

## 18. Exotic and Native Water Plants

Among the native water plants in this spot are *Nymphaea violacea* (Native Water Lily), which has purple or white flowers; and *Persicaria attenuata* (Water Pepper) which has a spike of white to pink flowers. There is also an exotic water hyacinth with lilac flowers, which although pretty, is a weed, and is suffocating huge areas of the river. In the distance is an island of Para Grass (*Urochloa mutica*). Para Grass is an introduced pasture grass that has become a huge problem in lagoons and dammed areas of water around Townsville. It is one of the more difficult weeds to eradicate and is prolific along Ross River.

## 19. Weeping Paperbark (*Melaleuca leucadendra*) and Indian Beech

(*Milletia pinnata*)

Weeping Paperbark (*Melaleuca leucadendra*), Family: Myrtaceae

This is a remnant tree, as are the surrounding Moreton Bay Ash. Reaching 30m, this species has a large amount of long, showy spikes of cream to greenish flowers, with a strong smell. Flowering is from April to September.

Indian Beech (*Milletia pinnata*, *Pongamia pinnata*), Family: Fabaceae

A dense, deciduous and spreading tree reaching 5-10m tall. The leaves are compound, with 5-7 leaflets, dark-green when mature and a glossy bronze colour when young. The flowers are pinkish-white, developing into a woody, oblong-shaped seed pod with 1-2 reddish-brown seeds.

## 20. Mango Tree (*Mangifera indica*)

Family: Anacardiaceae

Before housing was established along the river, numerous areas along the river bank were used for exotic mango orchards. A local native strangler fig (*Ficus virens*) has been planted in the branches of this mango tree. Eventually the fig will strangle and kill its host tree.

## 21. River She-Oak (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*)

Family: Casuarinaceae

These trees are 10-20m tall, and partly deciduous. They have small globular woody cones. There are no true leaves, but there are branchlets that act as leaves, and they are needle-like in appearance.

## 22. Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*)

Family: Myrtaceae

A tall gum tree growing up to 20-30m with a deciduous grey-blue bark and long cylindrical shaped buds, found in open forests and river flats.

## 23. Leichhardt Tree Grove (*Nauclea orientalis*)

Family: Rubiaceae

These large, stately trees have large, glossy, dark green leaves, and round aromatic flower heads. The fruit is yellowish-brown, and strong smelling when ripe. It contains numerous tiny seeds embedded in the flesh.

## 24. Bazza Island and Lotus and Bulrush Water Plants

Bazza Island

This island was carved out when sand dredging took place in the early 1990's. It had fires almost every year until rehabilitation commenced. Large infestations of weeds included, Chinese Apple (*Ziziphus mauritiana*), Guinea Grass (*Megathyrsus maximus*), and Leucaena (*Leucaena leucocephala*). There has been natural regeneration of both Weeping Paperbark (*Melaleuca leucadendra*) and Leichhardt Tree (*Nauclea orientalis*), since the weed removal. There is also a big remnant Leichhardt tree that magpie geese regularly perch on. Choking the channel is a mat of Para Grass.

Bulrush (*Typha sp.*), Family Typhaceae

These are erect perennials growing with their roots in the mud. The interior of the leaf is made up of air-filled spaces which provide buoyancy. The small, brown and furry flowers of this plant release small seeds that are carried on the wind via silky hairs that act as parachutes.

Lotus Lily (*Nelumbo nucifera*), Family: Nelumbonaceae. This lily has large pink flowers and large round green leaves.

## 25. Screw Palm (*Pandanus cookii*) and Native Damson (*Terminalia sericocarpa*)

Screw Palm (*Pandanus cookii*), Family: Pandanaceae

A small, palm-like tree that grows to 10m. Its blue-green leaves are long and tapering, with prickly margins. They are arranged spirally and crowded towards the end of the branches. The fruit is wedge-shaped, woody and packed tightly in pineapple-sized composite heads. Fruits are orange-red when ripe.

Native Damson (*Terminalia sericocarpa*), Family: Combretaceae

This large spreading tree is native to the Townsville area, and has strongly scented cream flowers borne on hairy spikes. The blue to purple egg-shaped fruit are a source of food for wildlife, and regularly eaten by black cockatoos.

