

# Newsletter

## Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

2016 No.3

It is nearly Birthday time. On May 24<sup>th</sup> Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens will be 13 years old. Enjoy the latest from 'The Botanic Gardens'.

### What's showing at the Lagoons Gallery?

'Inflorescence' is the latest exhibition in Lagoons Gallery and Cafe at the Botanic Gardens. There are some giant flowers (oops – inflorescence) like this Capitulum - Golden Everlasting Daisy.



An **inflorescence** is a group or cluster of flowers arranged on a stem that is composed of a main branch or a complicated arrangement of branches.

The complete flower head / inflorescence of a plant include stems, stalks, bracts and flowers.

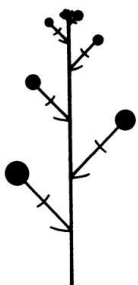
Photography, paintings, mixed media and weaving highlight some different inflorescence types found in nature.

Just like inflorescences are showy to attract pollinators (bees etc.); Maya hopes to attract your attention via large bold installations to learn a little about - inflorescences.

In case you didn't get a chance to read some of the information...

Along the largest wall inside Lagoons Gallery, Maya has five inflorescence types – Spike, Raceme, Umbel, Spadix and Spathe and Capitulum.

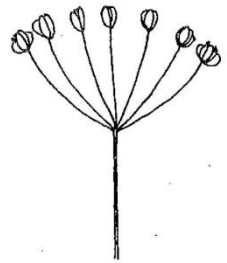
**Spike** – a simple inflorescence is stalk-less (meaning no pedicles) flowers arise from the main flower stem (peduncle) of the plant. Think of a Grass Tree spike as an excellent example.



A **Raceme** is a flower spike where the flowers have pedicles of equal length, and the tip of the stem continues to grow and produce more flowers. Flowers open from the bottom up. The flowers have their own pedicle (or stalk), and the pedicles do not branch. The Swamp Orchid *Phiausa australis* is a great example.



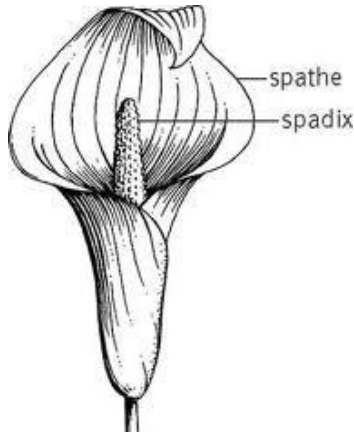
An **Umbel** is a flower head in which all the flower pedicles (stalks) are rising from the same point and are of the same length, so that the flower head is rounded like an umbrella.



A Compound Umbel is an umbel where each pedicle (stalk) of the umbel produces a smaller umbel of flowers. A great example of a compound umbel is the Mackinlaya flower which is what inspired Maya to create the three Compound Umbel flowers in the centre of the wall.

Love this little caption above to illustrate an Umbel

The next large installation was the blue and white **Spadix and Spathe**....



A flowering shoot, (a type of spike) with a large fleshy floral axis bearing small, usually unisexual, sessile flowers. It is protected by a large petal-like bract, the *spathe*, and is characteristic of plants of the family Araceae (Lily family).

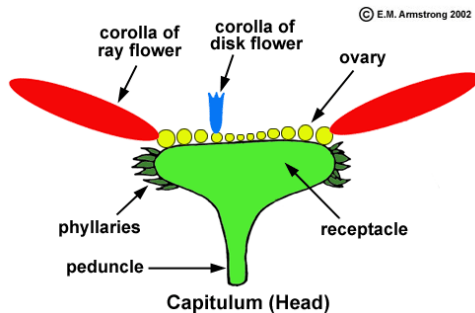
Often the spathe is very showy and colourful.

### Capitulum / Head

The Golden Everlasting Daisy was the plant of choice to illustrate Capitulum or Head.



