



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

**Newsletter
May 2016**

***Previous meeting
Sunday 17th April
Nature Trail/Pauline's Patch
Kathner St***

Alan, Pat and I mainly worked on *Verbascum thapsus*, of which there has been a significant emergence of new rosettes. (Plenty left for the Friday mob!) I also did some Rabbit Repellent work - dead and thorny branches strewn over the sites where they sun themselves, defecate and dig. Linda and Malcolm went after African love grass. Rob and Graham went to war on woody weeds (Briar rose) near the Main Reservoir. They took away nearly half a bucket full of rose hips. Rohan had 'a wonderful time hacking out hundreds of verbascum on the nature trail'. At the brief debrief, Alan, Malcolm, Pat and I noted that there had been a fantastic amount of *Panicum effusum* on this site this season with masses of seed. Redleg Grass (*Bothriochloa macra*) is prospering and plentiful. There are also lots of *Solanum cinereum* seedlings, swards of *Microstachya stipoides*, and lots of *Lomandra* spp.

Arminel Ryan



Graham Paul strips off rose hips before poisoning the Briar rose. Photo by Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie lundier@iinet.net.au

***Next Meeting
Sunday 15th May***

Group Area North: Chauvel Circle

Time: 1.30 pm – 4 pm

Meet: above Chauvel Circle

Bring: hat, gloves, hacker, drink, raincoat if it is wet

Task: plant identification and weeding

Contact: Rob Lundie 6288 4125



Linda at working party April 2016 Photo by Pat Ryan

Construction and other issues

Coolleman Ridge is under-going some major works over the coming months. The first, a reduction-burn over all of Mt Arawang, has already been completed. There will be comprehensive re-building of the cut-drain on the southern side of Mt Arawang, necessitating the closure of the road, and also in this area, the walking track up to the summit of Mt Arawang will be up-graded to

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improve the drainage and to make it safer. At the northern end, the steep vehicle track at the Kathner St entrance will be re-surfaced. Other action completed by CNP in April has been the recent comprehensive spraying of African Love Grass.

Indigofera adesmiifolia bushes and Enneopogen nigricans

On Tuesday 26th April, Linda, with the valuable assistance of Nick Daines, our current Ranger, dug up and re-planted nine small *Indigofera adesmiifolia* bushes. These bushes were situated on the south side of Arawang, and were destined to be destroyed by the imminent re-alignment of the cut-drain access road. We found that the bushes had quite long tap roots, making them very difficult to remove without damaging the root system, but some of the very small plants were removed successfully. We re-planted them up the slope only 20 metres away from their original home, around the Arawang sign.

I also found some *Enneopogen nigricans* (Nine-awn grass) in the endangered area, and moved the tussocky sods and seed heads to an area near some rocks, again near the sign.

Nick promises to water them during the next month or so, but if you are passing by with a full water bottle, then share some with the *Indigoferas*!

Linda Spinaze

Native grasses

Below is a passage from Bill Gammage's book 'Narrandera Shire'. It is an elegiac account of the wonderful native grasses that covered the western plains before white settlement.

The plains and open forest were occupied by a remarkable plant, Kangaroo Grass, *Themeda australis*, a perennial tussock grass up to 2 m high, with long thin leaves and clusters of corkscrew seeds. It flourishes in summer and even when red brown in late summer it is a highly nutritious fodder plant. It was one of the native perennial grasses which covered the open country with rich summer feed. Since stock prefer it, it survived only where stock could not reach it. In 1853, E.P.S. Sturt,

Charles Sturt's brother, remembered the Murrumbidgee region in 1837: '...the quail sprang from the long kangaroo grass which waved to the very flaps of the saddle...'

Jenny Horsfield

The Pink-tailed Worm lizard

The Group is aware that a survey of potential habitat for this lizard has now been completed. However, in view of recent (eg the Centenary Trail) and proposed work on the Ridge it is doubtful whether this lizard can survive in what is now a very fragmented environment. (It was declared vulnerable in the ACT some time ago.)



Source: Photo by Matt from Melbourne- Pink-tailed Worm-lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*) Uploaded by SunOfErat, CC BY 2.0,

Alan Ford

Vulnerable Scarlet Robin

The A.C.T. Environment and Planning Directorate has produced a [draft action plan](#) to save the scarlet robin which faces extinction in the next 25 to 50 years. It is calling on people to comment on the plan.



Scarlet Robin seen on Cooleman Ridge. Photo by Helen Cross