

COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
July 2018

Previous meeting
Sunday 17 June
Lincoln Place

A chilly Winter's day with the temperature reaching just 7°C, reported as the coldest Canberra day in seven years. However, that didn't deter seven of us (Doug, Alan, Malcolm, Chris, Rohan, Rob and Jenny) from weeding on the Ridge above Lincoln Close

It was pleasing to see that previous season verbascum had seen the immediate area above and to the right of the footbridge still largely clear of the weed. However, further north there is quite an infestation into which Chris and Rob made some inroads. But there is still quite a lot left.

Doug dealt with some briar roses, Rohan sprayed phalaris and other weeds. Jenny concentrated on St Johns Wort

Chris tackles Verbascum above Lincoln Close

Next Meeting
Sunday 15 July
Mt Arawang

Time: 1.30 pm– 4.00 pm

Meet: Horse paddocks, Namatjira Drive

Bring: hat, gloves, secateurs, dabbler, hacker, drink, raincoat if it is wet

Task: plant identification, weeding

Contact: Rob Lundie 6288 4125

August meeting: Sunday 19 Aug, Kathner St

Verbascum above Lincoln Close
Photos by Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie

Pigs on the Ridge?

Some time ago there was concern that pigs may have visited an area behind the Old Dam. Fortunately, closer inspection of the site revealed that the flattened grass was probably caused by wombats.

However, here are now confirmed reports that we have pigs in the vicinity of the Ridge. At the present time we are aware of pigs around the Arawang Horse Paddocks on the western side of the Ridge. If you see them let us know. We have reported their presence to Nature Park management.

ABC news reported that a Government supported program was attempting to trap feral pigs on rural leasehold land in the vicinity of Lanyon and Tidbinbilla.

Alan Ford

Why we target Phalaris aquatica

Phalaris aquatica is an invasive weed that Rohan in particular dedicates himself to eradicating from the Ridge. One reason for doing so is that it can be toxic to kangaroos. It has a neurological effect which causes them to stagger and lose balance. They may appear confused and disoriented and if they fall over they have difficulty in getting up again. Unfortunately there is no known cure. For further information see this recent ABC news story.

It is found from Queensland to Tasmania and Western Australia, and very wide spread.

Braconid wasps are a large family of wasps with over 800 Australian species. They are closely related to the ichneumonid wasps and parasitise the larvae of many insect groups in a similar way.

This Braconid Wasp has an orange head with black eyes. The thorax is black, and the abdomen is black above and white on the flanks and underside. There are black and white bands on the rear part of the abdomen.

They measure about 15mm long and can be seen flying around tree trunks looking for beetle larvae to parasitise. They feed on longicorn beetle larvae. Females lay their eggs inside longicorn beetle larvae and the developing wasp then parasitises the beetle larva.

Phalaris aquatica Photo: Canberra Nature Map

Rob Lundie

A new species of wasp on the Ridge

The White Flank Black Braconid Wasp (*Callibracon capitator*) was sighted on Cooleman Ridge by Roger F on 8 April this year and confirmed by Michael Mulvaney on 8 June. Going south past the Old Dam on the Bicentennial Nature Trail, the wasp was located just past the step through gate on the fire trail that goes off to the left. It is a local native, non invasive species.

White flank black Braconid Wasp
Photo source: Canberra Nature Map

Rob Lundie with additional information from Jim Bariesheff, the Ewasp Team, Core Enviro Solutions Pty Ltd