



FINIA

THE NATURAL INTEGRITY ALLIANCE FOR K'GARI

Newsletter

Sustaining the natural integrity of K'gari together

August 2023

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Things are always happening on K'gari, and even though it's winter, the last two months have been no different.

Most notably, the island has reclaimed her original Butchulla name of K'gari (under the *Place Names Act 1994*), and it's been full steam ahead for all FINIA's partners ever since.

Congratulations and thank you to all the Rangers, Groups and their many volunteers that work to protect and conserve K'gari and her integrity.

The Editor

K'gari – Always Was, Always Will Be



On 7 June 2023, the world's largest sand island and formerly known as Fraser Island, officially reclaimed her Butchulla name of K'gari.

The renaming took place after a lengthy process under the Queensland *Place Names Act 1994*. In 2011, the alternative names K'gari and Gari were recorded in the Queensland Place Names Database. In 2021, the

Queensland Government started the process to rename Fraser Island to K'gari and the co-named K'gari (Fraser Island) World Heritage Area was formally recognised by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee.

But the battle for K'gari's name started far earlier in 1836, after James Fraser, Captain of the Stirling Castle, ran aground in May 1836 on Swain Reefs while travelling from Sydney to Singapore. Also on board was his wife, Eliza. The survivors headed south in a leaking lifeboat, hoping to reach the convict settlement at Moreton Bay. Twelve survivors eventually reached the northern tip of Great Sandy Island, which would later be renamed after Captain Fraser, in 1842.

The Butchulla People named the island after the white spirit, K'gari who was transmogrified into the island after begging Yindingie (creator and messenger of the great god Beeral) to stay. Understandably, having lived on K'gari for over 6000 years, they were reluctant to adopt a new name for the island. This was exacerbated by Eliza's increasingly fictional stories about her time with her Butchulla rescuers, which undoubtedly contributed to the alienation, removal, and massacre of Butchulla people on K'gari.

The Department of Resources' consultation process received more than 6,000 submissions with ~70% in favour of restoring the island's Butchulla name that will now appear on maps, road signs and postal addresses.

So, is it K'gari or K'gari Island? K'gari, is still an Island and when referring to it in that context it could be referred to as K'gari Island or the Island of K'gari. However, when referring to traditional places, such K'gari, Uluru or Kakadu it is not necessary to also include a description of the geographical feature.

Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said it was a historic day. "K'gari is the name, it always has been, and it always will be," she said. "From now on, all Queenslanders should refer to it as its rightful name, K'gari."

Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation chairperson Gale Minniecon said she acknowledged the changes may be an adjustment for tourists on the island. "People will feel that they can't deal with the change," she said. "They will experience loss, but it won't be anywhere near the loss that our old people experienced back then. They didn't have their heart, their soul, their spirit broken."

"As traditional owners, we have always called it K'gari – so for us to officially get the rest of Queensland and Australia to call it K'gari, is really important," added Christine Royan, BAC Director. Ms Royan hoped the historic name change would inspire other traditional owners looking to follow suit.

"Like Uluru, this has been a great battle," Ms Royan said. "I would say to everyone that wants to fight for their name and the country, keep fighting. It's been a long time coming for us. Go with your heart."

Article and photo by Lucy Loram and Pat Heagney, ABC Wide Bay, adapted with permission

Black Summer Bushfire Project Update

Activities have ramped up on the *K'gari Bushfires – Butchulla Fire Management and Heritage Conservation Project* (funded through the Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants). The Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) in partnership with Everick Foundation has developed a Web Mapping portal and survey methodology to be completed on all pre- and post-burn walkthroughs and a BAC K'gari Fire Management Plan 2023.

Fire training is progressing well with Shantel Ah Kit, Melita Baird, Tahlia Burns, Lillian Green, Bob Broome, Dwight Blackman, and Dustyn Currie, now trained to Level 1 Fire (Crew Member) and Edward Bonner and Conrad Barney completing Incident Controller (Crew Leader) training. Team members have also undertaken Chainsaw Level 1 and participated in QPWS training on fuel assessment with Fireground (NSW) during June.

