

COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter October 2015

Previous Meeting Sunday 20th September GAC Darrell

A lovely Spring afternoon enticed out two extra workers. Graham and Paul W. made the party up to nine – seven men, two women. Welcome back, the returnees!!

The weather had been very dry and quite cold, so there had been little germination of annual weeds and grasses. However, woody weeds (Briar Rose, Blackberry, Cootamundra Wattle, Privet) kept most members of the team busy. Others dealt with African Lovegrass and Capeweed along the tracks. Alan inspected the Greening Australia plants in their pink shelters, and reported a high survival rate.

The botanical highlights of the day were *Acacia doratoxylon* and *Cryptandra amara* (details in *What's Around*, next page). The social highlight (apart from Afternoon Tea) was meeting Ted More, a descendant of a well-known local family. He told us that a landmark large boulder beside the base trail west of us had been known as The Sentry Box in earlier days. It had given its name to the farm property that once included it. Ted also told us about his elderly kinswoman, now resident in Yarralumla, who once lived on that property and has clear memories from the farming days before suburban expansion!!

School's Out

Our weekly presence at the Chapman Primary School outings has come to an end. Thanks to all members who participated in the programme.

Future programme

NB – Afternoon meetings this time of year!

Sunday 18th October

Group Area South – Arawang

Time:- 1.30 pm – 4 pm Daylight Saving Time

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

Tasks:- plant ID and weed removal.

For more info, contact Alan 6281 5648

Remember November AGM!!

Anna Seen on Arawang

Wednesday Weeders Arminel and Doug were delighted to have a fleeting visit from our former President. Anna sends greetings to all our members. She is enjoying being a mum, and her bonny baby boy is thriving.

Snakes & Other Sightings

With warmer weather, our reptiles are coming out. A walker reported having seen a big brown snake in September. Keep your eyes peeled! Carry your compression bandages for snake-bite! Make plenty of noise!

Pat reports seeing both Red-necked Wallabies and Wallaroos on Arawang.

Ranger Arrangements

We have a new Ranger at Athllon Depot, Liam Banyer. Welcome, Liam!

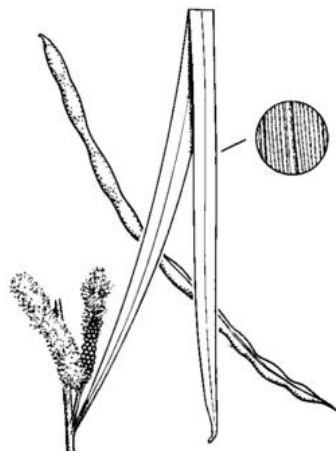
Left Eye Will Be Right

We all wish dear Jenny H. a continuing recovery from emergency eye surgery.

What's around

Acacia doratoxylon

Common Names: Currawang, Lancewood, Spearwood



Print References –
FIELD GUIDE TO THE
NATIVE TREES OF
THE ACT – National
Parks Association of the
ACT Inc., plus assorted
dictionaries.
On-Line sources include
PlantNet and Wikipedia.

Family Fabaceae (Lat. *faba* = bean)

Subfamily Mimosoideae (New Lat. from *mimus* = mime. The type plant has sensitive leaves, imitating an animal)

Genus *Acacia* (Gk via Lat., probably from Indo-European root “ak”= “sharp”).

Species *doratoxylon* (?New Lat = “Spear Wood”??)

Note The same species name *doratoxylon* occurs for other plants traditionally used for spears by Aboriginal people.

Both drawings from PlantNet. Rohan will put up Linda's photos and Arminel's scans on our website.

Occurrence: Well-drained, rocky slopes. Rare and localised in the ACT (the eastern limit at this latitude). Grows hereabouts in Eucalypt and Callitris woodland on rocky ridges. Found along the Murrumbidgee River, and in Molonglo Gorge. Also along the Great Dividing Range from Albury NSW to Qld.

Form: Variable. Tall shrub or small tree to 8 m., fairly straight trunk and grey to brown fibrous bark.

Leaves: Dark olive-green phyllodes, 7-20 cm x 3-9 mm, straight or curved, numerous longitudinal veins with 1 or 2 prominent.

Flowers: The only ACT wattle with flowers in spikes instead of spherical heads. Tiny, golden, dense fluffy spikes to 3 cm long at leaf base; often 2-3 together. Aug-Nov.

Fruit: A pod, 5-10 cm x 2-3 mm, fairly straight and thin-walled.

Note: reshoots from the roots after fire.

Cryptandra amara

Common Name: Bitter Cryptandra

Family Rhamnaceae (type genus name *Rhamnus* from Gk. = “stick”. Many species have a woody spine on the end of each twig. This gives the common name of Buckthorn to the genus.)

Genus *Cryptandra* (Gk *crypt[o]* = secret, hidden + *andra* = man, male)

Species *amara* = bitter (Lat adj., fem. form)

Description: Heath-like shrub to 1 m high, often intricately branched.

Leaves clustered, 2-6 mm long, 1-3 mm wide, base tapering.

Flowers usually clustered at end of branchlets. Bracts broad and obtuse. Flowering Aug-Sept.

Distribution and occurrence: Widespread in NSW; also Queensland and Tasmania.

Note: classification is under debate.



Harsh Reality

The World Herbivory Project is a database of plant biology, based on 75 ecosystems at different latitudes across the globe. Computer-based comparisons show that “..plants living in harsh environments – not the tropics – like in the Arctic where they only have a six weeks growing season, that the plants invest so much in producing just a few leaves that their defence mechanisms are much stronger,” says UNSW's Angela Moles.

Her research project has turned traditional thinking on its head and earned her the 2014 Frank Fenner Prize for Life Scientist of the Year. The previous assumption was that tropical forests, which boast the widest variety of plant species, had the greatest selection of biologically active compounds.

Her team is now assessing the rapid evolution of plant species introduced to Australia and how they've changed and adapted to our harsher environment.

From *UNSWorld*, Dec. 2013 Issue 19, pp 12-14.