



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter July 2017

Previous Meeting - Sunday 18 June Kathner Street

A glorious winter's afternoon welcomed four hard-core volunteers. Rohan continued his relentless campaign against the tall pasture grass **Phalaris aquatica* up the drainage line. Jenny, Arminel and Pat worked near the dam (site 1 on our Nature Trail).

The sunshine attracted quite a few visitors to the Reserve, some of whom stopped to talk. We were able to show them flourishing River Tussock we'd planted to halt erosion and clumps of Dianella Lilies planted with the help of small children years back. There is now very little **Cyperus eragrostis* (aka Dirty Dora) around the edge of the dam, where native reeds and sedges are taking root instead.

Removing the hay left by last year's grasses enables the lower-growing perennial native grasses and rushes to emerge from the germinating exotic annuals. The weed-piles, placed atop **Paspalum* clumps, inhibit the growth of this persistent perennial weed and will make the task of removing their roots much easier over the months ahead. Jenny's weed-piles have been laid beside the foot-track, to hold back moisture for the lovely reed-bed that has developed north of the dam in recent years.

A cup of tea from the back of our car, a chat with Malcolm and a discussion of strategies and tasks finished the afternoon. Well done!

Arminel

Next Meeting Sunday 16 July Group Area North - Chauvel

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm

Meet: End Kathner St

Bring: hat, gloves, secateurs, dabber-doober, hacker, drink, raincoat if it is wet

Task: plant identification, weeding

Contact: Doug 6288 8589

If you see or hear something, say something!

Please report

vandalism

to

Access Canberra on 13 22 81

If you hear or see anyone in the reserve who is actively damaging the park -

Please don't approach them.

Report your concerns to

the Police on 131 444.

Prompt Response by Parks Staff

We appreciate the attention given to our recent reporting of problems at Kathner Street - vandalism, plus an unauthorised camp fireplace. Thank you to our Rangers, Glenn Charnock and Brad Green, and to Area Manager Scott Seymour.

What's around

Small Purple Pea (Swainsona recta)

Some of you may have noticed a recent report on the ABC about using seed from the endangered species *Swainsona recta* plants found on Mt Taylor for re-establishing the species in Victoria where it is functionally extinct. The following information is taken from a report by that underappreciated gem, the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG).



Swainsona recta growing in the railway easement north of Williamsdale ACT (Ollerenshaw, P. Australian Plant Image Index Photo.: a.5891)

The Small Purple Pea is a small perennial forb formally widely distributed in south-eastern Australia from north eastern Victoria along the western slopes of New South Wales and the ACT to near Gulargambone. Mt Taylor is one of around 28 sites in NSW and the ACT from which seed has been collected to form a seed orchard to maximise potential genetic diversity.

Small Purple Pea occurs predominantly in grassy woodlands but sometimes extends into grassy open forest. The population declines or disappearances are thought to be down to the usual suspects: habitat loss due to pasture improvement; stock grazing; competition from herbaceous weeds; reduced fire frequency and the resulting competition with native groundcover species; and railway maintenance, roadworks and urban development. Sounds like Cooleman Ridge if not exactly Mt Taylor!

Adapting to Climate Change

Pat Boldra, from MASH (Minders About Simpson's Hill), went to a recent workshop about what Climate Change Adaptation means for Landcarers in the Canberra region. She reports: "It was decidedly scary to learn that we already have a different rainfall pattern, with more intense rainfall, increased heat stress, storm severity and extreme fires. This is resulting in changing animal and plant distribution, pest and disease spread and natural resource impacts, not to

mention increasing climate related insurance premiums.

"It was not very reassuring to learn that research into how to adapt is not keeping pace with the changes. However there were some useful techniques and resources presented at the workshop."

Pat B. also notes "the likelihood of extreme fires fuelled by African Lovegrass" as a matter of immediate concern to peri-urban reserves like Simpson's Hill and Cooleman Ridge.