With the QPWS planned burn season now underway (March to August) cultural heritage surveys have been undertaken of Oysterman's Lease, Dipuying, Bogimbah (including the Mission site), Ungowa, Dilli East and Cornwall's Break to Lake Wabby in preparation for planned burns.



Melita Baird records a scarred tree using the new webmap application (Photo: BAC)



BAC's Fire Coordinator Darren Blake with crew members Tahlia Burns and Bob Broome and QPWS Officer Anthony Dargusch (Photo: BAC)

BAC fire mitigation activities are also progressing well. Seven teams (eighteen K'gari Rangers) undertook fire preparation work on K'gari at Exploration Block East, Duck Creek, Cornwall's Break to Lake Wabby, Deep Creek, Central Station, Bogimbah to Lake Boomanjin and Kingfisher to Dudonga. All participating crew members have learned how to apply sislation (insulation) to culturally modified trees and rakehoe areas to protect culturally significant sites.

The BAC assisted with both fire preparation and planned burns at Orchid Beach Airstrip (22 June 2022), Kingfisher Northwest Protection Block (27-28 February 2023), Dilli South Protection Block (20-22 March and 27-30 March 2023), on Boorangoora Northern Block (1 June and 19-21 June 2023), and Exploration East Block (20-22 June 2023). Darren Blake, the BAC's Fire Coordinator also

participated in helicopter aerial operations undertaking a burn scar survey on 22 June 2023.

Darren now attends the weekly K'gari Planned Burns meeting with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Coastal and Islands Region (Fire Enhancement Team) to provide Butchulla input to all planned burns on Butchulla Country. This marks a change to the previous arrangements and greater inclusion of the BAC (and Butchulla people) in fire management decision-making for K'gari. The BAC Fire Coordinator and Senior Ranger (Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers) also participated in the University of the Sunshine Coast's K'gari Fire Workshop 20-22 April 2023 (held at Dilli Village) along with QPWS and QFES Rural Fire Crews, aiming to support consensus building on Fire Management on K'gari.

Article submitted by the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation

Wongari-Wise, Dingo-Safe - Get the Message!

Sadly, a recent wongari (dingo) attack to K'gari visitor, 23-year-old Sarah Peet, an urban designer with Moreton Bay Council, resulted not only in ~30 bites and lacerations on her arms, legs, and torso, but the euthanasia of the lead wongari (CC Green) after the attack. This was the second wongari euthanised on K'gari for dangerous behaviour this year.

The Queensland Government and the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) have invested heavily in promoting the messages of Dingo-Safe and Wongari-Wise. Wongari are a culturally significant species to the Butchulla people.

If you search 'K'gari safety' on the internet, the top two answers are on the Department of Environment and Science's website: visiting safely and be dingo safe! While the former page provides no wongari (dingo) safety information, it does link to two more pages – 'staying safe' and 'before you visit' that provide a wealth of advice on wongari (dingo) safety. The key messages are:

- Never feed wongari (dingoes).
- Always stay within arm's reach of children, even small teenagers.
- **Walk in groups and carry a stick.**
- **Do not run. Running or jogging can trigger a negative wongari (dingo) interaction.**
- Camp in fenced areas when possible.
- Lock up food stores and iceboxes (even on a boat).
- Never store food or food containers in tents.
- Secure all rubbish, fish, and bait.

Visitors to K'gari interacting with wongari (dingo) including approaching or feeding an animal, not only risk hefty on the spot fines of \$2,135 per offence (up to a maximum of \$10,676), but also habituating animals – reducing their natural fear or wariness of humans.

What does habitation mean? With repeated human interactions, wongari (dingoes) can lose their wariness of humans, will ignore threats, and may approach people in the future. Habituated wongari (dingoes) may



Wongari are apex predators on K'gari (Photo: Megan Oldfield)

learn to associate access to food with people and act aggressively if food is not forthcoming. Pups of habituated wongari (dingoes) may not learn how to hunt properly, and along with pack members may also learn habituated behaviours. Habituation can be a death sentence for a wongari (dingo) on K'gari.

