



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARKCARE GROUP

Newsletter March 2002

Sunday meeting February 17th. Visiting Mt Taylor's burn site of 4 years ago furnished rewards above and beyond mud cake and scones. Anne pointed out features of the regeneration process while Malcolm and Tony gave us some clues for "reading" a fire's direction, flame height and intensity. What we saw was a large area of relatively undegraded steep hillside of which Cooleman Ridge has no equivalent. We saw how well the *Allocasuarina* are responding, and were told of new appearances of orchids in other areas. Anne considers that in hindsight and over all, the fire was a good thing. One lesson learned was the use of newspaper for weed mats instead of jute mats with their tendency to slowly smolder.

Thanks to our hosts for your company and hospitality!

Incidentally, there is a thicket of young *Allocasuarina* on the slope of Cooleman Trig, surrounding a senescent tree, No. 294/3, at 0684391/6085548 (easting/northing) that has the suggestion of blackening on its trunk. Do we know of a fire here? When? ☼

Sunday meeting - Tina's thistles

- Sunday 17th March
- 1.30 -4 pm
- meet at the Namatjira Drive entrance; we will go up the track towards the summit of Arawang
- bring mattock or short handled digger, hat, gloves, drink, snack.
- there will be herbicide available, but there is lots of scope for purely manual removal.
- at 3.30 we'll pause for a brief general meeting, hearing about the Tuggeranong-Tharwa subcatchment group, and the co-ordinators' meeting. Other matters? There should be plenty of daylight left for another go at the thistles. ☼

Annual April Affair

Weeding! Picnic! Bird watching! Spot lighting! Star watching!
Come with your picnic to the Kathner Street end on Thursday 25th from 5 p.m. onwards (we know it is Anzac Day). Follow the track beside the outer fence, between the Olympic Area and the outer boundary to the rocky knoll (a few hundred metres). Bring torch; binoculars handy. ☼

Tool sharpening

Mike is happy to sharpen tools. Ring him on 6254 8405, or e-mail pmvarga@austarmetro.com.au ☼

Activity figures

For February, 7 people have reported 72 hours, and 8 of our group visited Mt Taylor on Sunday 17th. There has been massive tree-tagging down Arawang way. Contact Janice with your hours at the end of each month (evenings excepting Tuesdays on 6288 3953 or email at janice.paull@aph.gov.au) Janice forwards the stats to Ann Connolly. ☼

February log

100202 duck house demolished for safety reasons.

Crassula helmsii on platform - added to herbarium

220202 3 wood ducks on Kathner St dam.

xx0202 fire hazard reduction in progress - tagged trees removed in Survey area No2. ☼

Remnant tree cover in the ACT

is represented in the categories

Open forest - trees 10-30m, 30-70% foliage cover, understorey shrubs and low trees.

Low open forest - trees lower than 10m, 30-70% foliage cover.

Woodland - trees 10-30m, 10-30% foliage cover, understorey shrubs.

Open woodland - trees 10-30m, less than 10% foliage cover, ground cover tussock grasses and grass-like plants.
(taken from *The conservation of Remnant Woodland and Native Grassland in the ACT*, National Parks Association of the ACT, 1991.) ☼

Duck house

February's massive rains filled the Kathner Street dam to overflowing. In the process the duck house came unmoored for the second time since its installation, and drifted ashore. Fears that this could entice a child to a fatal accident led to a decision to demolish it.

The opportunity to identify the plants established on the pontoon was seized:

Lythrum hisiopifolia (Hyssop Loosestrife). Native

Polygonum aviculare (Wire Weed)

Poa annua (Winter Grass)

a leaf looking like *Cyperus eragrostis*.

These four are present on the dam wall.

And

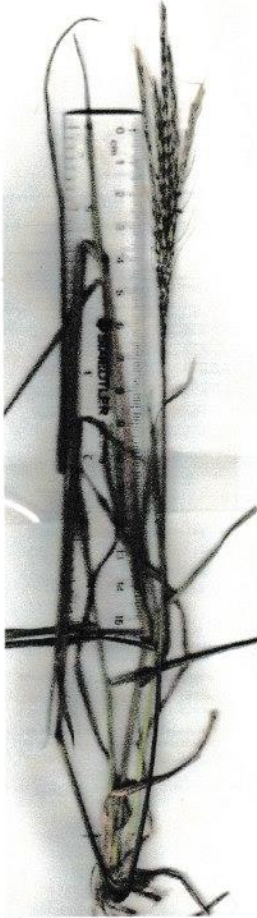
Crassula helmsii (Swamp Loosestrife), new to herbarium. Native.

Last year 9 of 11 wood ducklings survived to maturity - we will be following this year's brood with concern. ☼

What's around

Family: POACEAE

Both these grasses have finger-like inflorescences (flower-bearing systems.)

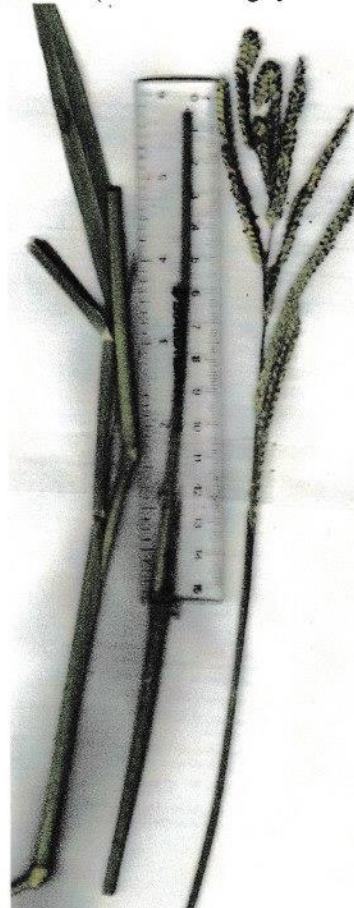


Bothriochloa macra

Red-leg Grass

Native. Widespread in overgrazed pastures.

From the Greek, *bothrion*, little pit + *chloe*, grass, referring to joints and pedicels having a distinct discoloured groove (Pedicel being the stalk of a flower).



Paspalum dilatatum

Paspalum.

Weed from South America.

From the Greek, *paspalos*, millet, and the Latin *dilatare*, to widen. ☼

Tree survey

Tree tags are useful! I spotted the showy blue flowers of *Tweedia coerulea* just above the fire trail on Coleman Trig, noted near-by Tag No 298/3, returned with tools and removed them. Unfortunately the fluffy seed heads were already flying.

Gösta writes:

Trees in areas 1, 2 and 3 are now completely tagged and photographed. GPS coordinates have been obtained for trees West of the Fire Trail (which have priority). In area 8 Doug and Tina have tagged away at high speed. Lots more has been done on the ridge but not reported. Tree surveyers: Don't be shy! Tell me what you have done.

Gösta (6288 7009, gostaL@ozemail.com.au)

Good, better, bless

Bess has left us for the Central Coast and true to character she chose to slip away without fanfare.

It was Bess who responded to CNP's idea of forming parkcare groups, and with David's loyal support and organising talents, led our flourishing band.

People wonder - can we keep it up?

But Bess showed us, with her dedication and dynamism: if you see something that needs doing - *do it!*

Bless you, Bess.

Pauline Lyngå, 6288 7009, gostaL@ozemail.com.au