

# Maggie Midwinter MAKE-OVER

9 – 24 August 2003

Greetings Island residents and visitors!

With the cooler weather with us, Islanders are warmly invited to take part in the Maggie Midwinter Make-over – to help repair the ravages of the year and uncover a fresh, new face! This year, we are focusing on removing weeds, ready for revegetating with plants that attract our special native birds and animals.

## Gardens

In gardens, we encourage you to concentrate on removing the following weeds - Singapore daisy, Periwinkle, Mother-in-law's tongue, Snakeweed, Mother of millions and Guinea grass, as well as Lantana, Yellow oleander, Sisal, Tecoma and Leucaena.

Wouldn't know your 'mother-in-law's tongue' from your mother-in-law? Your 'mother of millions' from your mother, or your 'periwinkle' from your pear tree? Easy! See the accompanying mini-poster (which you can keep for future reference!) and/or check out the displays of potted and pruned weeds that will be on display at sites around the Island during the 'Make-over'.

## Type of weed

## Removal technique

Singapore daisy; Periwinkle;  
Mother-in-law's tongue;  
Snakeweed; Mother of millions

Pull out. (Moistening the soil first will help.) Disturb the soil as little as possible. Remove all (or as much as you can) of the plant and roots. Put in a garbage bag, seal bag and place roadside, for pick-up on or after 25 August. This is a 'weed special' event and collections are being made by volunteers. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE OTHER GARDEN DEBRIS OR OTHER WASTE.

Guinea grass

Pull out. (Moistening the soil first, or using a water spear [available from The Island Nursery], will help.) Disturb the soil as little as possible. Shake soil from roots. Use the grass as mulch around trees, making sure that the roots are not in contact with the soil.

Yellow oleander; Leucaena;  
Lantana; Sisal; Tecoma

These large, woody or succulent weeds, need special treatment. If you are not sure about how to remove them, or need help to transport removed material to the green waste tip, contact one of the Maggie Midwinter Make-over hotlines (4758 1003 or 4758 1125) between 9am and 7pm.

## Streets, gullies and vacant land

Why not group together and tackle a problem area in your street? If you have a group but no problem, ring the hotline and you're sure to be given one! And if you know of a problem area – a particularly obnoxious area of weeds – and you would like some assistance and/or advice to tackle it, call the hotline and we'll target it for immediate or scheduled attention. If you or your group take on a site on public land and would like to revegetate and maintain it, we can provide native tree seedlings to replace the weeds (see below), and arrange authorisation and a landscaping plan for you.

## Group activities

Want to work in an organised group? Get yourself to one of the targeted areas (listed below) from 8am every Saturday and Sunday between 9 and 24 August. At each location, there will be organised weed removal activities.

- » Horseshoe Bay Lagoon walking track (between the lagoon entrance and the beach)
- » Alma Creek (upstream of the surf life saving club in Alma Bay)
- » Habitat Reserve (Sooning Street, next to and behind the Day Care Centre)
- » Butler Creek (beach end of Magnetic Street in Picnic Bay – turn off opposite the tip)

## Gardening specials

Check the Island hardware stores and The Island Nursery (all in Nelly Bay) for specials on plants, gardening tools and equipment – gloves, secateurs, mulch, compost bins etc.

## Native plant give-away

Everyone participating in the Maggie Midwinter Make-over is eligible to receive a free native tree courtesy of Magnetic Island Nature Care Association. The trees will be distributed by The Island Nursery in Sooning Street, Nelly Bay.

## Flora for Fauna

Now that all those weeds have gone, why not fill the space with plants that will help prevent the weeds returning and, at the same time, attract native birds and butterflies?

To attract nectar-eating birds, plant Grevilleas and Banksias; for cockatoos and lorikeets, plant Eucalypts, Melaleucas, Hakeas and Callistemons; for pigeons, trees bearing berries (such as the Burdekin Plum). Include grasses, native daisies and wattles for seed-eating and insect-eating birds. Provide shelter (thickets of dense, prickly shrubs) and water in areas out of reach to predators. Remember that red and yellow flowers are especially attractive to birds.

To attract the splendid, green Birdwing butterfly, plant the 'Birdwing vine' (*Aristolochia tagala*); and *Euodia elleryana* for the brilliant blue Ulysses butterfly.

For more information on flora for fauna and on establishing and maintaining native gardens, visit [www.floraforfauna.com.au](http://www.floraforfauna.com.au)

## Water wise

Remember, extensive planting of thirsty 'exotics' (non-natives) and lawns can lead to excess water bills, pressure on aquifers and destabilisation of deep-rooted native vegetation. Think natural, think native!

## Health and Safety

- » Wear sturdy gloves, long-sleeved shirts, long socks (or trousers) and strong closed-in shoes.
- » Avoid sunburn. Slip (on a shirt), slop (on sunscreen) and slap (on a hat).
- » Do not try to lift heavy weights – if it weighs more than about 12 kilograms it may be unsafe to lift it without assistance.
- » Beware of stinging insects, spiders and snakes - use a garden fork to lift piles of debris.
- » If you find any syringes DO NOT handle them – use kitchen tongs to pick them up and put them in a safe place (eg. inside a plastic bottle with cap or an empty jar with a lid) and place in your garbage bin - NOT the recycle bin.
- » Place bags of weeds roadside, for collection on or after 25 August, where they will not impede traffic or sight lines.

## Disclaimer

This is a voluntary project. While the organisers will deal with logistics and costs, they cannot be responsible for your safety. By participating in the project you agree to be responsible for your own safety and welfare, and you agree not to hold the organisers liable for any injury or loss you suffer. The simple solution is to be careful and sensible and look after yourself and others.

## REMEMBER!

- » Two-thirds of Australia's most damaging environmental weeds originated from home gardens.
- » Local native species suited to our climate provide good habitat for native flora and fauna and are, generally, easy care.

## Happy make-over!

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Magnetic Island

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This project is brought to you by Townsville City Council, Magnetic Island Nature Care Association Inc., Magnetic Island Community Development Association Inc., The Island Nursery, Big Hammer Hardware, Mitre 10 Hardware, Magnetic Waste Management, Queensland Parks and Wildlife.