS and the Wetland Sign.

## COMMUNITY BUSHCARE AWARDS

1998

Community Education Category

Awarded to

Coochiemudlo Bushcare Group

For fostering community interest in bush friendly activities and discouraging activities that affect the sustainability of bushland, through example, promotional activities and education of residents

presented by

The Mayor of Redland Shire Council

Signed

*John Santaguida*  
John Santaguida, Mayor



Greening Australia

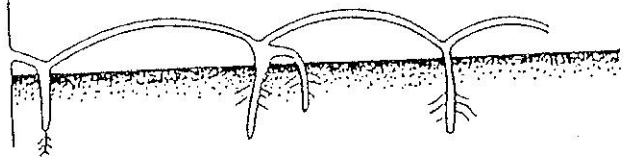
# HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR MANGROVES ?

Last year, when we did the coastal plant identification course held by Greening Australia here on the island, we did a fascinating activity in the Mangrove area. If, like me, you thought that Mangroves were all the same, try working through these criteria. Sue Mathams organised the activity and she kindly said we could share it with you. Just go through the questions, follow the directions and you'll be able to identify the different Mangroves.

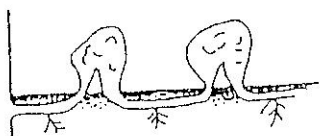
## KEY TO the SEVEN MANGROVE GENERA

1. Are the leaves alternate on the stem,  
or opposite each other?      Go to 2  
Go to 4
2. Is the sap milky,  
or not milky.      Excoecaria  
Go to 3.
3. Is the leaf broadest towards the tip,  
or broadest about the middle?      Lumnitzera  
Aegiceras
4. Does the plant have conspicuous stilt roots, Rhizophora  
or no stilt roots?      Go to 5.
5. Does the plant have erect cylindrical  
aerial roots projecting from the mud?  
or does it have knobbly, knee-like  
aerial roots, projecting from the mud?      Avicennia  
Go to 6
6. Is the base of the trunk distinctly  
buttressed  
or not?      Ceriops  
Bruguiera.

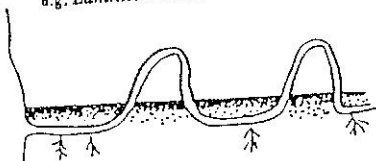
Long, looping bow-shaped extensions of stilt roots  
e.g. *Rhizophora styloza*.



Curved thickened, knee roots  
e.g. *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*

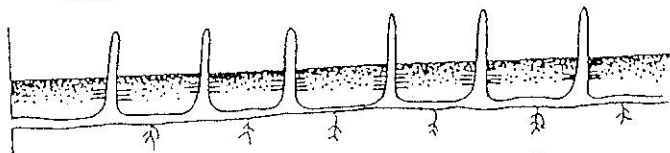


Simple knee roots  
e.g. *Lumnitzera littorea*

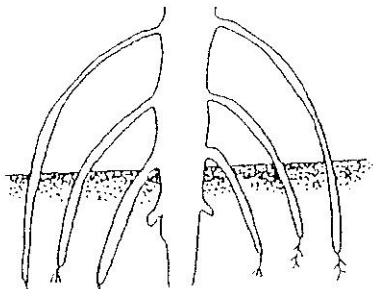


Check  
the roots!

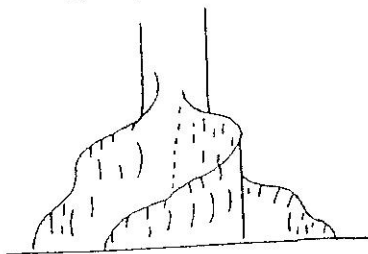
Erect, slender, annual roots e.g. *Avicennia marina*



Stilt roots  
e.g. *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*



Buttress roots  
e.g. *Ceriops tagal*



## TWO HAPPY ENDINGS.

Last September a Bush Curlew was seen huddled on Elizabeth St at the edge of the road. A group of Islanders were concerned that it was hurt so they rang Bushcare and put an umbrella over it to shelter it from the hot sun.

By the time we arrived the Mother Curlew, who had been hiding her baby had taken fright, run away and we were left with the chick.

A quick call to Noah's Ark confirmed our belief that the chick would be accepted back by the mother and so the task became to reunite them.

After walking around the area with the chick loudly calling its parents, and then sitting in the mosquito and tick ridden bush for a couple of hours we remembered that Ernie and Hazel Calotti had befriended the Curlews in that area.

They were instantly able to point out where the parents were. Although the Mother was nervous and ran away we were able to put the chick close to the Father. An hour later Ernie and Hazel were able to report that the chick was once again under its Mother's wing.

Living on such a special place brings its responsibilities as well as its joys.

We are all honorary caretakers of this Island.

Thanks to Hazel and Ernie for doing such a good job in their area.

\* \* \* \* \*

In October many Islanders on the Eastern Side of the Island noticed an Ibis which had become so tangled up with fishing line that it was virtually hobbled.