A Capitulum is a flower head composed of many separate un-stalked (no pedicles) flowers (florets) close together. This type of inflorescence is typical of the Compositae (Asteraceae) e.g. Daisy and Dandelion.



The tip of the peduncle is flattened and is surrounded by a ring (involucre) of bracts. This arrangement gives the appearance of a single flower.

Mostly the outer flowers have one conspicuous large petal (ray flowers) and the central disk is formed of flowers with smaller petals (disk flowers).

The Golden Everlasting Daisy has bright yellow flower heads which are long lasting. Just when you thought... a head with outer ray flowers... No! What looks like outer ray flowers are actually papery bracts displaying colours of lemon to gold just to confuse the issue!

These are just a few of the inflorescences seen in nature and like everything else in nature, descriptions can only be a general guide to how flowers might look. There are many variables, sometimes even on the same plant. I hope you enjoy "Inflorescence"

Date claimer: Part of BGANZ - Botanic Gardens Open Day

**May 29<sup>th</sup> > 1.30pm - Meet the Artist / "Inflorescence" Exhibition celebration.**

Meet at the Lagoons Gallery and Café to meet artist Maya Harrison and celebrate the exhibition with a little light catering. Maya will also describe why and how the artworks were made and following this session at 2.30pm Maya will assist others in weaving palm inflorescences to create nature shapes

(Please RSVP by Wednesday 25th May to the Botanic Gardens on 49527321 or email [botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au](mailto:botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au) should you be attending. We need numbers for catering)





Sunday 29 May 2016  
[www.botanicgardensopenday.org](http://www.botanicgardensopenday.org)

## **BOTANIC GARDEN** AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND *Open Day*



Botanic gardens, arboretums and gardens in Australia and New Zealand will celebrate the vital work botanic gardens do for plant conservation. For more information... visit <http://www.bganz.org.au/>

### **What will be happening at Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens?**

We are planning a variety of Guided walks, presentations and activities throughout the day, with a plan to have **something for everyone**... Bird lovers, children, gardeners, walkers, runners, nature lovers and plant enthusiasts.

Starting at...

#### **7. am - Breakfast with the Birds:**

Meet Daryl Barnes (Birdlife Mackay president) at the Lagoon Outlook Deck. This is the deck which looks over the lagoon between the two buildings. Daryl and other BirdLife members will assist people with Bird identification using binoculars and scopes. Walks will be made to other areas of the Gardens to view both wetland birds and bush birds. There are over 100 different species of birds recorded at the Botanic Gardens. Follow your bird watching with Breakfast at the Café.



(Please note \*\*\* Breakfast bookings from 8.00am will need to be made with Lagoons Cafe; Phone 49526930 to book your table)

**10am –**

#### **“Dare to be Different - Biodiversity” guided walk:**

Margaret Lane who has a passion for native plants will lead this walk, pointing out the diversity of plants we have in our region, some which are regarded as ‘Threatened species’  
Meet at the new Mt Blackwood flower feature wall at the Administration building.



#### **10am – “Bungee Jumping Caterpillars” - a session for the children:**

Parents may like to join the Guided walk with Margaret, also at 10.00am

Meet Maya at the Meeting room opposite the Café. Children will be read ‘The Bungee Jumping Caterpillars’ story, venture out to see the creatures and plants from the story, return to play the Bungee Jumping Caterpillars board game and make their own caterpillars to take home. Expect live creatures too!



**The Garden’s Shop and the Tropical Shade Garden will be open all day from 9.00am – 5.00pm**

Why not buy your very own “The Bungee Jumping Caterpillars” book and a Tree Omphalea *Omphalea celeta* and eventually have Zodiac Moths and their caterpillars in your garden too.



## 1.30pm - Bonsai Society meets at the Gardens

A Bonsai plant might be just the right idea for people who like gardening but have little space!

The Bonsai Society members will be in the Meeting room from 1.30pm and have lots of Bonsai plants to show and demonstrate.

