



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter July
2006

Previous Sunday Meeting, June 18th

At this unproductive time of the year GAS/Arawang is looking really good, and we left to looking even better. We continued to work out from the big flat Meeting Rock – *Acetosella vulgaris*, *Festuca elatior*, *Salvia verbenaca*, *Chondrilla juncea* featuring prominently – piling the litter on to the pool of *Rubus fruticosus* (blackberries) where the frost should break it down. The profusion of *Cheilanthes sieberi* – Resurrection Fern – was a joy to see.

It's a poor time of the year for a species count and I scored a total of 41 plants of which 21 were native. Both previous counts had been done in March when more is identifiable. *Acacia doratoxylon* (Currawong), also known from just outside the fence at GAN/Chauvel, was a welcome find. ☼

Future programme

We will continue to rotate through the three Group Areas (GA) when there is no special programme, meeting as usual on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 1.30 p.m.

At a suitable time we'll reassess developments at the Fuel Reduction Trial Site. ☼

Next Sunday meeting, July 16th

- GAN/Chauvel for clearing of exotic growth, plant ID
- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at Kathner St or GAN/Chauvel
- bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet ☼

Woody weeds

In the grand old days Bess and David kept the woody weeds in check, but lately they have been proliferating beyond our powers of control.

On Friday June 16 Doug and I were driven round the Maintenance Track by Graham Heanes, with fellow ranger Bernadette Brown, so that we could share our concerns with them.

From Monkman St to Coleman Trig are a few scattered briars; from here on the situation worsens and it is here that CNP's current spraying programme should have a dramatic impact at least as far as Guinness Place where funds ran out. With the couple of hundred metre long hose, spray can be delivered far in from the Maintenance Track, with the specific targeting of specific weeds with specific herbicides under specific weather conditions.

Priority weeds are blackberries, briars, pyracantha and St John's Wort. Funds do not extend to Cootamundra Wattle or Blue Gum; thistles and verbascum are not considered as meriting attention.

Thanks for the update, Graham and Bernadette. ☼

Pauline Lynga, 6288 7009, paulyn@iinet.net.au. July 2006

June log

230606 four Maned Wood Ducks Kathner St dam ☼

Mynas

News from Kambah is that Arminel and Pat very quickly caught 47 mynas and 2 starlings in their \$50 trap. Pat went to the trap-building workshop and is now seeing \$50 as the option of choice.

The threat these birds pose to wildlife worldwide has been recognised by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) with their inclusion on the IUCN's list of the 100 most invasive species in the world. ☼

Apologies

to Graham Heanes for persistently misspelling his first name. ☼

Pine seedlings

Another was spotted from the ranger's vehicle, and noted for later removal. ☼

Various rumours have it:

that cattle will not be returning to the trial area next spring
that cattle will be returning to the trial area next spring
that a similar trial is to take place on Red Hill. ☼

Previous newsletters

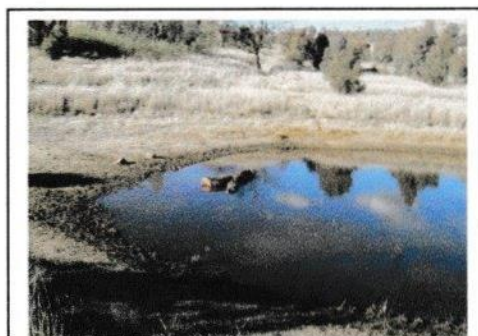
Karina has placed all the 2006 newsletters on our web page. coolemanridge.inventivedingo.com/news2006.html. ☼

Dam logs

Thanks to Tanya Noakes, Waterwatch Coordinator for the Southern ACT Catchment Group and John Wilson of Parks and Places with the ACT government, our two dams each have a large log placed as best as could be in them. The idea is to replace the pontoons which served as a roost for ducks and a sundeck for turtles. Hopefully the logs will serve the same purpose and even help out other creatures such as frogs and macroinvertebrates.

