



## **Pasture Dieback Puzzles Farmers and Scientists**

Bob Clem provided the following information on pasture dieback.

This is a condition occurring widely in sown/planted pasture in central Queensland, the Burnett region and in SE Queensland. In attempts to identify the cause and to determine what action

can be taken to overcome the problem a range of activities have been initiated and are ongoing. This is being coordinated by MLA but several agencies are involved including DAFF Qld.

A brief summary of activities (from reports of Dieback Working Group, Applied Horticultural Research, Farmer survey)



### **Some activities include:**

Property visits and collection of plant, soil, and water for analysis (Aug 2017)

A survey of farmers (Oct 2017). Results indicated that dieback occurred:

- initially in patches and then spread
- it occurred on a wide range of soils
- not all pasture species were affected
- spreads both up and downslope
- worse in tall grass, thatch, under trees and along fences
- strongly associated with moist soil and rain
- burning before all plants were dead could be beneficial
- once severely affected plants die and do not regrow

As a result testing in labs and glasshouses has been done and some field trials have been started. Field treatments being tested include burning, fertilizing, renovation, cultivation and resowing grasses, legumes and forage crops in various combinations and use of fungicides and insecticides.

Early indications are that cultural treatments (Burning, fertilizing, cultivation) has suppressed dieback but results are variable and at this time short term, legumes can be successfully established in areas of dieback, sorghum can be established in dieback affected areas, Amistar (ai Azoxystrobin) a fungicide used to control a range of diseases in wheat, barley, ryegrass, maize and many horticultural crops shows promise to control disease in the tropical grasses.



### **My comments**

In CQ buffel grass is badly affected but other grasses including Rhodes grass, panics, urochloa (Sabi) and creeping bluegrass have also been affected.

While this is not the first time that productivity of sown grasses/pastures has been reduced by disease/insects etc. it is by far the most widespread that this kind of condition has been observed and is impacting on many producers. In the 1980's buffel grass growing in the Baralaba area was

seen with somewhat similar symptoms (ie reddening of leaves and subsequent decline and death in patches). Soil pathogens were indicated as the probable cause but there were no treatments that were widely adopted by farmers.

In the 1970s Pangola grass in NQ (wet tropics and Burdekin) was infected with a range of pathogens including leaf rust, lemma beetle larvae, aphids, root nematodes and viruses to the extent that it was replaced with other grasses (green couch and signal grass) in these intensive grazing systems.

Kikuyu grass is infected with a soil fungal type organism (oomycete) that causes yellowing (usually in late summer/autumn) each year in SEQ.

Legumes have also been affected. Of most consequence was the impact of anthracnose on Townsville stylo in NQ in the 1970's but a range of other stylos are of little value for grazing in many parts of the world because of this disease. Using resistant species/varieties and breeding for resistance has been successful.

Lucerne is also an example with anthracnose, aphids and other pathogens and insects reducing yields and requiring major plant breeding efforts to keep it in agriculture. I think this is also the case with some of the temperate legumes such as sub-clover, white clover, and medics.

My understanding is that there is always a range of pathogens in the soil and most of the time healthy plants can withstand some attack. The current issue may be something new and more virulent or it may be just a change in the growing conditions that have caused existing organisms to be more damaging either because there are more bugs/fungi/viruses, or their populations have changed, or that the pasture plants are under stress from climate-related events (hot, cold, wet, dry), declining/poor nutrition or other things that I don't understand. Certainly, most of our pasture grasses have been used in Q now for many years and some are old stands that have declined in productivity. Initially, these pastures were very healthy growing in high N and free from insects and disease that were present in countries where these grasses grew in naturalised populations. Older pastures especially where all plants are of the same or similar age may be more susceptible although I have not heard reports that only old pasture are affected. In fact, the occurrence seems to be somewhat random.

So I don't think we are in entirely new territory but it is the severity and area affected that is of concern. The program being undertaken will likely sort some of the science but it will take time and is a bit frustrating to farmers who are wanting some direction so that they can make decisions about what to do in the short-term. In the longer-term solutions that can be applied to extensive areas will need to be cost-effective.