With all this information available to her, why did Sarah Peet, an intelligent young woman, choose to leave the safety of the newly installed Orchid Beach dingo fence to go off jogging, alone, on K'gari?

Stories in the media may hold some of the answers. Following the incident, wongari (dingoes) were frequently referred to by reporters as dogs. Wongari (dingoes) are Australia's largest land predator. Genetically they are somewhere between a wolf and a modern dog. Although visually like a dog, wongari (dingoes) are not domesticated pets. They fulfil the same important, top level predator role in the food web as lions in Africa, tigers in India, grizzly and polar bears in North America and crocodiles and great white sharks here in Australia.



Ignoring signage can be a dangerous matter!

Ask yourself the question – would you put your small child over the fence in a zoo with any one of these animals for a picture? The answer would undoubtedly be no. We all know that's stupid. Yet parents and visitors to K'gari continue to flout the rules, putting themselves, their families and wongari (dingo) at risk.

K'gari's accessibility may also be part of the problem. Brisbane to the Inskip Point barge is only 255Km, taking only 3 hours followed with a barge crossing of only 10 minutes. Is the World Heritage listed island a victim of its own proximity and

accessibility to the mainland? Visitors may feel that K'gari's beaches are just an extension of Queensland's Sunshine Coast. They are not. K'gari is a remote area where people need to take responsibility for their own safety.

Then there are the visitors themselves, with no end of theories why they choose to ignore available information and signage. There's optimism bias (initially described by Weinstein in 1980) that even in the face of clear evidence that there are dangers or reason for pessimism, people opt for optimism, dismissing danger over the belief that that individually they will be more successful than the average population (beating the odds). There's also research into why people ignore signage including danger perception and familiarisation, potential of enforcement/compliance, risk-taking and social pressures (social norms). Research would seem to suggest that more signage is not the answer.

The take home messages – K'gari and wongari should both be kept wild. If you plan to visit, you need to be responsible 24/7 for your own and your family's safety. Follow the rules, stay dingo-safe/wongari-wise and you'll have a great time. If not, then you need to be held accountable for your behaviour. Habituating wongari (dingoes) is a deadly serious matter! Remember - give wongari (dingo) space, K'gari is their place.

Article contributed by Sue Sargent, FINIA – the Natural Integrity Alliance for K'gari

BAC Promotes Wongari Wise on K'gari

The BAC's Communication and Education Officer, Tessa Waia, has been stepping up the BAC's involvement in wongari (dingo) management on K'gari.

Aside from their role as an apex predator, Wongari are culturally significant to the Butchulla people. Before European settlers came to K'gari, there were two types of dingoes on the island - Wat'dha (the camp dingo) and Wongari (the wild dingo). Wat'dha were Butchulla companions, helping to hunt, track, and protect the Butchulla from bad spirits. After the Butchulla people were removed from K'gari only the Wongari remained.

Since starting in the role Tessa has participated in two necropsy sessions – used to provide or confirm a cause of death for wongari discovered on K'gari. It's not a glamorous job, but as Tessa says, "It's an important process and interesting to know what's happened. We undertake a health check and assess the animals for heartworm, diet, and fat content."

The BAC team also participated in education and interpretation days on K'gari over the Easter and June-July School Holidays. Tessa and the new RAM (Recreation Area Management) Rangers assisted Queensland Parks

and Wildlife Service officers to deliver Wongari-Wise (Dingo-Safe) messages to visitors – encouraging families to stay safe and give wongari space.

Tessa attended the NAIDOC celebrations in Brisbane with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service talking about K’gari’s Wongari and the role of Butchulla Rangers in protecting and managing Country.

Tessa and Darren Blake will also be delivering a wongari presentation: *Promoting Wongari-Wise Behaviour on K’gari* at the National Inaugural First Nations Dingo Forum being held from 15-16 September 2023 in Cairns. The Dingo Forum aims to provide a space for First Nations people to express their views and concerns regarding the cultural and environmental values of the dingo, and highlighting how First Nations people may wish to be involved.

The Forum will provide a First Nations perspective on the dingo, with the potential to develop a culturally appropriate policy framework and National Statement that provides a First Nations peoples voice on the dingo’s cultural values within current legislation.



