



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter October

2009

Previous Sunday meeting September 20th

Once again we met on Cooleman Trig to remove the persistent euphorbia plants. We intended to pull, or cut and dab them, and Athllon Drive ranger Joel Patterson drove the necessary equipment close to the trig point on the rural side, all according to plan.

Fortunately the plants pulled up relatively easily as strong wind inhibited the use of herbicide, and we made good progress. The infestation occupies a much smaller area now than when at its worst.

When Joel returned to pick up the equipment we had many well-stuffed bags lined up for him to cart away for disposal. His help was more than welcome. ☼

Future programme

Next meeting, Sunday October 18th

- 1.30-4 pm
- short AGM, followed by clearing exotic growth from the Nature Trail, plant ID
- meet at the Kathner Street entrance, bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet.

Please note: nominations for the committee are welcome. ☼

AGM

A tradition is being established to hold our AGM at the Kathner Street start of the Walking Trail so that access is easy for both active and non-active members, and for those bearing loads. When the Trail was redesigned following the fire consideration was given to side-stepping the steep and treacherous descent back down to Kathner Street. With the help of our then ranger Graham Heanes a pleasant route was settled on, and has been added to our Group Areas for work parties. Walkers are gradually learning to accept it, and it carries more and more traffic. Unfortunately it does nothing to deter mountain bikers from the enticing sharp descent. A recent Sunday morning spill happened to find four of our members nearby. They were able to call 000 and stay with the unconscious casualty till the fire brigade and ambulance arrived, relieving them of responsibility.

A solution is hard to find, but a warning sign may caution young riders. ☼

Fuel reduction trial/grazing trial report

Monday 19th October Greg Baines, Wildlife Ecologist, has agreed to present the results of the grazing trial on Cooleman Ridge. All welcome.

Time: 10 am. **Venue:** Stromlo depot, Cotter Road

RSVP by October 10th to:

Sally McIntosh

Community Programs Officer

Ph: (02) 6205 7384, sally.mcintosh@act.gov.au

Chapman School

Arminel and Jenny were guests at a delightful event at Chapman Primary School on Thursday 24th September. The Sunlight Centre, built with the help of various grants and much parental and school involvement, was opened with much laughter, colour and fanfare by ABC presenter Mark Carmody. The centre complements the fine new hall which was opened last year. The Sunlight Centre will be a place where students from all grades learn about plants and growing them and will include vegetable plots and a worm farm. In pride of place outside the garden and facing down across the school playing fields will be the Wollemi Pine we presented to the school about 18 months ago. One of the staff has been caring for it and the plant is looking strong and healthy. A 'symbolic' planting was done on the day but the pine will be taken home over the holidays and a proper planting done in the new term. Our Park Care group is fortunate to have such a happy and productive relationship with this school where so much enlightened and creative teaching is taking place.

The Year 4 teachers have already made a date to take their students for one last 'work party' up the hill early in fourth term. ☼

Park Care 20

A well-organised celebratory breakfast, to mark 20 years of Park Care, was held at the Canberra Yacht Club on Saturday 19th September. It was a delightful morning, where old hands mingled with the current crop of Rangers, Parks Staff and Park Carers. Tony Brownlie, Manager of Canberra Nature Park in 1989, gave an amusing and enlightening address about the context in which Park Care originated. Our group received a framed certificate "in recognition of dedicated volunteer community service to Cooleman Ridge Nature Reserve" and a \$50 Bunnings gift voucher. Arminel, our representative for the occasion, also accepted two wattles grown by Sally McIntosh. ☼

What's around



Family: ASTERACEAE – *aster* Gr. star
Previously Compositae; the daisy family

**Hypochaeris glabra* – Smooth Catsear
Exotic annual 10-14 cm high, slender
taproot, stems glabrous
hypo- Gr: under, *glaber* L: smooth
Native of Europe, Asia, Africa



Family: CARYOPHYLLACEAE

**Cerastium glomeratum* –
Mouse-ear Chickweed
Annual exotic herb
glomeratus L: gathered into a ball
Native of Europe

Dust

From: *DustWatch report for week ending 21st September 2009*,
John Leys, Stephan Heidenreich and Mike Case, The
DustWatch Team (south-eastern section)

For the Canberra dust storm, dust was emitted on Monday 21st September from the lower Lake Eyre Basin and travelled into Canberra on the afternoon of 22nd September.

The dust storms of the last week have had both on-site and off-site impacts. On-site impacts have included:

- soil and nutrient is lost resulting in lower soil productivity
- carbon release to the atmosphere, and
- soil degradation where subsoils with constraints to plant growth have been exposed.

A recent report from Bureau of Meteorology states that, for the last 12 years, the drought is not 'prolonged', but is a significant shift in rainfall patterns across south-eastern Australia, due to climate change.

The current predictions indicate that due to projected decreases in rainfall and increases in evaporation, soil moisture is likely to fall over much of southern Australia and droughts are forecasted to increase. These factors may contribute to a higher frequency of dust storms. ☼

Black Mountain Wildflower Ramble

9.30am to 12 noon - Saturday 10 October 2009
Belconnen Way entry, just before Caswell Drive turnoff.
BYO morning tea, hat, sunblock, water and stout shoes.
Contact Jean Geue on 6251-1601. ☼

Tip

When you want to confirm any identification, go to Google. Check pages from Australia. Search for, for instance:

Hypochaeris glabra, PlantNET. This gives you the botanical description.

To get a definition of a term used, google: **Flora of NSW, glossary.** I haven't managed to call up the illustration, only text.

To find out if the species is known in the ACT, google: **census of vascular plants of the ACT.** I have this amongst my favourites. ☼

Half-quiet Achievers

Four of our members were glimpsed, heavily disguised, early on the morning of September 10th at Regatta Point. On the Group's behalf they were presented with our half of the Quiet Achievers Award, sharing it and welcome prize money with plant propagator Vic Grosvenor.

They are, from left to right: Gösta, Arminel, Linda, Doug.



Never let it be supposed that we are a bunch of Quiet Half-achievers. ☼