



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter August

2008

Previous Sunday Meeting July 20th

Arminel reports: "Seven members and a visitor from Sydney met to clear exotic growth and identify plants at Group Area Central, up from Darrell Place. Mal had responded to a sign we'd put up near Kathner Street, advertising the event. Armed with a borrowed mattock, and initiated into the mysteries of identifying *Verbascum thapsus*, she set to work with a will, as did the rest of the party. Then the rain came down and the sweetest members of the party melted away. Those of us with adequate rain gear persisted as long as we could with our work, for there was no wind and the temperature remained mild. This area has come on amazingly since I first went on a weeding party there - the native grasses have flourished and there are many local forbs now, with fewer thistles and a reduction in the infestations of St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*). As the showers persisted, we all went home early to enjoy our own hot showers and clean dry clothes. I think we all had a lot of wet, muddy clobber to contend with after our sodden day! And that wasn't quite the end of it all - through a misunderstanding, a raincoat and mattock were left behind, so Pauline and I donned rubber boots and sloshed back up the hill in the gloaming to collect them. A truly memorable work party".



Future programme

Next meeting, Sunday August 17th

- meet on Namatjira Drive just before the Kambah Pool Road turn-off, or GAS/Arawang to clear exotic growth, & plant ID
- 1.30 to 4 p.m.
- bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet. ☼

11th October: Focus on Feathers – see next column

19th October: short AGM at GAN/ Chauvel, followed by weed removal and plant ID ☼

Sharps again

"When I rang up to report finding the sharps disposal container on 4 July, I got into trouble. Apparently it should have been left where it was, beside the track! 'Denise' said I should have known not to touch such an item, even with gloves on. However, the container itself did not bear any warning to that effect, and I thought the rebuke was uncalled for. On the positive side, the container was collected promptly from my front porch."

Arminel

Sharps Hotline: phone 13 22 81. ☼

Census of the Vascular Plants of the ACT

Here is Part 4 – from Brendan Lepschi's detailed response to our worries. See our April, June, July newsletters for Parts 1, 2, & 3.

"The Australian Plant Census, the Australian Plant Name Index and names and concepts adopted for the ACT Census"

Providing 'absolute power' over taxonomic decisions to any one person or body would seriously limit scientific discourse and progress, and it is ultimately the taxonomic community at large that decides on the adoption of particular ideas or concepts. The downside of this is that this process can seem rather haphazard at times, with each state and territory adopting its own preferred concepts, with general but not absolute agreement across jurisdictions. Australia is fortunate in that we have a detailed listing of plant names, the Australian Plant Name Index (APNI) which is available at <http://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/databases/apni.html>

"APNI is a listing of all scientific plant names (including non-indigenous taxa) used in the taxonomic literature relating to Australia. The thing to remember about APNI is that it is an uncritical presentation of names and their usage. It simply seeks to present names as they are published, along with any synonymy presented by the author(s) in a given work. It DOES NOT seek to indicate any recommended taxonomy or nomenclature. Unfortunately, many users try and derive that information from APNI and become (understandably) confused."

Brendan Lepschi, Curator, Australian National Herbarium;

Brendan.Lepschi@csiro.au; (02) 6246 5167 ☼

Focus on Feathers

We are announcing an early morning bird-watching walk for Saturday 11th October 2008 – the start of Parks Week.

Numbers will be limited to 20. A second walk can be scheduled at another time if this event is oversubscribed.

A reasonable level of fitness is required as tracks are steep and surfaces uneven.

Bring: binoculars, stout shoes, long trousers, long-sleeved shirts, hat and sunblock.

There will be an opportunity to discuss bird photography following the walk - leader, Tobias Hayashi, is an accomplished young cameraman, whose work can be seen on our website:

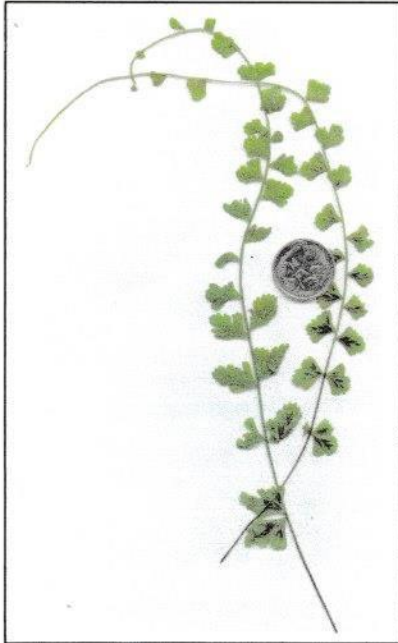
<http://www.coollemanridge.org/fauna.html>

RSVP: Arminel Ryan, president, by Friday 10th October. Phone: 6231 7392. You will then be told time and place of meeting. ☼

Tuggeranong Homestead

The Australian War Memorial special exhibition *All together: sport and war* is ending its national tour at the historic Tuggeranong Homestead, where it will be open to the public each weekend from 26 July to 24 August, from 10am to 3pm. Enquiries 6231 5548.