Unfortunately, departments are not in a good position to respond quickly with very few pasture scientists actively undertaking research these days, and management (I think short-sightedly) withdrawing almost all resources from the highly productive systems in favour of other programs. If pasture dieback is not contained it has potential to cause large-scale damage to our landscape and natural systems (erosion, sediments in streams, deterioration of the reef etc. etc.) and may even surpass the damage caused by tree clearing that has had so much attention of late.

### **Something a bit more local**

On my small property at Kin Kin grasses most severely affected are broad-leaf paspalum, Bisset creeping bluegrass, Callide Rhodes grass (large patches of dead or near dead), Kikuyu much worse than normal in some patches and Gatton/Green Panic and Digit grasses to a lesser extent. Setaria is affected to some extent and signal not noticeably affected. Ryegrass and Tillage radish planted in infected areas have established and are growing well.

Bob Clem

26<sup>th</sup> August 2018

## Meet the New Team Members

The Gympie Landcare team would like to introduce Lavina Shaw as the new Administration Manager and Regula Waser as Gympie Landcare's Finance Officer.

Lavina moved to the Gympie region almost ten years ago and has extensive administration experience and small business knowledge from working in various professional industries including accounting, the solar industry, plumbing, and irrigation. Lavina loves the outdoors and spends most weekends outdoors camping and hiking with the family and experiencing all that nature has given us.

Being on the land is second nature to Lavina and she hopes to grow her own produce patch and orchard so that she and her husband can become self-sufficient. Lavina is also an avid animal lover and generously donates her time, knowledge and skills in marketing and fundraising to a local animal rescue group.

Lavina is truly excited to be part of the Gympie Landcare team and is looking forward to the challenges that lay ahead. Lavina's role is to oversee the general administrative processes of the organisation and to create further awareness about land care in the Gympie community through events, workshops, and marketing.

Regula and her husband moved from Switzerland to Kununurra, Australia in 1988 where she was involved in a station south of El Questro. Regula and her husband's task was to bring the badly overgrazed and understocked area back to life with the principles of Allan Savory.

Regula continued to work as a bookkeeper for twenty years and after many adventures in Kununurra (including a plane crash, helicopter crash, and a crocodile attack), Regula felt it was time to move the family onto to bigger and better things. Regula set out to find the perfect place for her family and drove from the West Coast to the East Coast and found the perfect spot at Goomboorian. Regula and her husband purchased a 30 acre property and continually plant new trees; they have a vegetable garden, and have started to develop their own orchard. Regula and her husband are loving the farm life with their chooks and the beautiful surrounds of Goomboorian. When the advertisement came up for her position, Regula was instantly attracted to it and decided to apply, already being a life member. Regula is looking forward to a long lasting and satisfying future with Gympie Landcare.



## Christmas Fundraising Raffle

We are holding a Christmas raffle with all funds raised going towards Gympie Landcare!

Enter our raffle to go into the draw to win:

- \$50 Bunnings Voucher
- A bee hotel
- Gympie Landcare plant voucher
- Plant and person pamper pack

Tickets are \$2.00 each or three for \$5.00 and are available at our Nursery.

The Raffle will be drawn on Friday 21 December 2018 and the winner will be notified via phone to collect their prize.



## Our End of Year Celebration

The Gympie Landcare staff, volunteers and members came together on Thursday 29 November 2018 to celebrate another successful year.

Tony, our Nursery Manager, was also our stand-in BBQ chef on the day and provided a mouth-watering sausage sizzle and ice cold drinks for everyone to enjoy. Staff, volunteers, and members all brought a plate to share and we had a wonderful Christmas feast with plenty of leftovers for the next day!

The Committee would like to thank all of our staff and volunteers for an amazing year and are truly grateful for their passion for land care. We are looking forward to an even bigger year in 2019 and would like to wish all of our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



## Farewell To Jenny At Messmate Park

A special thank you to all who came to say farewell to Jenny at Messmate Park.

Lots of happy memories were shared while we feasted on our morning tea.

Ric, Carl, and of course Ernie were on hand to help identify the diverse range of trees and plants on our walk to the billabong.