It was a very quick and cunning bird though and resisted many Islander's attempts to catch it.

It took a Team effort to catch it and remove the

fishing line from its legs.

Bill Ginnelly made a trap from an old crab pot covered with shade cloth donated by Don Holcraft. It was propped up by a stick attached to a fishing line. The fishing line had bits of white rag tied to it so that it would not trip unsuspecting people walking past. And Bill got the good job - he sat in the shade holding the fishing line waiting patiently for the bird to come for its food.

Norah Ginnelly had to use her best bowling skills to throw the meat - it was a Leonard's chicken burger that day! - into the trap in the precise area which would allow the bird to be caught without being hurt.

My job was to tell Dad when the Ibis was in the right position for him to pull the line and release the stick. The Ibis who had sat on the roof and watched the construction of the trap with great interest refused to go anywhere near it.

It was then that THE MAGPIE gave an unexpected hand. The Ibis hates the magpie. They fight regularly over scraps of meat. It was too much for the Ibis to see the Magpie getting all Norah's carefully thrown chicken burger. He went into the trap to chase the Magpie away.

The Ibis was strong and the trap was light "Mary, go and hold the trap down" yelled my Father. So I did and tried to calm the frightened and angry bird down by telling him that he was OK and that everything was going to be fine. I could tell by the look in his eye that he did not believe me!

At this stage we decided that we needed some expert help so Paul Bishop was summoned. He arrived, faster than a speeding bullet, - on his bike and skilfully removed the fishing line from the bird's legs.

It was a great joy to see the Ibis soar over the

root.

"We won't see him again" said Paul.

But we did - the next day he was back again.

Such is Island Life.

\* \* \* \* \*

We all cursed the lazy person who had left that tangled line behind. It's a big problem. A few years ago we had to rescue a kookaburra which had become tangled in a fishing line left in a tree and was hanging with one of its wings caught in the hook. I, for one, will never again walk past discarded fishing line. It's picked up, taken home, wrapped carefully and disposed of in the bin.

I hope some of you who read this will feel the same. Let's keep our Island safe for the birds too!

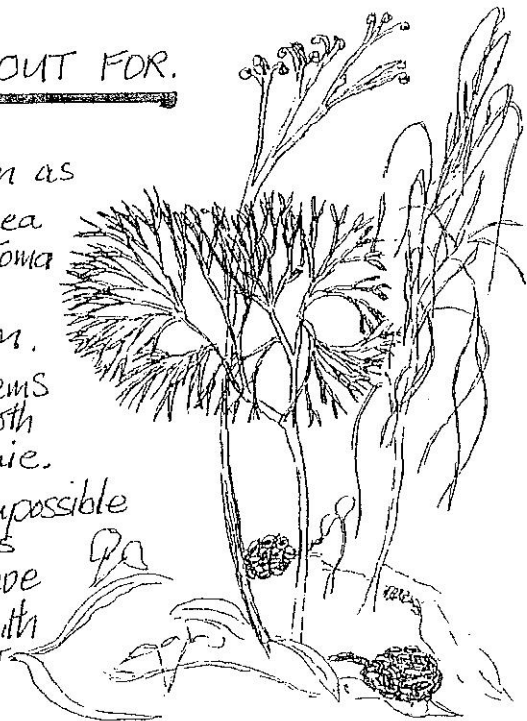
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## A PLANT TO LOOK OUT FOR.

The plants commonly known as the "Combs" ferns - *Schizaea Bifida* and *Schizaea Dichotoma* are among those seriously threatened by urbanisation.

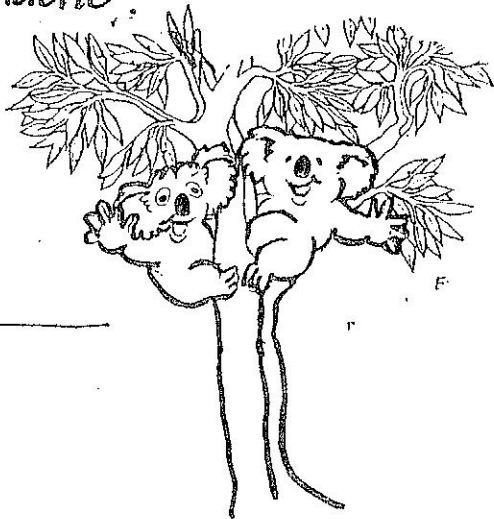
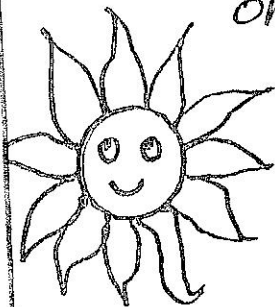
They grow on old dune systems in wooded areas and both types are found on Coochie.

Because it is almost impossible to transplant them it is thought that they may have a symbiotic relationship with the roots of the trees that surround them.





How about some KOALAS  
on Coochiemudlo? <sup>20</sup>



We talked to Adrian Cameris - Wild Life Officer for Redland Shire Council - about this idea as it has been raised on more than one occasion.