## 1.30pm - Meet the Artist / "Inflorescence" Exhibition celebration.

Meet at the Lagoons Gallery and Café to meet artist Maya Harrison and celebrate the exhibition with a little light catering. Maya will also describe why and how the artworks were made and what "Inflorescence" is.

(Please RSVP by Wednesday 25th May to the Botanic Gardens on 49527321 or email [botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au](mailto:botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au) should you be attending. We need numbers for catering)



## 2.30pm - Palm Inflorescence weaving

Join "Inflorescence" artist Maya Harrison under the Mango tree in front of the Café and learn how to do some weaving using palm inflorescence. Bring a cushion to sit on the ground or use one of the gardens chairs.



## 4.00pm - For the very energetic, join in with the Mackay Sugar Run for Mi Life Remembrance Journey through the Botanic Gardens.

Registration at 4.00pm and run starts at 4.30 – 6pm. 3km or 5km run available.

Plans are also underway for a **Special Guided walk through the Regional Forest** section of the Botanic Gardens with Grant Paterson (SGAP president) Society for Growing Australian Plants. Meet at the South Sea Islander Hut. There is a carpark there, with entrance from Ram Chandler Place. **Time to be confirmed.**

Some events require bookings (e.g. Breakfast, Meet the Artist for catering) and more events may be added so...

Keep informed by visiting the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens website...

<http://www.mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au> or our Facebook page...

<https://www.facebook.com/mackayregionalbotanicgardens>



Here is a little test for you... What is the inflorescence type of a Hoya flower? Hint- all the flower pedicels (stalks) are rising from the same point and are of the same length...like an Umbrella?



## Just taking a wander through the Botanic Gardens...

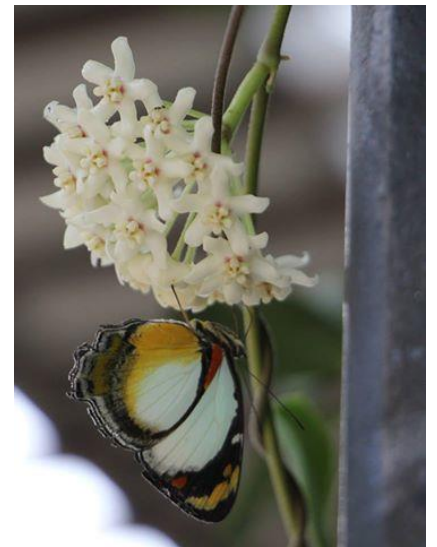
At the Orientation Garden walking in from the Carpark to the Café - These stunning fruit



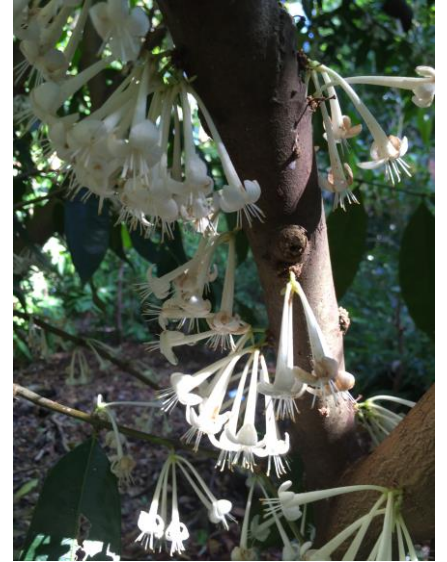
Unfortunately the plant was without a label so we wondered what they were. Using the book 'Fruits of the Rainforest' and a bit of googling we confirmed they are fruits of (*Ochrosia elliptica*). Don't you just love the challenge of plant identification?

These 3 trees are now entered into our New Data Base! Passing by the Café made us think of having lunch... but not just yet... more to see.

Um Um Umbel... These Hoya (*Hoya australis*) flowers (an Umbel Inflorescence) are just dripping with nectar and attracting all sorts of butterflies. Check out the Jezebel Nymph (*Mynes geoffroyi*) having a sip with its long curling tongue. These flowers are on show on the wire surround of the Eungella Cloud Garden adjacent to the Lagoons Cafe.