Just a reminder our working bee at the Park will be Saturday, 15th December at 8.30am.

Contact Landcare or Sandra Lalor at 54821331



## Good Year for Bio-Control

It has been an amazing and very busy twelve months in Biocontrol. Changes to rearing the Madeira beetle resulted in harvesting larger than normal numbers with the Sunshine Coast Council releasing 7000 beetles in the past six weeks.

Over the next two to three years, large numbers of Jewel beetles will be released around Brisbane and the Gold Coast by Healthy Land and Water.

While we have been releasing Tingids for a little over 10 years, we have decided to downsize to make way for a new venture breeding composting worms for landholders and sale of worm juice and castings. Tingids will continue to be released to landholders and groups until the season slows early next year. From there Tingids will be released by biocontrol staff in and around the Gympie region.

It has been exciting to see that our Leaf Tying moth to control cats' claw creeper have emerged with 89 adults being transferred to new cages. Our fourth generation should emerge late December to early January and if we are able to rear enough to be able to establish on their own, they will be released out into the field.

Biocontrol could not operate without the help and support of so many people. To all the volunteers who have helped catch beetles, care for plant stock, set up new tents and irrigation, insect and moth monitoring and so on, Pat, Phil, Steve, Sue, Kerrie, Bruce, Dave, Sandy, Suzanne, Leanne, Chris, Coral, Robin, Phil, Lesley, Peter, Peter and Peter. Kerrie, who takes amazing macro shots of our bugs and beetles for our Facebook page and newsletters.



Leanne and Sally, who have brought in so many cats claw tubers to grow and feed our bugs and beetles. Admin staff, Jenny and Ari for processing insect release forms, accounts, data, grants and so on. Our Contract Services team, Ricky, Glen, and Carl who release insects on my behalf and give vital feedback from the field. Our main supporters, MRCCC, HQ Plantations, Gympie Regional Council, BMRG, Sunshine Coast Council and our most recent supporter Healthy Land and Water and all of the Landholders and Landcare Groups and members who have supported the Biocontrol facility over the last ten years.

Our committee members, Ernie, Gloria, David, Mel, Louise and Louise, who have given me so much trust and support in the work that I do.

And of course, to Tony James, our Nursery Manager, who has been by my side on a daily basis, giving me encouragement, support and laughter throughout the facility. It has been my pleasure working you and I wish you all the best in your early retirement in 2019.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas, and a fantastic 2019 from all the Staff, volunteers, bugs and beetles of Biocontrol.



## Looking for a gift for Christmas?

Trying to buy something for someone who has everything or just can't think of the right thing?

How about a gift voucher from our nursery!

Christmas is a stressful time when you're racing around trying to find a gift for a list full of people.

With a gift voucher from our nursery there is no stress involved, just pop into our nursery or purchase a gift voucher online through our website and you're done!

There's something for everyone at Gympie Landcare nursery, so you will feel confident that they will love their gift!



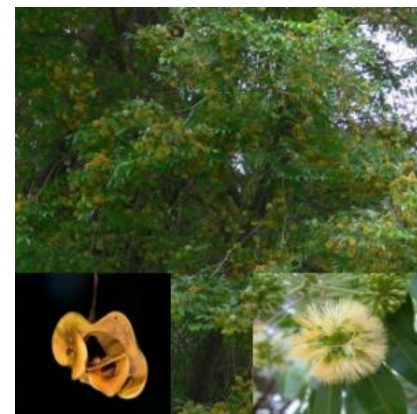
## Nursery Manager's Plant of the Month – Parachidendron pruinosum

Our plant of the month is Parachidendron pruinosum. It is sometimes known as Stink Wood, or more commonly as Snow Wood.

Growing to a height of about 15 metres it has heads of fragrant, white to pale yellow flowers from spring to summer. The 12cm long twisted seed pods are red or orange inside and contain black flattened seeds.

With its reddish trunk and lacy pinnate leaves, Snow Wood is an excellent small tree for street plantings, parks or as a feature in a larger garden. It grows well in full sun or part shade, prefers well drained neutral pH soil, is frost tolerant and requires only moderate watering.