What's around



Family ASPLENIACEAE
Asplenium flabellifolium –
 Necklace Fern
 Native, fronds procumbent,
 1-pinnate, mostly 10–20cm
 long, rachis often
 extending beyond the
 uppermost pinnae and
 rooting close to the apex
asplenon Gr: a fern reputed
 to cure illness (*splen*:
 spleen); *flabellum* L: fan-
 shaped



Family SINOPTERIDACEAE
Pellaea falcata –
 Sickie Fern
 Native, with long
 creeping rhizome. Sori
 in a continuous band,
 about 1 mm wide
pellos Gr: dusky
 (fronds); *falcatus* L:
 sickle-shaped.

Mount Taylor Group 19 years and a track!

Gösta went to the opening, walked the walk and filed this report:

"On a beautiful Canberra winter day, 24th July, the Mt Taylor Park Care group with Mr Hargreaves officiating opened the new walking track to the top of the mountain from Parkhill Street, a short distance north of Brinsmead Street in Pearce. It was also the 19th birthday for the group so the vivacious president, Anne Ions provided a birthday cake. Several rangers were there including Nadia Kuzmanoski, our new Park Care contact, who is planning to follow our activities and to be at our meetings. After hearing the speeches, seeing a ribbon being cut, planting a Kurrajong and engorging a number of delicious cakes we walked to the top, a climb of 150 metres.

"A number of very attractive information boards had been erected, vandalised and re-erected by the rangers and the group. It is sad that people enjoy the destruction but an indication of the tenacity of that group that the signs again looked very good on the day.

"Top of Taylor: an impressive view reminding me of when Rod Quinn reached the top of Cooleman Trig and enthusiastically exclaimed in his radio report that 'from here you can see the whole world', by which he obviously meant the most important part of it: Canberra. The view from the top of Mt Taylor is even better because you can see the whole length of Cooleman Ridge from there." ☺

FREE GEAR FOR VOLUNTEERS

Ring Arminel on 6231 7392 to arrange delivery of -

- Wide-brimmed cloth hats
- Long-sleeved polo shirts
- Leather gloves
- Latex dipped gloves
- Two-pronged weeders
- Medium mini-mattocks
- Sock protectors
- Fly veils ☺

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

There are alternatives to grazing by exotic herbivores as a fuel amelioration measure. Firstly, the nature of the fuel can be changed. Eliminating the introduced *Phalaris*, a major problem species (see also Fenwick and Everall 1975), and replacing it with a sward of native grasses will reduce fuel loadings in many areas; this could be achieved by an incremental program of herbiciding and sowing of native grass seeds (McDougall 1989) and by establishing indigenous trees. Plantations of trees change the fuel type from a grassy one to one dominated by twigs and leaves (litter) (see also Fenwick and Everall 1975); litter loads can be reduced by burning at a wide range of times during the year.

Secondly, the amount of fuel can be changed by slashing, mowing, cutting (shrubs) and by burning under safe conditions. It is recommended that a zone 10 m wide adjacent to the houses in the reserve be declared a "nature strip" (as at the curbside of suburban properties); in this zone householders would be able, if they wished, to reduce fuels legally (cf present) by mowing or by removal of exotics (including non-indigenous natives) but be obliged to refrain from sowing or planting any non-indigenous species. Any planting would have to be under the authority of Canberra Nature Park. Managers would continue a program of slashing and seriously consider prescribed burning in selected areas adjacent to the suburban edge. Thirdly, steps could be taken to inhibit or prevent the spread of fires onto the Ridge. This can be done by maintaining a selection of bare earth roads and reducing grass heights in a strip adjacent to them. By reducing grass height (and fuel load) the lengths of flames in a fire are reduced and the chances of fire crossing the bare-earth break are also reduced.

Finally, steps can be taken to reduce the ignition potential of the region, perhaps through education.

Note: the whole draft, submitted in 1998, can be read on our web site. ☺