## 26. Mueller's Damson (*Terminalia muelleri*)

Family: Combretaceae

This is a small to medium, deciduous tree. It has large, dark green leaves, clustered towards the ends of branches. It has small white to cream flowers from November to February. The fruits are 2cm long, almond-shaped, and blue.

## 27. Brush Macaranga, Heart Leaf, Spear Tree (*Macaranga tanarius*)

Family: Euphorbiaceae

This grove of Macarangas was planted between late 1997 and early 1998. It is a pioneer plant, which means it grows quickly in disturbed sites. It is effectively shading out Para Grass and other weeds on the levee bank. The birds also like to eat the fruit, and are spreading the tree widely.

## 28. Cluster Fig (*Ficus racemosa*)

Family: Moraceae

This is a big remnant Cluster Fig, that existed on this site before rehabilitation work began. The fruit, which is red when ripe, is edible.

## 29. Glue Berry (*Cordia dichotoma*)

Family: Boraginaceae

A medium to tall, spreading, vine thicket tree with oval leaves that are hairy underneath and have irregular margins. The flower is trumpet shaped and orange. The egg shaped fruit is pinkish with a glue like gel around the seed.

## 30. Cheesefruit, Great Morinda (*Morinda citrifolia*)

Family: Rubiaceae

This tree has sweet scented white flowers. The unusual pear-shaped fruits are whitish, and produce a strong cheese-like smell when ripe.

## 31. Tuckeroo, Beach Tamarind (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*)

Family: Sapindaceae

This tree has small greenish-white flowers. Its fruit is orange to yellow when ripe, and contains black seeds with a reddish attachment. It is found in coastal habitats.

## 32. Norfolk Island Hibiscus (*Lagunaria patersonia*)

Family: Malvaceae

A small to medium tree with grey-green leathery leaves and white-pink hibiscus like flowers.

## 33. Helicopter Tree, Stinkwood (*Gyrocarpus americanus*)

Family: Hernandiaceae

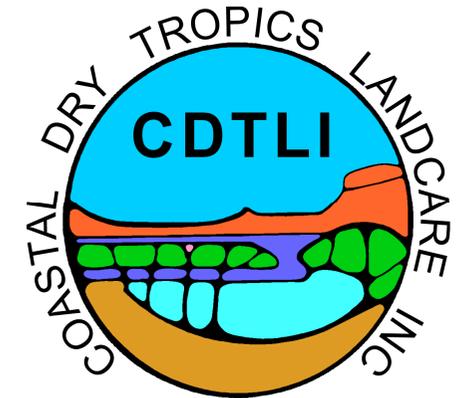
A medium sized deciduous vine thicket tree with broad, bright green, ovate/heart shaped leaves, tiny cream clusters of flowers and egg shaped capsules with 2 long papery wings attached.

## 34. Corkwood Wattle (*Acacia bidwillii*)

Family: Mimosaceae

This small tree has cork-like bark, and cream, ball shaped flower heads. The pods are long, flat and woody. Young plants and new growth are thorny.