We were so glad to wander through the Shade Garden because around the corner this is what we saw! And what a sight! The whole tree has flowers coming out of its branches and trunk.



It's a Scented Daphne (*Phaleria clerodendron*). Absolutely stunning!



We turned around and we were reminded of LUNCH!

I spied this beauty having her lunch. A very large Golden Orb Spider with a moth in a wrap! Lagoons Cafe was open and it looked like a wrap would be the choice of the day.

Lagoons Café is such a glorious spot to have lunch... or breakfast on the weekend... or just a cup of delicious coffee... or even a high tea. Something for everyone it seems and the view over the Lagoons allows you do a little bird watching or maybe you will see a Blue Ulysses butterfly float by or look up and see a snoozing possum in the rafters.



## Birthday celebrations...

It is nearly the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens 13th Birthday (24th May) and the presents are already happening. Check out the Botanic Gardens' Garden crew adding Grass Trees (Xanthorrhoea) to the front entrance. Won't they look stunning when they flower? What do you think?



The Garden Friends will be getting down and dirty for this year's Birthday present to the Gardens with a Planting bee. They will be assisting in adding some new features to the Orientation Garden / Sugar Cane wall (part of the front entrance to the Gardens' buildings) on the Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May from 8.30am.



The Garden Friends are also continuing with the Botanic Gardens' new Data Base and are adding more plants as different garden sections are Plant Audited.

The Garden Friends are committed to this project and have contracted Ross Demuth to assist with the Plant Audits so the Friends can replace all the faded labels with either new paper labels or our new engraved labels. The paper labels cost around \$1.00 to produce whereas the engraved labels are \$11.00 per label.

## Would you like to give a present to the Botanic Gardens... you can.

If anyone would like to “Sponsor a Garden Bed of Labels” by donating monies via the Garden Friends towards the production of more engraved labels, we would love to hear from you. Even if you would just like to sponsor a few labels, that could be your present to the Botanic Gardens this year for the 13<sup>th</sup> Birthday. I'm sure new labels would be appreciated by many people.

Contact Maya on 49527321 or 0409750453 or leave a message should you want to donate. Thanks.



One family have already offered to donate all the labels for the Whitsunday Garden bed. Thank you. Thank you.

## Thank you to our Volunteers...

Actually the Botanic Gardens would not exist without the great support of all our volunteers. The list of individuals is too long to mention but the groups involved include The Friends of the Gardens, the Society for Growing Australian Plants (SGAP Mackay branch), Birdlife Mackay and many more. These groups and individuals provide assistance with a whole host of projects including planting bees, information events, guided walks and plant sales. Volunteers have always been essential to the success of the Botanic Gardens and we want to THANK YOU from the bottom of our plant pots. Thank you one and all.





## CHECK OUT THIS ANCIENT ONE!

It was so great to see... One of our ancient trees, a Cycad (*Cycas media*) has new growth. The tree has not shown any signs of life since 2009. Check it out in the World Cycad Garden. See the new leaves on the side and there are more coming from the top too.



**We were there, were you?...Where?** At the Farleigh Palm Fete at Farleigh State School on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May!



The Bungee Jumping Caterpillars, Threatened plant species and Friends of the Gardens were on display to promote the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. Our stall was next to the SGAP (Mackay branch of the Society for Growing Native Plants) stall and people were line up at 7.30 before the fete even officially opened to purchase their choice of native plants to suit their Gardens. This is very fortunate for us as the crowd is right there and we can share lots of information with them. We also sold items from The Garden's shop with funds supporting the Botanic Gardens with future projects.

Thank you to all the volunteer Garden Friends for your assistance at this event.

**Need more information...  
about anything in this newsletter or  
more...**

Contact the Botanic Gardens on 49527300 or email [botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au](mailto:botanic@mackay.qld.gov.au)

