

Free plant program returns

It's official - council's popular native plant giveaways are back from this Friday.

RESIDENTS living in Andergrove, North Mackay and West Mackay love their plants.

These suburbs collected the most plants as part of council's free native plant program last year. Other areas where free plants proved popular included Marian, Sarina, Walkerston and the Northern Beaches.

The program returns for another year, with the first round of giveaways of 2020 scheduled for Friday, February 21, and Saturday, February 22.

Cr Ayril Paton encouraged ratepayers to come along and choose from over 45 different species of plants that will be available on the day.

"There will be a range of climbers, ground covers, shrubs and trees to choose from," he said.

"As part of the program, ratepayers can receive four free plants per year.

"The program is run by calendar year, so if you collected plants last year and want to add some more natives to your garden, you can pick up another four at one



Glen Harris with some of the native plants grown as council's nursery.

of this year's events.

"Local native plants are not only beautiful, but they thrive in our climate and require less water than many non-native species."

Residents who can't make it to the February giveaway can

attend one of four other sessions held during the year including:

April: Friday 17 and Saturday 18
June: Friday 26 and Saturday 27
August: Friday 21 and Saturday 22
October: Friday 16 and Saturday 17

Due to the heat, the February

giveaway will be held from 8am to 11am at the Mackay Natural Environment Centre, 6 Swayne Street, North Mackay. The remaining sessions will be held from 9am to midday.

To collect your plants, bring along your most recent rates

notice and your own bag or box to take your plants home. Extra plants can be purchased on the day via eftpos.

For more details about the free native plant program visit mackay.qld.gov.au/nursery.

Mackay shines for Gold Coast Suns

GOLD Coast Suns players Kitara Whap-Farrar and Taylor Smith took some time out to see what our region has to offer before the club's first prime-time match for 2020.

That match will be played here at the Great Barrier Reef Arena at Harrup Park on March 6.

While on their weekend sabbatical, the players visited the Bluewater Lagoon, explored the City Centre lane ways and Artspace, dined in Wood Street, enjoyed a pizza while watching some thrills and spills at the Wakehouse Cable Park and hung out at the beach at the Mackay Marina.



Taylor Smith and Kitara Whap-Farrar at the Mackay Marina.

The duo also met with keen local AFL players.

"We loved meeting and talking to the locals and seeing all the young girls interested in football in Mackay," Smith said.

"I absolutely loved my time up in Mackay over the weekend," Whap-Farrar said.

"It was so good to see all our passionate fans up there and we hope to see them coming to support us," she said.

"The entire club is really excited to come up and play."

Watch the Gold Coast Suns take on the Geelong Cats from 6pm at the Great Barrier Reef Arena on Friday, March 6. Entry is free.

> super sarina women to be recognised

COUNCIL is looking to recognise amazing women from Sarina, like Dianne Barnett. Mrs Barnett was awarded the Mary Malone Memorial Trophy at the 2019 Sarina Women's Week Awards for her tireless community service. Nominations for the 2020 Sarina Women's Week Awards are now open.

Cr Fran Mann said the Sarina Neighbourhood Centre team had done an amazing job coordinating the awards night each year. "If you can spare a few moments to nominate someone, that acknowledgement means so much, and all nominees are invited to a special dinner on Friday, March 6," Cr Mann said. "So many of these women work exceptionally hard behind the scenes in our community and have an impact that is far-reaching," she said.

To nominate someone, email their names, contact details and a brief paragraph about them to the Sarina Neighbourhood Centre team at margaret.mcdowall@mackay.qld.gov.au. Don't forget to include your name, email and phone number and let us know if you wish to remain anonymous. Nominations close Monday, February 24.



Dianne Barnett, pictured with Mayor Greg Williamson, was awarded the Mary Malone Memorial Trophy in 2019.

All nominees will be invited as a guest to attend the Sarina Women's Week Dinner and Awards Night at the Bob Wood Cultural Hall on March 6.

The awards are an initiative of the Sarina Neighbourhood Centre and council and are supported by the Queensland Government, Sarina Community Bendigo Bank and BMA.



Ella Heke trying her hand at Taiko Drumming in 2019.

> Travel to Japan

COUNCIL is offering a chance to visit an Olympic city in the September school holidays as part of a scholarship program. The 2020 Youth Ambassador Program launched this week and applications are now open for students in years 10, 11 and 12 (in 2020) to visit Japan and stay in Matsuura. Cr Fran Mann said council was providing a \$1000 scholarship to be used towards the cost of travel for each student.

Download applications from mackay.qld.gov.au/sistercity. Applications should be finalised and submitted to mackaysistercities@mackay.qld.gov.au no later than midnight, Sunday, February 23, 2020.

SAVETHEDATE



February 21 - 22
Free native plant giveaway



March 6
GC Suns V Geelong Cats AFL



March 13
Library Mega Book Sale



March 21
Harmony Day Festival of Cultures

For more information visit, mackay.qld.gov.au