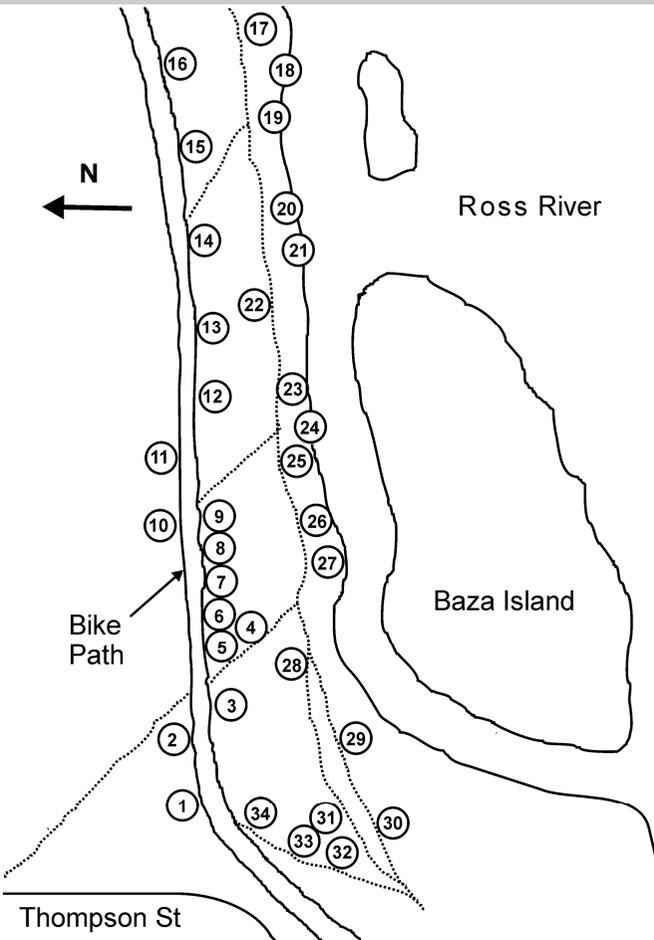
# Ross River Bush Garden Interpretation Trail



Located at the end of  
Thompson St., Mundingburra

The Bush Garden was established in 1994 to provide a demonstration site for revegetation using local native plant species. Work was initiated by the Tropical Urban Production and Landcare Group (TUPALG).

**Open Day: 3rd Saturday of every month, starting at 3pm. ALL WELCOME!**



**Map of Bush Garden**

**Most of the trees planted at the Bush Garden grow naturally in woodlands or vine thickets along our local waterways. They are grown and planted from locally collected seed.**

**While walking through the Bush Garden, please do not damage the trees by removing their leaves, fruit or flowers.**

**1. Poplar Gum (*Eucalyptus platyphylla*)**

Family: Myrtaceae

This tree has white bark that peels off in the dry season. It bears small clusters of white flowers. Older trees provide good hollows for wildlife. It is a common tree in coastal, open woodland areas around Townsville.

**2. Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton australis*)**

Family: Sterculiaceae

A tree to 20m that is briefly deciduous, with white flowers. It is located in a planting done by the Mundingburra Special School at about the same time as the Bush Garden began. All of these trees are native, although not all are local. e.g. Salwood (*Acacia mangium*)

**3. Carbeen, Moreton Bay Ash (*Corymbia tessellaris*)**

Family: Myrtaceae

This tree is very old and contains hollows that provide habitat for wildlife, including birds and native bees.

**4. Hooker's Bauhinia, Pegunny (*Lysiphillum hookerii*)**

Family: Caesalpiniaceae

A medium sized tree, with distinctive lobed leaves. Flowers are white, edged in red, and are about 7cm in diameter. Flowering period is September to October.

**5. Bush Food Planting**

This planting includes the following local native bush food trees:

~ Peanut Tree (*Sterculia quadrifida*), Family: Sterculiaceae

A medium sized deciduous tree with tiny greenish-yellow flowers, flowering from November to January. Seed pods are orange outside and bright red inside. The seeds have a black satin coat, and taste like peanuts.

~ Burdekin Plum (*Pleiogynium timorense*), Family: Anacardiaceae

A medium, densely canopied tree, which is deciduous in the dry season. It has small yellowish-green flowers, and large, purple, plum-like fruit.

~ Cluster Fig (*Ficus racemosa*), Family: Moraceae

A large spreading tree with smooth fruits that are yellow to red when ripe. The fruits are found in clusters on stalks arising from the trunk and main branches.

**6. Non Local Planting**

Silk Cotton Tree (*Bombax ceiba*), Family: Bombacaceae

This tree, indigenous to Cape York, is deciduous and has big red flowers. It has large thorns on the trunk and branches.

Silky Oak (*Grevillea robusta*), Family: Proteaceae

This medium sized tree with orange-yellow flowers is native to south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales.

**7. Hickory Wattle (*Acacia crassicarpa*) planting**

Family: Mimosaceae

This is the first site in the bush garden which developed a continuous canopy over one large area. The trees provide a thick mulch layer of leaf litter that supplies nutrients and also suppresses weeds.