Two wongari search for discarded scraps of food at Eli Creek (Photo: Darren Blake)

Article submitted by Tessa Waia, Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation.

Pandanus Restoration Program Update

The Pandanus Restoration Program is a joint initiative between FIDO and the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) supported by the Department of Environment and Science. Pandanus restoration on K’gari is not a simple task, with logistics alone a complex exercise. In his latest field trip report, FIDO’s trip coordinator, Isaac Neisler provided an update on the work being undertaken in the field and Eurong nursery during the March, April/May, and June field trips.



FIDO and BAC workers potting up young Pandanus plants for sun hardening (Photo: Isaac Neisler)

Joining Isaac were team volunteers – Jade Anstee, Lyndall Bissett, Hayley Collings, Breanna Duthie, Rose Hart, Dan Hass, Brooke ledger, Len Mitcham, Tori Pearce and Kevin Strong. The team worked alongside Lillian and Virginia from the BAC, who offered FIDO participants their insights into the history and culture of the Island and its people, the spirituality and significance of everything that makes up K’gari, greatly increasing the volunteers’ appreciation for the piece of paradise they are collaborating to save.

In June, 981 seeds, appearing to be viable, were collected between Eurong and the northern-most planting site in March (about 1km north of Red Canyon). Approximately

523 pandanus seedlings are currently in the nursery, with 1,612 seeds currently laid in 80 trays. Germination of these is expected to commence over the next 3 months.

Given the low stock of planting-ready at the nursery, only one site was planted out during the June trip with the remaining eighteen pandanus tube stock. The site was carefully marked via GPS with photo references taken to enable the pandanus to be monitored.

Supported by Queensland Park’s and Wildlife Service Ranger, Greg Matson, the team randomly selected six previous planting sites for assessment while collecting seeds, with the plan to only inspect further sites if the survival rates were poor. The team selected six sites in total, seeing good results at each.

Figure 1: Pandanus survival rates at K’gari restoration sites (June 2023)

Site No.	Planting date	No. planted	No. alive (June 2023)	Notes
1	27/4/23	23	20	
3	27/4/23	5	4	
4	27/4/23	9	8	

5	27/4/23	7	7	
6	24/7/23	49	30*	Incomplete count. *Located before having to abandon site with wongari present.
-	10/3/23	11	8	Most plants struggling

Pandanus planted in bare sand in direct sun, were observed to be doing it a lot tougher than those planted in an area with partial shade or filtered sun for all or part of the day. In some sites, like Site 1, although there was some plant loss, the remaining plants were in a healthy condition. Planting success was primarily attributed to the amount of shade or filtered sunlight received throughout the day, given the significant canopy (at least 5m) on all sides of the site as well as other smaller plants (grasses, ground covers and other juvenile plants) growing throughout. Even though smaller plants could be considered competitors for resources, they do not appear to be currently hindering the young pandanus. This observation will play a crucial role in future plantings that will be focused on areas with sufficient shading to allow the young pandanus to acclimate to their new surroundings after planting.

During follow up at site six, the team were chased off by a Wongari before locating all 49 plants (or as many as were alive). This was an educational experience for the volunteers having not brought their Wongari sticks from the vehicle as they had done previously. Gathering as a group, the team made lots of noise, and backed out of the area slowly. A fallen tree branch was used to keep some distance between them and the Wongari until reaching the beach, where two passing QPWS Rangers put their vehicle between the team and the animal. The lesson was learned: always bring a Wongari stick!

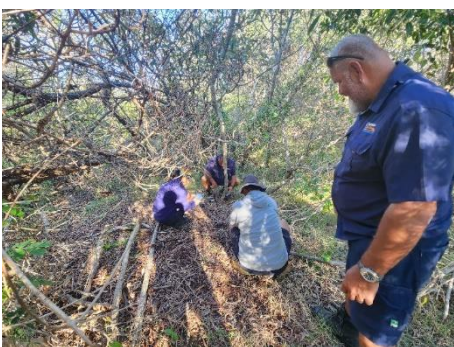
Isaac suggested that the optimal trip length was six days (including travel) although one person regularly going to the island between trips to focus on cleaning, weeding, and organising the nursery is invaluable. The task list includes weeding and upkeep of the nursery, collecting seed stock of other local native species, and a clean-out of the larger shed with the collaboration of QPWS at the Eurong station.