His immediate response was that it is not a good idea - this is one of those times when we leave things to Mother Nature.

Apparently one of two things could happen -:

The soil could not provide the right nutrients in the leaves which would result in a slow death for the koalas OR if the soil is right they would breed and in about fifteen to twenty years devastate the Island by defoliating the trees. Then the other creatures would suffer and we would lose the birds.

We only have to look at the Kangaroo Island experience to see how this kind of experiment can go wrong.

Adrian said that it is almost certain that in the past koalas have been brought on to the Island but if they don't last the distance something is not right.

He added "The special thing about the Bay Islands is that they are genetically unique. Each one has its own beauty and quality. Let's keep it that way."

A STRANGER ON THE SHORE: *THESPESIA POPULNEA* (*HIBISCUS POPULNEUS*), AN UNUSUAL SPECIES FOR SOUTH MORETON BAY.

Rosemary Opala

PO Box 5031, Victoria Pt., Qld 4165

Apparently overlooked until early 1996, something different was spotted among the cottonwoods (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*) on Coochiemudlo Island's less-visited north eastern corner. A scattering of unusual flowers, at first glance on cottonwood branches, alerted members of a walking group to a quite puzzling "hibiscus".

The distinctive buds and fruits, and crinkled, lemon-yellow petals (some at stages of maturing through rose-pink to dull purple) could never be *H. tiliaceus*. The large, heart-shaped leaves lacked the "lace d'oyley" insect depredations typical of cottonwood foliage. Unlike the latter, the undersides were the same colour as the surfaces. The overall appearance was of *Macaranga tanarius*, but difficult to sort out from a tangle of cottonwoods. What at first had appeared to be two specimens turned out to be a single tree with 3 long (approx. 5m) arching trunks with pale grey, lenticular bark.

The plant may have been bypassed for years because of its comparatively short flowering period (late summer), and interlacing with cottonwoods and other shoreline trees. The large (6 - 7 cm x 8 - 10 cm) blooms are most attractive, with dark red centres to the yellow petals and a pleasant "plastic feel" when touched. The dangling green fruits, looking rather like miniature tomatoes, are also interesting. Flattened globular and about 4cm in diameter, they hold several furry seeds. The fruits have a smooth, hard skin which goes brown and shrinks to hazelnut size when mature, remaining indehiscent.

Information in Stanley & Ross, Vol.2 (1986) suggested that the plant was *Thespesia populnea* (L.) Solander ex Corr., which had been recorded from Goat I. in Moreton Bay. The Herbarium reported that "This is a tropical strand species with its occurrence in Moreton Bay its most southerly aspect. The only other specimens we have from the Moreton Region are from Goat I. so this is a new locality for the species."

For Coochiemudlo's lone plant, vandalism or natural death is a concern. The seeds appear to be sterile. What odyssey, we wonder, might have brought just one fertile seed capsule to this receptive landfall on a quiet island corner? (The pod will float for several months).

It now seems there may be another *T. populnea* on Macleay I. No details are available at the time of writing this.

Weed Buster Day with the FINOCI's.  
(Friends Of Nature On Coochiemudlo Island.)



The FINOCI's marked Weedbuster Day by attacking the weeds along the creeke which runs behind the carpark and parallel with main beach. They did a tremendous job filling around thirty sugar bags with mother of millions, asparagus ferns, mile a minute etc etc.

Then the fun activity was to paint and write about an area without weeds compared to an area of healthy Australian Bush.

Lord Mayor, Eddie Santaguiliana enjoyed reading the stories, admired the paintings and presented certificates to the participants.

Well done kids!! and what a great area to give attention to. That creek could be made into a lovely foreshore feature..... all we need is more time!

# Bushcare Diary 1999-2000

**FEBRUARY:** 2 World Wetlands Day  
6 Curlew Survey on Goodiemanullo Island  
20 WORKING BEE.

**MARCH:** 7 Clean Up Australia Day  
20 WORKING BEE  
20-21 Bush care Twitch Fun Day  
28 Bushcare/Lifesavers Sea Week Day

**APRIL:** 17. WORKING BEE

**MAY:** 15. WORKING BEE  
29. Coolwynpin State School  
Koala Fete and Bush-friendly  
neighbours workshop.

**JUNE:** 4 Bush Friendly Garden Competition.  
5 World Environment Day  
19 WORKING BEE.

**JULY:** 17 Flinders Day  
WORKING BEE

**AUGUST:** 30 Save the Koala day.  
7-8 Indigiscapes/WOW weekend  
21 WORKING BEE

**SEPTEMBER:** 5. National Tree Day  
7. Threatened species day  
18. WORKING BEE

**OCTOBER:** 9th-17th Weedbusters Week. Trees for Woods  
13th Arbor Day  
16. WORKING BEE.

**NOVEMBER:** 17-23 Coast Care  
20th WORKING BEE.

**DECEMBER:** 5. Ocean Care Day