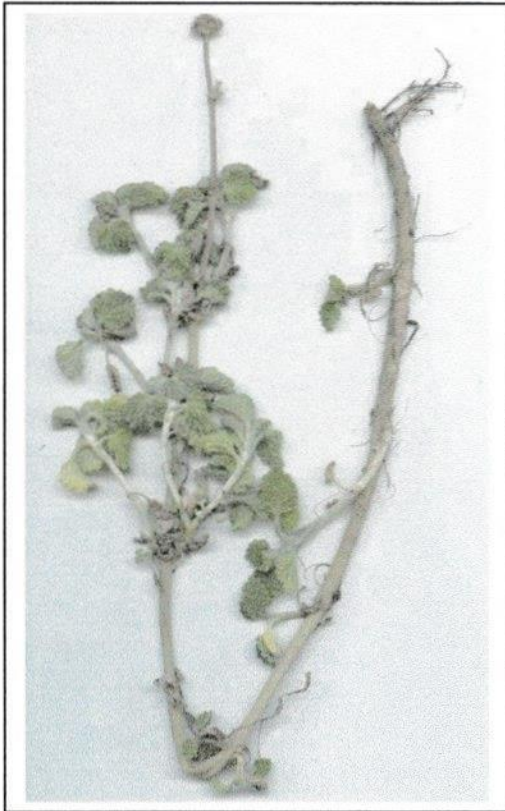
Story and picture from Doug. ☼

Old dam

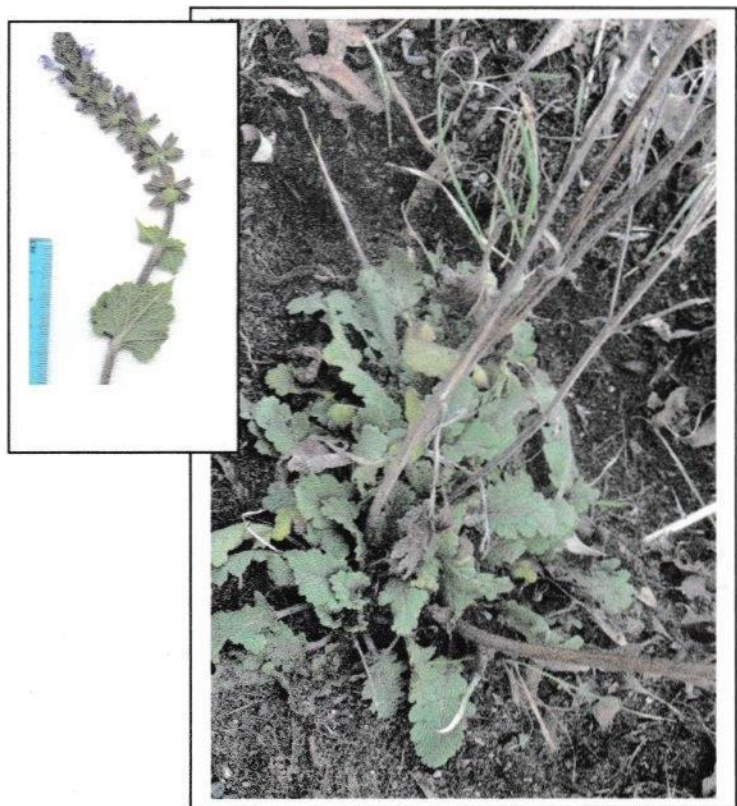


What's around

Family LAMIACEAE – Mint family



Marrubium vulgare - Horehound
Perennial exotic shrub to 60cm
vulgare L.: common
Native of Europe and northern Africa. ☼



**Salvia verbenaca* – Wild Sage
Perennial exotic herb to 70 cm
L. salvia safe (supposedly medicinal)
Native of S & W Europe, N Africa ☼

DRAFT: TOWARDS A MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR COOLEMAN RIDGE CANBERRA NATURE PARK (continued)

HISTORY

After thousands of years of Aboriginal occupation white settlement began in the region about 1825. The local Ngunnawal tribe travelled to the mountains in summer to feed on aestivating Bogong moths (Flood 1980). Europeans sought land in the area for their domestic grazing animals once they had discovered a route through the Blue Mountains from their original settlement in Sydney.

Early maps nominated the vegetation of the area as "forest" or "open forest" even "thickly timbered" (Parish maps for Yarrowlumla 1879, 1880) but we know little of the detail of natural history of the area at the time of settlement. By 1899 the area was part of a large grazing property called *Yarrowlumla* which extended from what is now Canberra City to the suburbs of Belconnen and Weston Creek. A diary (Vest 1899) and maps (...) reveal that European rabbits were present then and that thistles and briars were problems and had been since 1874 (L.Gillespie). Boxthorn hedges had been planted. In 1919 the value of the

property was being assessed probably with a view to compensating the occupants as part of the process of establishing the National Capital of Australia following Federation of the States in 1901.

The Ridge at the turn of the century was part of *Yarrowlumla* Station. No doubt the Ridge had been disturbed in various ways but specifics are few. We do know that thinning and ring barking had taken place on the property as a whole. There were about 1.5 trees per acre on *Yarrowlumla* on average, about 4 trees per hectare (...)

Coolman was a subdivision of *Yarrowlumla*. It was leased by the Champion family from 1937 to 1996 and run as a grazing enterprise. It comprised Blocks 18 and 22 and Stromlo - 2900 acres or 1 140 ha in all. Block 22 included Mt Taylor (Taylor's Hill then) which was resumed for housing and recreational use in the 1960s. The Champions operated their property from a house in what is now Doyle Terrace, Chapman but later (when?) moved to an area west of the Ridge. Their move may have resulted from resumption of land for the building of the suburb of Chapman from the late 1960s. In 1997, the lease on the property changed hands. Now (1997), it is run as an equestrian centre. (to be continued).

Note: the whole draft can be read on our web site. ☼