FIDO thanks both the BAC and Ranger Grant Matson from QPWS for their collaboration with the hope that this partnership strengthens as the work progresses.

Article contributed by Isaac Neisler, FIDO

Black-breasted button-quail project comes to a close

When the BAC's Conserving Mur'rindum (Black-breasted button-quail) on Butchulla Country project was approved in September 2020, the Du'ling Bushfire that burnt over 85,000 Ha (50%) of the island, hadn't even started. But there were already concerns about fire impacts to this Vulnerable ground-dwelling bird found on K'gari.



BLSR deploy a trail camera to record BBBBQ data on K'gari (Photo: Pat Webster)

The aims of the project were for the Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers (BLSR) to deliver actions under the 'National recovery plan for the Black-breasted button-quail (*Turnix melanogaster*)' or BBBQ for short, to increase resilience to climate change. Activities were planned for K'gari (formerly known as Fraser Island) and Inskip Recreational Area, where BBBQ populations had previously been recorded.

During the first survey period in August-September 2021, the BLSR deployed cameras and surveyed sites to check in on previously mapped populations (from Liddington, 2013 and Webster, 2016). Trail cameras were deployed from Double Island Point to Champagne Pools.

What the team discovered is that although there were several areas where the BBBQ were still going well (with healthy breeding populations), there were several gaps in the records where key habitat had been impacted by wildfire, access issues – where informal pathways have led to weed and grass encroachment, or predation – by feral cats, foxes, and pigs.

Conservation actions conducted by BLSR included implementing a cultural burn at Dilli Village (to reduce bushfire risk and protect habitat), along with weed management and pig control activities near Rainbow Beach (in the Inskip Recreational Area).

In a recent survey (17-21 July 2023), the BLSR team headed out again, accompanied by BBBQ researcher and project advisor, Patrick Webster (University of Queensland). The team checked both the east and west coasts of K’gari.

Nineteen trail cameras were deployed from just south of Sandy Cape down to Hook Point. All cameras were deployed in littoral forest where there was evidence of BBBQ in the form of platelets, and at Dilli Village observations of the birds themselves. These cameras will be collected, and data analysed in about 6 weeks’ time.

On the western beaches, there was some suitable habitat present, but this is currently too open to support BBBQ (which rely on canopy cover to prevent predation and provide leaf litter). These sites will continue to be monitored.

The team was pleased to see some recovery of the dune scrub following the fires. Whilst it does not appear these areas are utilised by BBBQ yet, it should only take another 5 to 10 years before these areas will once again provide suitable habitat for these threatened birds.

The BAC will also incorporate records into their mapping system and seasonal calendar, informing future fire management of critical habitat protecting Mur’rindum on Butchulla Country.



Evidence of Mur’rindum from feeding platelets (Photo: Pat Webster)

The 3-year project was supported by a Queensland Government Community Sustainability Action grant.

Submitted by Chantel Van Wamelen, Butchulla Land and Sea Rangers

K’gari Land and Sea Country: djaa – ngarawinj 2023 Conference

The K’gari Land and Sea Country: djaa – ngarawinj 2023 Conference will be held jointly with the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC) and the Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO) at Fraser Coast campus, University of the Sunshine Coast on 9-10 November 2023.

The conference follows a series of biennial conferences hosted by FIDO and the third symposium hosted by UniSC. This is the first time the two organisations have hosted a joint conference.



K’gari Symposium Opening in 2021 (Photo: UniSC)

The event is an opportunity to celebrate K’gari, share research, identify key issues, opportunities, and collaborations. Past UniSC K’gari symposiums and FIDO conferences have focussed on the land. The aim here is to also examine the issues relating to Sea Country.

The combined event will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share their research and their knowledge of K’gari and surrounding Sea Country with an audience of peers, community groups, students, and the wider community. The program is designed to be collaborative, with an emphasis on knowledge sharing and learning by the participants.

