



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter February

2007

Previous Sunday Meeting, January 21st

Doug provided this account.

"The early start of more or less 8.00 am saw five members gathered on the base of Mt Arawang with a mind to savage the wild sage (Salvia verbenaca). This exotic perennial rosette is common and widespread in the region (more accurately, abundant, on the lower slopes of Mt Arawang). These specimens seemed to have stunted rosettes but the root system was the size and texture of a carrot. Tough survivors by the look of them. The woody weed spraying of November/December did not extend as far as Arawang, which is a pity because we only managed to cut and dab a few briars. Mind you, those briars and St John's Wort that were hit by the contractor in the area above the equestrian park and northwards are stone dead. The team was cheered by the comeback of Tina Nevins. Members may recall that Tina broke her hip on a bus some two years ago and has not been able to make it to the Ridge until now. Great to see the Queen of Arawang return to her domain". ☼

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.

Start: 8 a.m. November, December, January, February

1.30 p.m. during the rest of the year ☼

Next Sunday meeting, February 18

- GAN/Chauvel for clearing of exotic growth and plant ID
- **8 a.m. to 10.30 a.m.**
- meet at Kathner St or GAN/Chauvel
- bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet ☼

January log

Kathner St dam dry

Large fire damaged Eucalyptus melliodora collapsed in Olympic Site ☼

"News of Friends of Grasslands"

carries this report:

FOG's committee is seriously concerned by the proposed development in Molonglo Valley (ACT) and the general lack of regard for natural grassland and woodland areas when land is released for urban development. FOG, like the Conservation Council, believes that Australia should seriously question 'greenfield' development. FOG has not objected to the development of areas of little or no conservation value (unless they are potential ecological corridors) but we have consistently opposed the clearing of native grassy ecosystems for development.

In the Molonglo Valley there are areas of both natural temperate grassland and yellow box-red gum grassy woodland, sensitive riparian areas, and habitat for pink-tailed worm lizard, raptors and threatened species such as brown tree creepers. FOG understands that current proposals would mean the removal of 600 hectares of yellow box-red gum woodland, 25 percent of the pink-tailed worm lizard habitat, raptor and brown tree creeper habit.

FOG is considering nominating the pink-tailed worm lizard as a threatened species in the ACT. FOG understands that the reason that it was not listed in the past is that its habitat was considered secure as there were no proposals to develop the Molonglo riparian area. ☼

Our Web site

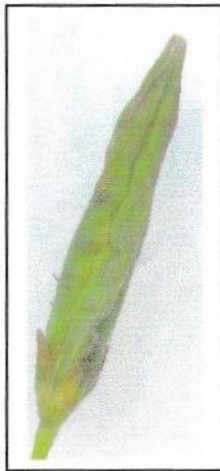
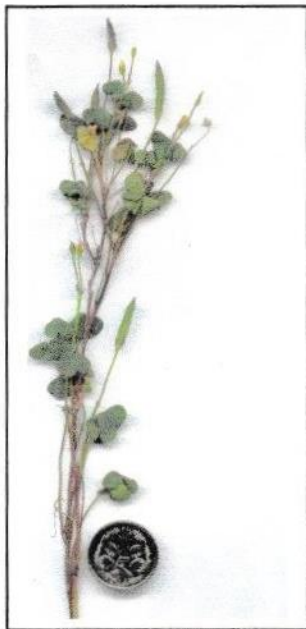
Note our new address: www.coollemanridge.org ☼

The Ridge viewed from Oakey Hill



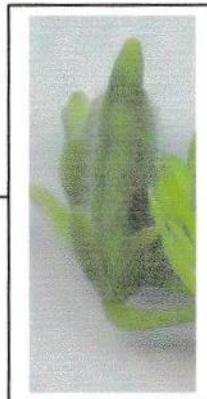
What's around

Family OXALIDACEAE



O. radicata (left)
Note long, slender fruit with simple, backwards-sloping hairs.

O. tompsonii (right)
Note short, broad fruit with conspicuous septate hairs



Oxalis radicata

Native perennial herb with branches erect or creeping to 30 cm. Sometimes with stout taproot
oxys Gr: acid + *alis* saltiness ☼

Oxalis tompsonii

Native perennial herb
oxys Gr: acid + *alis* saltiness ☼

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

PLANNING HORIZONS

The origins of the native species present on the Ridge go back millions of years. Climates, substrates, topography and species composition have changed many times. Thousands of years ago Aboriginal people colonized the area with unknown impact. Hundreds of years ago Europeans arrived in Australia with dramatic impact. With conservation of native biota a major aim of management, what planning horizons are pertinent in our changed landscapes? Three time scales are apposite currently while a fourth is relevant. These scales are yearly, decadal and centennial while millennial scales should not be discounted. At yearly scale is the annual works plan; at decadal scale are provisions for management and recreation including efficient roading, fencing and trails and a detailed management plan; and at centennial scale is the vision for the future of the Ridge. Without vision we wander in the darkness.

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

Herbicide 1

From Doug to Graham:

"Back in late November/early December I saw a contractor spraying for briars and St John's Wort in the area north of Mt Arawang. I've been impressed with the results. All the target weeds seem stone dead, with no overspray effects on the adjacent grasses. What was the herbicide? Unlike glyphosate there doesn't appear to be any collateral damage. Was the timing due to a critical flowering period or did some money turn up out of the blue?" ☼

Pauline Lyngå, 6288 7009, paulyn@iinet.net.au, February 2007

Web site URL www.coolemanridge.org

Herbicide 2

From Graham to Doug:

"Just a little of both some money and the little rain at the time or should I say the rain before hand and the sap runing. The mix of chemical also helped, Starane and Grazon did a good job." ☼

Arminel's diary, 2 February 2007

"My first attendance this year. I'm delighted to find that almost no weeds are emerging in the areas I've cleared. As it was hot and dry, I worked down near the fence in a patch of shade, removing *Acetosella vulgaris*. The pink-flowered patches of *Geranium solanderi* with which it was competing should flourish now. I'm intrigued by the orange-red carrot-like fleshy roots of this cranesbill. According to Tim Low (*Wild Food Plants of Australia*, p 110), cranesbill roots were eaten by aborigines, explorers and early settlers. Those he had tried himself had been astringent and inedible! Like the fleshy roots of the native bluebells, (*Wahlenbergia* spp.) which have been flowering all summer, this characteristic of the cranesbills is a wonderful adaptation to dry conditions.

Other flowers in evidence today were Kangaroo Apple (*Solanum cinereum* and Pink Bindweed (*Convolvulus erubescens*). The cassinia bush and the yellow-flowered rush clumps – *Tricoryne elatior* – are still flowering, too.

The dam remains dry, but there is pigweed (*Portulaca oleracea*) growing in the cracked mud. This cosmopolitan weed is listed as native in Flora of NSW and was a whitefeller food plant in early times. Its alternative English name is purslane. The tiny seeds, which were blackfeller tucker, are a good source of protein and fat, according to Tim Low (*Ibid.*, p 156). It's good to be back." (Thanks, Arminel) ☼