**8. Pink Ash, White Ash (*Alphitonia petrei*)**

Family: Rhamnaceae

This bushy tree has leaves that are dark green on top, and white and hairy underneath. The white flowers appear in numerous clusters near the ends of branches.

**9. Chinaman's Cedar, Ribbonwood (*Euroschinus falcata*)**

Family: Anacardiaceae

This is a tall tree with a spreading canopy. It has small pink flowers in November and December, and small black fruit, which are scented when opened.

**10. Sandpaper Fig (*Ficus opposita*)**

Family: Moraceae

A medium sized tree, with small round fruit, fruiting between July and February. The fruits are red to brown, and are coarse and hairy on the outside. This tree gets its common name from the texture of its leaves, which feel very much like sandpaper.

**11. The Food Orchard**

This planting contains many exotic fruit trees. Examples are bush lemons, bananas, mulberries, cashews, and custard apples.

**12. Lolly Bush (*Clerodendrum floribundum*)**

Family: Lamiaceae

A small tree with reddish new shoots, white flowers, and a non-edible red and black fruit. Aboriginal people are known to use the branches as fire-sticks.

**13. Soap Tree, Red Ash, White Myrtle (*Alphitonia excelsa*)**

Family: Rhamnaceae

A small tree with leaves that are dark green on the upper side and white and hairy underneath. The seed coating is black covering a powdery red coated seed.

**14. Kapok Tree and Open Woodland Section**

Kapok Tree (*Cochlospermum gillivraei*), Family: Cochlospermaceae

A small deciduous tree with cotton wool like seed pods and bright yellow flowers that show on a bare tree before the new leaves appear

Open Woodland Section

Eucalypts are the dominant trees in open woodland habitats, along with other tree species such as Kapok. Open woodlands have a dense ground cover of grasses and herbs. The native herbs planted here include Camel Bush (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*), a small perennial with blue flowers all year round, Forest Indigo (*Indigofera pratensis*), a small perennial with bluish-purple flowers, and Creek Cassia (*Senna gaudichaudii*) which has small yellow flowers and brown pods.

Wattle trees (Family: Mimosaceae) are also characteristic of open woodland areas. This section of the Bush Garden has a diverse range of local wattles, including:

~ Sim's Wattle (*Acacia simsii*) has yellow flowers in globular heads; brown, wrinkled, papery pods; and narrow leaves have a small upturned hook at the tip.

~ Wattle (*Acacia umbellata*) has reddish young shoots, and blue-green older growth. It has short, yellow flower spikes, and narrow woody pods, that are held upright.

~ Silver Wattle (*Acacia holosericea*) has pale yellow flowers in spikes, and silver, hairy leaves. The dark brown pods are papery, and coiled to form ball-like clusters.

~ Townsville Wattle (*Acacia leptostachya*) has golden yellow spikes. Leaves are grey-green and leathery. The young growth on both branches and leaves is hairy.

**15. Bat's Wing Coral Tree (*Erythrina vespertilio*)**

Family: Fabaceae

From the pea family, the Bat's Wing Coral Tree is easily distinguished by its leaf shape as it resembles the outspread wings of a bat. It is a deciduous tree that has red flowers which open while the tree is without leaves. Its seed pods are long and slender carrying a orangey red seed.

**16. Moreton Bay Ash (*Corymbia tessellaris*)**

Family: Myrtaceae

This patch of residual gums were here before revegetation work began. Before this work, the trees were burnt every year due to the large amount of Guinea grass underneath- contributing to a high fuel load. The damage on the trunks is noticeable to about half way up the tree.

**17. Weir Planting**

This planting was done in late 1996 to early 1997, and has survived numerous floods. Species were chosen for their flood resistance. They are also preventing erosion of the river bank during peak water times. Species planted include: Leichhardt Tree (*Nauclea orientalis*), Weeping Paperbark (*Melaleuca leucadendra*), Native Damson (*Terminalia seriocarpa*), Northern Swamp Mahogany (*Lophostemon grandiflorus*) and Freshwater Mangrove (*Carallia brachiata*).