The result should be a shared understanding of the management of K’gari and the needs, including research, in caring for Land and Sea Country going forward. The combined event builds on existing partnerships, particularly with the BAC, BNTAC, QPWS, the K’gari World Heritage Committee, Kingfisher Resort and FINIA – the Natural Integrity Alliance for K’gari.

The 2023 K’gari Conference aims to build on the outcomes of UniSC’s 2021 symposium. The program is designed around knowledge sharing and learning by the participants and working together to develop a research strategy critically needed for K’gari. The event aims to promote continued partnerships, research, and collaboration.

The aim of the event is to:

- Celebrate K’gari and the work happening on K’gari, particularly the work of the Land and Sea Rangers

- Share knowledge
- Identify current management practices and key initiatives in Caring for K’gari and surrounding Sea Country
- Map current research on K’gari and surrounding Sea Country
- Generate key research questions, opportunities, and collaborations
- Promote collaborations with key stakeholders; and
- Share the work of FIDO and other K’gari stakeholders.

The program is spread over two days and will include the opportunity to gather at the Hervey Bay Boat Club for a conference dinner. The website (and conference registration) will be finalised in the next few weeks.

For further information please contact [Kim Walker](#) or [Peter Shooter](#).

Article contributed by Dr Kim Walker, University of the Sunshine Coast

Reflecting on Tin Can Bay Seagrass Decline

On Friday 21 July, I attended Cooloola Coastcare’s barbecue at Crab Creek Park at Tin Can Bay. I reflected on all the issues we discussed over the barbecue such as the long slow decline of seagrass in Tin Can Bay and Cooloola Inlet.

As with many of us who are now active in the environment movement, most of the people at the barbecue have relocated to the Great Sandy in the last couple of decades. I only moved to Maryborough in 2002 and can only imagine how good the environment was decades ago. However, at least one person was able to recall their observations of K’gari and Cooloola from several decades ago.

Decades ago, there were no golf courses around Cooloola, leaching fertilisers and herbicides into the groundwater and running out to the inshore waters. Decades ago, there was no stench of sewage treatment at Inskip Point, and no sewage treatment plants also discharging nutrients into the waters. Decades ago, there were still bêche-de-mer, sea cucumbers, that had not yet been strip-harvested by commercial fishery licence holders.



White teatfish (Holothuria fuscogilva) one of the species of sea cucumbers found in the Great Sandy Strait (Photo: Steve Purcell)

I expect seagrass meadows benefit from the presence of sea cucumbers, which harvest nutrients from the sediment and beneficially bioturbate the sediment as they dig through it. As any gardener who turns over their compost heap knows, bioturbation is a great boon for soil health (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bioturbation>). In fact, it is

thought that complex life only really started to progress after the Cambrian Period, when plants developed roots and animals became large enough to start digging through and thus turning over the mud.

Bêche-de-mer strip-harvesting occurred around the same time that a commercial fishery licence holder attached a bragalow-clearing metal ball and chain to a couple of tugs and flattened the corals of Hervey Bay so that he could strip-harvest the fish without snagging his trawl nets. Since then, Hervey Bay corals and fish have been decades recovering to their present state, where their further recovery is limited by being smothered under sediment exported from the deforested Mary Basin during flood events.

Maintenance of sea cucumbers in adequate numbers could be of potential benefit to Great Sandy ecosystems, as would Hervey Bay corals, and oyster and mussel beds throughout. If, however, nutrient runoff from golf courses and residential gardens, sewage treatment plants and municipal garbage tips are too high then ecosystem restoration will be constrained.

At the barbecue it was also proposed that funding for water sampling and chemical analysis would help inform decision-makers. As with sand disturbance by vehicles on K’gari and possibly in Cooloola, one wonders if our decision-makers want to be informed?

Article contributed by David Arthur, Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council

Bêche-de-mer Fishery Information

The commercial sea cucumber (Bêche-de-mer) fishery area consists of all tidal waters east of longitude 142°31'49"E between latitude 10°41'S and latitude 26°S (parallel to the southern limit of Tin Can Bay). In practice, however, waters south of the Great Barrier Reef are rarely fished. The fishery operates under the fishery symbol B1.

