



# COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter August 2003

## Previous Sunday meeting, July 20<sup>th</sup>

First of all, Doug presented Park Care goodies to the deserving, and then we knuckled down to the business of potting the eucalypt seedlings peppering the moist soil just above water level. When the dam eventually starts filling, from the lowest it's ever been, this zone will be flooded. We quickly emptied the garbage bags of pots Janice had collected from Revolve, and just as quickly filled the pots with seedlings, 116 of them. Some are being cared for by the members present, and the remainder are with Kathryn who thoughtfully rang offering them safe haven. There was time over for one group to remove the rest of the burned stakes from the Olympic Site, with Gösta providing a bike-transport service, while the others chipped away at Paterson's Curse on the dam wall.

See it all, in glorious colour, on our web page  
[www.webone.com.au/~kpelling](http://www.webone.com.au/~kpelling) ☼

## Next Sunday meeting, August 17<sup>th</sup>

CVA volunteers have been working on the Ridge, doing track work, clearing litter and chipping weeds. Although we don't know where they'll be on Sunday, we hope to meet up with them on the Arawang track. We'll see what remains to be done, and chip weeds.

- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at Namatjira Drive entrance
- bring hat, gloves, drink, snack, weeder, raincoat if it is wet ☼

## Future programme

September 21<sup>st</sup> to be decided  
October 19<sup>th</sup> to be decided ☼

## Archives

Janice is now custodian of the library which had been in Alan's care until it could be once again housed closer to the Ridge. Contact Janice to borrow items.  
Janice: phone 6288 3953 (h) email  
[janice.paull@aph.gov.au](mailto:janice.paull@aph.gov.au) ☼

## Crash

I'm late this month because the computer hard disk crashed taking the newsletter and everything else with it. So here is a partial reconstruction, lacking *What's around* this time, I'm sorry to say. ☼

## July log

More productive birdseed - \**Linum usitatissimum* (Flax), \**Carthamus tinctorius* (Safflower) flowering

250703 rabbit on Fence Post Hill

## Recovery – NPA walk

Our rapid response team, on the morning of July 5<sup>th</sup>, was mingling with 150-odd walkers as they surged up from Kathner Street for a look at fire-damaged Chapman and the recovery taking place in near-by bushland. Gösta stayed with the leaders, Reet and Janice moved within the body of the group, while past member Anne and I tailed the stragglers who elected not to climb to the high points, urging them to at least look at the view above Titheridge Place. But the mist hadn't risen. On Coolleman Trig Elizabeth was waiting to point out the returning plants, and on Mt Arawang Tony described the progress of the fire. Stage 1 of the walk ended with morning tea at the Kambah Fire Station where Anne and I caught the Salvation Army's shuttle bus back to Kathner St. The walk continued over Mt Taylor (still in thick mist) to a BBQ at Athlon Drive. Stage 3 took in Farrer Ridge.

The Recovery Centre, NPA and Salvation Army ran a very smooth operation. ☼

## Web site

Karina asks for pictures of wild life to add to her new web chapter. She also reports seeing a uniformed official telling walkers to leash free-ranging dogs. ☼

## Welcome

to new member Malcolm who joins us from Farrer Ridge. Malcolms are always good value. ☼



## Monitoring the Old Dam

Doug reports:

*One thing with a closed system, change is limited! Perhaps the greatest change over the last few months has been the temperature. Water temperature in July has dropped to 5.5 degrees Celsius from 17 degrees Celsius in April. This may explain the lack of algae where once the plumes were obvious.*

*While the dam is very murky, salinity is quite low and in July's test, no phosphates were detected. The water appears to be slightly alkaline. The level remains very low with no runoff from rain in the first part of the month.*

*Although water quality is dubious, a veritable squadron of ducks used the dam while we were testing. These could have been the ducklings, now grown, observed on the water a couple of months back. Wherever they're from, it's encouraging to see them.*

*Of course the sunflower, millet etc. shot from seed put out for wild life after the fire is still there. It's looking a little bedraggled with the cold weather but, combined with the abundant Paterson's Curse interspersed around the dam, things could get ugly in Spring. We may need to think about a work party to clean up the area. ☼*

## Weedbuster week

Environment ACT in conjunction with Canberra Urban Parks and Places, the Australian Native Plant Society (ANPS) and the Friends of the Botanic Gardens are again this year producing a 'good plants, bad plants in your garden' display at Floriade as the major contribution of the ACT to Weedbuster week. The display will run at Floriade from 13 September to 12 October.

They are seeking volunteer explainers to help at the site. If you wish to add your name to the roster please contact Rosemary Blemings on 6258 4724 or mail to: [roseble@tpg.com.au](mailto:roseble@tpg.com.au) <<mailto:roseble@tpg.com.au>> ☼

## ACT Landcare Awards

Wendy, of Farrer Ridge, successfully submitted a joint application for Cooleman Ridge, Mt Taylor and Farrer Ridge ParkCare Groups. Great work, Wendy!

National Landcare Week (18-24 August) will include the ACT Landcare Awards on Thursday August 21. ☼

## Park Care Coordinators' Meeting

More from Doug:

*Representatives of Park Care groups meet regularly with Steve Welch, the Environment ACT Park Care Coordinator. The July meeting was addressed by a member of Environment ACT's Water Resources Taskforce. In addition, Paul Higginbotham, who is responsible for the East district of Canberra Nature Park outlined developments on repairs to fencing and walking trails. A draft policy for sustainable water resource management in the ACT was launched by the ACT Government in July. It's a big issue and one all of us will confront as we are encouraged or coerced into a 12 per cent reduction in per capita use of potable water over the next 10 years – and a 25 per cent reduction by 2023 (on top of the 20 per cent already achieved since 1993). The draft goes into the options available, some of which include increased use of effluent, limiting stormwater flows and reducing household usage.*

*A copy of the draft policy is obtainable from the web on [www.sustainability.act.gov.au/pdf/water\\_policy.pdf](http://www.sustainability.act.gov.au/pdf/water_policy.pdf). Alternatively, hard copies should be available from ACT Government outlets and libraries.*

*As to activities in fire-damaged areas of the Nature Park, Urban Services has taken the opportunity to enhance fencing of management trails. Some fences have been removed (one above Lincoln Close has gone) but others extended. The net effect on Cooleman Ridge is that the management trail resembles a corridor of wire – mainly to keep horses, bikes and other vehicles on the road and off the ridge. The Parks people are well aware of the looming explosion of weed growth. Extra funds were made available in the ACT Budget to deal with the problem and work is expected to be undertaken when growth commences in Spring.*

*Urban Services is also accelerating fire fuel reduction in non-burnt areas and managing buffer zones around houses. ☼*

## Women

*I remember last time I wrote this newsletter having included a report from a Women's Landcare conference in outback NT. Instruction was received in herbicide management, whipper-snipping, Waterwatch, GPS reading and quad bike riding. Finally they autopsied a pig and then barbecued it. Seems we've still got a way to go. ☼*