

COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter November
2015

Previous Meeting Sunday 18th October – GAS Arawang

Our work party morning saw six sturdy souls attacking weeds on the slopes of Mt Arawang. Most worked up a sweat on the blackberry infestation. Alan walked west to the boundary of the Bennett lease, inspecting the area of the proposed Roads ACT work on the drain. He also looked for major outbreaks of woody weeds, which he found on the Centenary Trail up the hill from that lease. Great to welcome Brigitte out again!

Broken or Surplus Tools?

1. Return these to the Group's current storekeeper. (As of now, this is Alan.)
2. Take away a substitute for a broken tool if a suitable one is in the store already. (If not, the storekeeper will make arrangements to obtain a suitable new tool and issue that when it arrives.)
3. Repairable tools will be collected until we have the resources to fix them as a batch.

Fisken Cct Drainage Works

In 2006, heavy rain sent the surface of the horse paddocks into the basements of nearby houses in Kambah. Lots of damage! Remediation work is now planned and markers are up along the cut-off drain. The Project Director, Mr Viet Le, briefed Arminel and Pat on Tuesday 6 October, but Doug will be our on-going contact. The proposed works will entail temporary re-routing of the Arawang summit trail as the construction site begins just east of the wooden bridge.

Future programme

Sunday 15th November

NB: Remember we meet in the mornings during the warmer months!!

1. Kathner Street Working Bee – Nature Trail and Pauline's Patch

Time:- 8.30 am – 11 am DST.

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

Task:- Plant ID and weed removal on Pauline's Rocky Knoll and Fencepost Hill. (Close by the Kathner Street meeting place.)

2. Annual General Meeting

Time:- 11 am Daylight Saving Time

Place :- Kathner Street Entry

Purpose: - to receive the reports of the previous year and conduct elections for all committee positions.

Nominations and Apologies to The Secretary, Coolman Ridge Park Care Group Inc, at lundier@webone.com.au

Down the Track and Up the Hill

This year we had to miss our usual Spring meeting atop Coolman Trig. We're proposing to make amends by holding our Christmas Meeting and Working Bee up there instead. Save the date! Sunday 20th December!!

What's around

**Galium aparine*

Common Names include cleavers/clivers, goosegrass, catchweed, stickyweed, robin-run-the-hedge, sticky willy/willow, velcro weed, and grip grass



Drawing from PlantNET.

Family: Rubiaceae (Lat. from *ruber* = Red. The name was used by Pliny the Elder in his *Naturalis Historia* for the dye-plant, madder ie *Rubia tinctorum*)
Genus: *Galium* (Gk. = milk)
Species: *aparine* (Gk. = to seize, grip, grasp.)

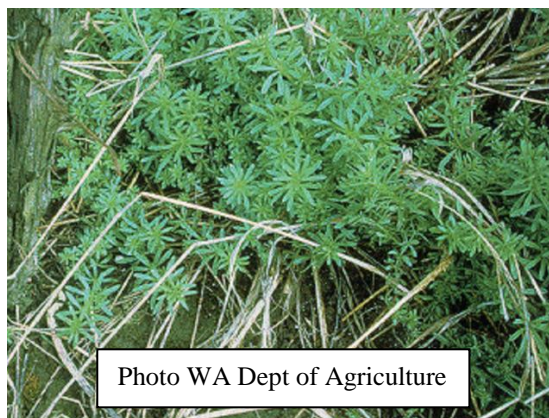


Photo WA Dept of Agriculture

Note: The whole plant feels sticky.
Warning – can cause contact dermatitis.

Description

Habit: an annual straggly scrambling herbaceous plant, growing along the ground and over other plants, with weak branched stems up to 1.5m long. Usually germinates in autumn. **Stems:** hollow, square in section with ridges at the corners. **Leaves:** no leaf-stalk; whorls of 4 - 8 at nodes on stems. **Flowers:** small (2 mm diam.), white, usually 4 petals, 4 – 6 carried on short straight stalks (peduncles) arising out of the bases of the leaves. **Seeds:** spherical burrs covered by tiny hooks, in pairs that separate when dry. **Dispersal:** wind, water, on the plant and especially by people or animals. The seeds survive in the soil for up to three years. **Occurrence:** Eurasia. Widely naturalised elsewhere. **Status:** a noxious weed in many places. An environmental weed in Vic., Tas., and NSW. A declared weed in WA.

Impacts: A weed of crops, orchards, gardens, waste areas, disturbed sites, pastures, grasslands, open woodlands, closed forests and margins, waterways and wetlands. Invades a variety of native habitats including dry coastal vegetation, coastal sand dunes, rocky sites, open woodlands, temperate rainforests, wetlands and riparian areas. Its burrs spoil fleece. It is a serious problem in some conservation areas, as well as a serious agricultural weed.

Traditional Uses: 1. Culinary (the young plant is edible, but usually cooked rather than raw; seeds can be ground and used to make beverages). 2. Folk medicine (poultices and washes can be applied to treat minor skin complaints). 3. Milk processing (a coarse sieve made from the stems can be used to strain milk, eg. for making cheese). 4. Mattress stuffing (hence the common name “bedstraw” for all the similar sticky members of the genus). 5. Dyeing (the roots produce a permanent red dye.)

References: there is a wealth of information on-line. I found the WA and Qld govt websites particularly informative. I also used Wikipedia and PlantNET.

Still Grasping the Nettle

Wednesday Weeders have returned to the site of the **Celtis Australis* Southern Nettle Tree infestation (see *What's Around*, Feb 2014). We spent much of 2014 felling these, helped by Craig Wainwright and his chainsaw, but there are now a gazillion suckers, seedlings and re-shoots. Poisoning the stumps wasn't very effective! Moreover, the enriched soil created under these deciduous trees, together with more sunlight due to removal of the dense shade, has liberated flourishing thistles, black nightshade and other nasties.

Arminel Ryan ryan@pcug.org.au

Wanted – Alive and Willing

Your Committee desperately needs new members. For various reasons, the old hands are finding they have to down tools. Please put your name forward if you love the Ridge and can help the Group continue its sterling work. There are many rewards in shouldering this leadership responsibility.

Lots of Life About

Including flies!! Wear your Fly-veil or ask Alan for a new one! Wombats and echidnas are being seen, as well as nesting birds.

Web site URL: www.coolemanridge.org.au