Major commercially harvested sea cucumber species include:

- black teatfish (*Holothuria whitmaei*)
- white teatfish (*Holothuria fuscogilva*)
- burrowing blackfish (*Actinopyga spinea*)
- various other sea cucumber species.

Sea cucumbers are harvested mainly by divers breathing surface-supplied air from hookah equipment and, to a lesser extent, by free-diving from dinghies or by hand collection along reefs at low tide.

The fishery imposes species-based catch limits and due to their potential vulnerability to depletion, black teatfish (*Holothuria whitmaei*) has a quota of zero on all licences. White teatfish catch is limited by condition of licence. Collecting sandfish is prohibited in Hervey Bay.

Fisheries Queensland monitors other species in this fishery by performance measurement systems.

Weed Spotters: Watch Out for Telegraph Weed

Native to northern Mexico and south-western USA, telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), sometimes known as sticky daisy is a biennial or annual herb with hairy stems and yellow flowers. The weed prefers open, disturbed sites with dry, sandy soils forming dense infestations on sand dunes and beaches, where it can threaten native vegetation.

Telegraph weed is a common weed throughout Hawaii and was first found in Australia in central New South Wales. It was first recorded in Queensland on the Gold Coast in the early 1990s – with current infestations at Labrador, South Stradbroke, and Wavebreak Island.

Features:

- Flowering herb, up to 2m tall.
- Flowers are small, yellow, daisy-like, 15–22mm wide.
- Each flower head produces many seeds 2–5mm long.
- Produces flowers during late summer.
- Leaves are ovate to oblong, 2–8cm long, 1–3.5cm wide, arranged alternately.
- The stems are thick, densely hairy, 5–20cm long.
- Plant emits strong odour when crushed.



Telegraph weed daisy-like yellow flowers and hairy stems (Photo: Queensland Government)

After flowering in summer one year, the plant dies back to the base, re-sprouts, and flowers again the following spring. It most commonly flowers late summer but has also been known to flower throughout the year. In Queensland, peak seed production, which is its only form of reproduction, appears to be in late summer and autumn.

Seeds spread by wind and water, but can also be carried on clothes, shoes, and beach towels. So please make sure you don't carry this plant with you if you visit K'gari.

Telegraph weed is a category 3 restricted invasive plant under the Biosecurity Act 2014. For more information, please check out the telegraph weed [fact sheet](#).

Article adapted from Weed Spotters Network Queensland, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Dates for the Diary

What: FINIA Meeting
Where: Town Hall, Maryborough
When: Tuesday 15 August
For: FINIA's partners meet quarterly to provide updates and collaborate on projects. Three meetings are held on the mainland, generally at Maryborough Town Hall (in February, August, and November), with an annual field trip to K'gari in May each year. For the upcoming meeting, partners will convene at the Butchulla Warriors Memorial in Queen's Park, Maryborough at 10am.
Cost: Free
More info: To register for the meeting, please email Sue Sargent at contactFINIA@gmail.com.

What: Bush Regeneration and Monitoring
Where: Eurong, K'gari
When: 22 to 28 October 2023 (Sunday to Saturday).
For: FIDO has been conducting weeklong weeding–bush regeneration programs in Eurong since 2005. These have progressively transformed Eurong and dramatically reduced the weed threats there. Based at Tallinga, the former Sinclair family home in Eurong Village, work will focus on weeding, bush regeneration, building the Eurong nursery's capacity, and continuing FIDO's ongoing environmental monitoring programs. The program is supported by Eurong Resort, providing dinner for the volunteers each night.
Cost: \$300 (\$200 for concessions) to subsidise costs.
More info: Please send any questions to weeding@fido.org.au.