Snow Wood is an attractive fragrant small tree that attracts bees, birds and butterflies and is available in the nursery now.



## Christmas Closing Hours

Dear Valued Customers & Members,

Our office and nursery will be closed over the Christmas break from 1.00pm Saturday, 22nd December 2018 and will reopen Wednesday, 2nd January 2019 at 8.30am.

Due to the break in business hours, our next monthly newsletter will be distributed in early February 2019.



# Caring for your rural block course

## Our very popular 'Blockies' course is on again in 2019

Topics in 2018 included an introductory plant ID workshop, soils, landforms and vegetation in the Gympie region, planning a revegetation project, fire safety and land management, an introduction to permaculture concepts, weeds, pests and biosecurity, land caring from a traditional perspective, the role of microbats, riparian condition assessment and a glimpse at what other landholders had achieved.

We tested soils, looked at ways to prevent and improve erosion and conducted a pasture analysis and developed a forage budget. All in 9 short weeks!

### When:

Wednesday mornings commencing 6<sup>th</sup> February through to 10<sup>th</sup> April. Sessions will commence at 9am and generally finish by 12.30pm, although sessions involving bus travel for field trips will require an earlier start.

### Cost:

The course fee is \$100 for Landcare members and \$120 for non-members. This includes all bus travel for field trips, course notes and morning tea.

### Field trips:

You will travel by bus in air-conditioned comfort but as field sessions may involve walking up to 500m through paddocks and wooded areas, walking shoes, long trousers, hat, sunscreen, and a water bottle are recommended.

Feedback from the 2018 course identified field trips as the biggest highlight of the course. The program presenters will include a range of professionals and community leaders with specialist knowledge.

The education team is currently finalising the program, which will be released in the next 2 weeks.

Payment of the course fee will confirm your place on the course.

Booking is essential, as places are limited.

Visit [www.gympielandcare.org.au](http://www.gympielandcare.org.au) or contact the office to book.



## Native bee session 9 December 2018

### Native Bee Morning – change of venue

The next native bee morning conducted by Valley Bees will be held on Sunday 9 December 2018.

The usual venue is at Landcare but this session will instead be held at 354 Tandur Road Gympie (opposite Puma Service Station on the old Bruce Hwy) starting at 10am.

It will involve the transferring of a number of native hives.

Please bring a plate to share for morning tea.

For more information visit [www.gympielandcare.org.au](http://www.gympielandcare.org.au)



## Save the date – Members meetings for 2019

The Committee hopes you can join us for the quarterly Member's meetings in 2019.

This will be your opportunity to keep up to date with what is happening at Landcare and share your thoughts with the Committee and other Members.

### The dates for the meetings are as follows:

- **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm**
- **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 10am**
- **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August at 9am**
- **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm**

There will be a call for agenda items 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

If you have an item for the agenda please submit it in writing to [admin@gympielandcare.org.au](mailto:admin@gympielandcare.org.au) for consideration prior to the deadline.

We look forward to seeing you.





## Join One of Our Sub-Committees

Gympie Landcare has an active management committee who are keen to give as many members the opportunity to be part of guiding the organisation into the future.

To facilitate this process and ensure a focused effort on various areas of the organisation that require attention the management committee have created sub-committees.

All the sub-committees are chaired by a management committee member and have a 'Terms of Reference' (scope) that has been approved by the management committee.

We invite all our members who want to actively take part in developing the organisation to become part of one of our sub-committees.

For more information on the sub-committees and who to contact see below.

### Marketing Sub-Committee

#### Purpose

To develop a marketing & promotions strategy, and oversee the implementation of that strategy



#### Delegated Authority

Provides direction on marketing and promotions strategy and manages the resources delivering on the strategy.

Makes decisions on all the activities within its area of responsibility that have been approved by the management committee.

#### Specific Areas of Responsibility

- Marketing & promotions strategy
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
- Other media (includes media liaison)
- Website
- Newsletter
- Events
- Organisation Branding (Organisation logos, style sheet, templates, presentations, business cards)
- Signage
- Publications (brochures, flyers, fact sheets).

