



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

**Newsletter
December 2021**

Previous Meeting: AGM and Sun 21 Nov 2021 Kathner St

The forecast of rain failed to deter 14 Group members from attending the AGM at the end of Kathner St. It took just 15 minutes to elect the following people to committee positions for another year.

President: Linda Spinaze

Vice-President: Chris Oates

Treasurer: Rohan Thomas

Secretary: Rob Lundie

Public Officer: Doug Tinney

Committee: Jenny Horsfield, Paul Sheils, Helen Govey and Natasha Cole.

In her President's report, Linda thanked retiring members Alan Ford, Doug Tinney and Brigitte Brickwood for their long service to the Group over many years. She also noted the difficulties the Group had in conducting formal weeding parties during the year due to the Covid restrictions. However, highlights of the year included the celebration of the Group's 30th anniversary in May and the substantial planting of shrubs and grasses around the Old Dam in March. Work continued on the Group's archives and website, and a Facebook page was established. Some members attended weeds and grasses identification courses and a Masters student was helped with his thesis. Monitoring activities included Vegwatch and the placing of cameras on Mt Arawang. Burn offs continued and cattle were again allowed to graze along the western side of the Ridge. The Group farewelled Gosta and Brigitte but also welcomed a good number of new members. In a lovely touch, two of those members, Angus and Tamsin, arrived at the

Next Meeting

Sunday 19 December 2021

Above Chauvel Circle

Time: 8.30 am – 11.00 am.

Christmas morning tea at 11 in the park on top of Chauvel Circle. Bring your own drink and something to share.

Meet: Chauvel Circle.

Bring: hat, gloves, digger, water to drink.

Task: weeding

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

Jan meeting: Sun 16, Darrell Place

AGM with a tray of 'just out of the oven' warm rhubarb muffins!

After the AGM the following people (Linda, Rob, Chris, Natasha, Angus, Tamsin, Rosalie, Alex, Natasha, Doug, Paul and Helen) wandered up the Nature Trail and put up with wet legs from the long grass to deal with Verbascum, fleabane and African Love Grass.

Rob Lundie

Old Dam Plantings Progress

Recently Chris and I weeded around the southerly planting of the Old Dam, so that Paul could whipper-snip in the area more easily later.

The good news is that only a few plants have died due to being drowned in water. I think they were the *Acacia ulicifolia*. I hadn't

realised quite how wet that area was until the recent non-stop rains.

However, the *Acacia rubida*, *Leptospermum lanigerum*, *Callistemon sieberi* and *Acacia parramattensis* all seem to be OK, as are many of the poa grasses. In fact, one was doing so well that I almost pulled it out because I thought it was a weed!! Some of the other grasses are struggling, and I had to be careful to pull out the weeds and not the grass. The pink plant protectors have certainly stopped a lot of the growth of weeds around the plants - the ones without surrounds had thick grass growing beside them.

We checked the other areas of new planting, and it was pleasing to see that most plants have survived. The Blue Devils are looking great so hopefully they will turn their electric-blue colour in December.

Chris also found a friend!



Chris with turtle near the Old Dam
Photo: Linda Spinaze

Linda Spinaze

Walks on the Ridge

Over the past few weeks I have had the pleasure of leading two large groups of U3A walkers along the Ridge from Kathner St around to the Old Dam and then back via the reservoir, anniversary seat and the nature trail. The recent rain ensured that the countryside looked wonderfully green and the dams full to overflowing. However, this also meant that the track was pretty muddy and soggy in parts, not helped by the prevalence of cow pats. Yet no one seemed deterred as Deirdre helped them negotiate the best path through.

While they marvelled at the hills to the west and views over Canberra to the east, it was Linda's knowledge and keenness to point out and identify the Ridge's various plants and weeds that captivated the walkers and added extra colour to their overall experience.

Rob Lundie

Wombat hole collapses, again

In the July Newsletter, it was reported that the wombat hole under the track north of the Old Dam had collapsed, making cycling, in particular, treacherous. Eventually the track was repaired and the status quo returned, that is the wombat rebuilt its burrow with two tunnel branches just inside the entrance. Unfortunately, the record rain and possibly heavy traffic resulted in its flooding and collapse again. Hopefully the wombat has escaped and found alternative accommodation, no doubt waiting for the track to be re-repaired.



Flooded wombat burrow

Photo: Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie

Christmas Morning Tea

After our weeding on Sunday, there will be a Christmas morning tea in the Chauvel Circle park. Please bring whatever you wish to drink, something to share and a chair if you wish to sit. There is a picnic table for putting the food/drinks on. If it's raining, we will be able to retreat to Lyndal's covered outdoor area. Everyone is welcome.

Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in 2022