What: Weed Management
Where: Happy Valley, K'gari
When: ALL DATES ARE FULLY BOOKED FOR 2023
For: Peter Shooter leads these trips to help tackle the heavy weed infestation around Happy Valley. A group of up to eight will share "Kurrawa", a comfortable holiday house in the Centre of Happy Valley. The group will work to contain a particularly aggressive weed with poisonous seeds, *Abrus prectorius* Var. *Africanus*. This weed heavily impacts the vegetation but isn't found anywhere else on Fraser Island. As the *Abrus* comes under control, the team will increasingly eliminate large woody weeds, Easter cassia and lantana. Again, fitness is needed to carry heavy chemical backpack sprays across steep terrain.
Cost: \$300 (\$200 for concessions) to subsidise costs.
More info: Please send any questions to weeding@fido.org.au.

What: IGEM Bushfire Recovery Project
Where: East Coast, K'gari
When: ALL PLACES FILLED FOR 2023
For: FIDO's bushfire recovery project 2022-25 is being conducted on the east coast of K'gari. Volunteers are restoring the low coastal vegetation complex on the foreshore and undertaking Pandanus recovery works by monitoring, establishing a seed collection and restoration protocol and on-ground works, including restoration training. FIDO is also interested in hearing from other groups interested in partnering on the project.
More info: For more information or to register your group's interest in this activity, please get in touch with Mark Dwyer at mdwy.dbq@gmail.com.

Funding Opportunities

What: Gambling Community Benefit Fund

For: Provide one-off grants for not-for-profit organisations to help provide community services or activities that benefit the Queensland community. The next funding round is a \$100,000 super round for all priorities.

When: Round 118 will open in mid-July and closes at midnight on 31 August 2023.

Email: cbf@treasury.qld.gov.au

Phone: (07) 3247 4284

Website: <https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/community-grants>

What: Saving Native Species Program (Priority Species)

For: The program is providing \$224.5 million over four years to support the recovery of Australia's unique plants, animals, and ecological communities. It is guided by the [Threatened Species Action Plan: Towards Zero Extinctions 2022-2032](#), which identifies 110 priority species (including Eastern curlew and green turtles) and 20 priority places to drive action where it is needed most, and where it will have the biggest impact. For this opportunity, grants of between \$20,000 and \$500,000 are available.

When: Applications close 7 September 2023.

Contact: 13 28 46

Website: <https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/saving-native-species-priority-species>

What: Wettenhall Environment Trust —Small Environmental Grant Scheme

For: Projects that enhance or maintain the vitality and diversity of the Australian natural living environment. Objectives of the Small Environmental Grants Scheme (up to \$10K) are flora and fauna conservation and threatened mammal conservation with one or more of the following: monitoring/recording data, community education, community capacity building (training), and research/science.

When: Next round opened on 1 October 2023 (funding released November 2023)

Phone: (03) 5472 1316 or 0431 219 980 - Elizabeth (Beth) Mellick, Executive Officer

Email: beth@wettenhall.org.au

Website: <https://wettenhall.org.au/grants/small-environmental-grants/>

What: Volunteer Grants

For: Start planning now for the 2023–24 Volunteer Grants. Volunteer Grants support the work of local community organisations by enabling the inclusion of vulnerable people and promoting awareness to increase participation in volunteering. Grants of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 will be available to assist eligible not-for-profit community organisations support the efforts of their volunteers.

When: Opening soon!

Contact: For additional information please contact your local MP or visit [GrantConnect](#).

What: Australian Geographic Society Sponsorship

For: Founded by Dick Smith, up to \$5,000 is available for Australian Geographic Society Project Grants. Project Sponsorship funding targets all four Project Categories: Science, Community, Adventure and Environment.

When: Applications close in November 2023.

Phone: (02) 9263 9825

Email: society@ausgeo.com.au

Website: <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/society/sponsorship/2019/12/apply-for-sponsorship/>

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

FINIA – the Natural Integrity Alliance for K'gari is a non-incorporated, not-for-profit umbrella organisation for its partners. As a non-incorporated organisation with no dedicated funding to support our meetings, administration, barge transfers, or accommodation, we rely on our partners to support activities on the K'gari (Fraser Island) World Heritage site.

We acknowledge Fraser Coast Regional Council, Sealink – Kingfisher Bay Resort & K'gari Explorer Tours, the University of the Sunshine Coast and our outstanding contributors, volunteers and donors for their generous support. Without this generosity, FINIA's activities would not be possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thank you" with a long, sweeping underline.