To see the full Terms of Reference visit [www.gympielandcare.org.au](http://www.gympielandcare.org.au)

To express interest, please email Mel Marx at [marketing@gympielandcare.org.au](mailto:marketing@gympielandcare.org.au)

### Education Sub-Committee

#### Purpose

To develop an education platform (workshops, courses etc.) that supports both the landowners and our vision.

#### Delegated Authority

We identify, develop and implement education content to further the vision and purpose of Gympie Landcare

#### Specific Areas of Responsibility

- Education policy, guidelines, procedures and practices
- Pricing of education content (workshops, courses, online resources, information sessions)
- Development & sourcing of education content

- Planning and implementation of education content
- Manage & report on feedback with regard to education content
- Management & development of online education content
- Marketing & promotion of the education content in collaboration with the marketing & promotion sub-committee
- To collaborate with the following: science and technology sub-committee, marketing & promotion sub-committee and staff

To see the full Terms of Reference visit [www.gympielandcare.org.au](http://www.gympielandcare.org.au)

To express interest, please email Louise Watson at [education@gympielandcare.org.au](mailto:education@gympielandcare.org.au)

## Human Resources Sub-Committee

### Purpose

To develop a basic human resources framework that meets the requirements of the Fair Workers Act ensuring all legislative requirements are met and that the organisation has effective people management policies, guidelines, and strategy.

### Delegated Authority

Provides direction on all the people management aspects required by the Fair Workers Act and the effective people management of the organisation.

Makes decisions on all the activities within its area of responsibility that have been approved by the management committee.

### Specific Area Of Responsibility

- Human Resources Policies
- Human Resources guidelines, procedures and practices
- Grievance procedures
- Human Resources templates (contracts, role descriptions)
- Monitoring of the entire employee lifecycle
- Coaching of staff & managers/supervisors in their human resources roles
- Organisation effectiveness (structure, leadership, work practices/methods, accountabilities, culture, climate, decision making, engagement)
- Recommendation to MC on adhoc HR matters arising

To see the full Terms of Reference visit [www.gympielandcare.org.au](http://www.gympielandcare.org.au)

To express interest, please email Mel Marx at [marketing@gympielandcare.org.au](mailto:marketing@gympielandcare.org.au)

Terms of reference are currently being created for 2 additional sub-committees. They are a finance sub-committee and science and technology sub-committee.

To express interest in either of those sub-committees please contact the chairperson of the sub-committee.

Science & Technology – Ernie Ryder: [president@gympielandcare.org.au](mailto:president@gympielandcare.org.au)

Finance – Barry Lambooy: [finance@gympielandcare.org.au](mailto:finance@gympielandcare.org.au)



# Gympie & District **Landcare** Group

## **Contract Landcare Services Team Member**

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>CLS Team Member</b>
<b>Award:</b>	Gardening & Landscaping
<b>Hours:</b>	24 – 36 hrs per week depending on project availability (The applicant will be required to work weekends)
<b>Pay rate:</b>	\$25.28 per hour, and entitlements as defined in the award
<b>Contract Position:</b>	Casual, Award Level 2
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Carl Schefe

### **Our Organisation**

Gympie and District Landcare Group is a community based organisation active in the Gympie Region, Queensland. The Group is an incorporated organisation and a registered charity. Members elect an Executive (Management Committee) each year that is responsible for management oversight. Members and volunteers are integrally involved in the group's main activities: operating a local native plant nursery; raising biocontrol insects for invasive plant species control; providing land care services, fostering local land caring activities; and community education.

### **Purpose of Position**

To provide the best environmental outcomes for our clients through a range of specialist landcare services.

### **Person**

This person will be able to implement project objectives as directed. Work well with others in a team environment. Have a passion for land caring activities as it pertains to revegetation, clearing and caring for the environment. This person will have initiative and be open to sharing their practical skills and experiences with a broad range of people and be committed to working safely.

### **Responsibilities**

- Carry out safe and correct manual handling of heavy items up to 20kg.
- Undertake handling transportation and use of Herbicides.
- Choose the best equipment for jobs and tasks.
- Have a working knowledge and skills to identify native and exotic vegetation.
- Develop a working knowledge of native plants and where they are suited.
- Weed control work
- Chainsaw use
- Drive a vehicle to and from site
- Revegetation/Tree planting
- Operate equipment

## **Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

### **Essential**

- ACDC license
- White Card
- Drivers' License
- Experience with revegetation and maintenance
- Good communication and writing skills
- Experience with herbicide application
- Problem solving skills as it pertains to equipment maintenance

### **Desirable**

- Traffic Control

### **Physical Demands**

This position may be physically demanding at times and requires a person who is fit, energetic, and flexible. Carry out safe and correct manual handling of heavy items up to 20kg.

### **GDLG PURPOSE**

We support and inspire landowners to practice sustainable land stewardship

### **GDLG VISION**

To leave a legacy of sustainable land care management in the Gympie region



# Gympie & District **Landcare** Group

## **Contract Landcare Services Supervisor**

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>CLS Supervisor</b>
<b>Award:</b>	Gardening & Landscaping
<b>Hours:</b>	24 – 36 hrs per week depending on project availability (The applicant will be required to work weekends)
<b>Pay rate:</b>	\$27.55 p per hour, and entitlements as defined in the award
<b>Contract Position:</b>	Casual, award level 4
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Carl Scheffe

### **Our Organisation**

Gympie and District Landcare Group is a community based organisation active in the Gympie Region, Queensland. The Group is an incorporated organisation and a registered charity. Members elect an Executive (Management Committee) each year that is responsible for management oversight. Members and volunteers are integrally involved in the group's main activities: operating a local native plant nursery; raising biocontrol insects for invasive plant species control; providing land care services, fostering local land caring activities; and community education.

### **Purpose of Position**

To provide the best environmental outcomes for our clients through a range of specialist landcare services.

### **Person**

The successful candidate will be able to direct staff to implement project objectives, and have previous experience supervising a small team. You will be confident in making decisions and are able to prioritise tasks to carry out project objectives efficiently and in a timely manner. You will have initiative and the required skills to coach your team to improve their practical skills and experience, and you must also have a commitment to working safely and implement OH&S procedures.

### **Responsibilities**

- Set goals for performance and deadlines in ways that comply with project guidelines.
- Organising workflow and ensuring that employees understand their duties or delegated tasks.
- Monitoring employee productivity and providing constructive feedback and coaching.
- Oversee and carry out safe and correct manual handling of heavy items up to 20kg.
- Encourage staff development and improvement.
- Undertake handling transportation and use of Herbicides.
- Choose the best equipment for jobs and tasks.
- Have a working knowledge and skills to identify native and exotic vegetation.
- Develop a working knowledge of native plants and where they are suited.
- Weed control work
- Drive a vehicle to and from site
- Revegetation/Tree planting
- Operate equipment including a chainsaw

## **Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

### **Essential**

- ACDC license
- White Card
- Drivers' License
- Leadership experience and skills
- Good understanding of OH&S procedures
- Experience with revegetation and maintenance
- Good communication and writing skills
- Experience with herbicide application
- Problem solving skills as it pertains to equipment maintenance and staff matters

### **Desirable**

- Traffic Control

### **Physical Demands**

This position may be physically demanding at times and requires a person who is fit, energetic, and flexible. Carry out safe and correct manual handling of heavy items up to 20kg.

### **GDLG PURPOSE**

We support and inspire landowners to practice sustainable land stewardship

### **GDLG VISION**

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## Would you like to become a member?

Gympie Landcare values your involvement and support. Members receive discounts on nursery plants, newsletters, and email notices.

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_ GivenName/S \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(If Different from above)

Home

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:.....

Date:...../...../.....

Membership Price Table	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Individual	\$25.00	\$45.00	\$60.00
Family	\$37.50	\$67.50	\$90.00
Community Group/ Organisation	\$50.00	\$90.00	\$120.00

Life Membership: \$220.00

Method of Payment: Cash / Cheque/ Direct Deposit/ Other: \_\_\_\_\_