

# COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

**Newsletter October 2016**

## **Previous Meeting - Rained Out!**

The Working Bee scheduled for Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September at Group Area North, above Chauvel Circle, had to be cancelled due to the wet conditions.

## **The Big Wet**

This extraordinary wet winter and spring has brought new life to the river corridor. Not only is the river in flood a spectacular sight, but the continuing wet conditions have transformed part of what was the old Yarralumla grazing lands, sloping down to the river from Cooleman Ridge. On a recent walk through grassland just up from the river, north of Forster Hill, we saw orchids (maybe *Diuris sulphurea*?) and whole hillsides of Early Nancy *Wurmbea dioica* in flower. It must be many years since there has been such flowering of native forbs in areas that have been grazed until quite recently.

Another walk on Saturday 1 Oct along the river track and over Forster Hill revealed a wealth of Yam Daisies *Microseris lanceolata* in flower and, among the north facing rocks on the hill, amazing clusters of Bulbine Lilies *Bulbine bulbosa*, at least 40 or 50 cm high.

*Jenny Horsfield*

## **Green Army attacks Verbascum**

Liz from CVA led her lads and lass to the fray on Wednesday 28 September, a splendid Spring day at Kathner Street. Thanks to all the team! Arminel, Jenny and Mike enjoyed the session.

We'll give you a fuller report next issue.

## **Next Meeting**

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Cooleman Trig**

**Time:** 1.30 pm - 4 pm Daylight Saving Time

**Meet:** At site (Parking at Monkman Street, Titheridge Place or Freebody Place.)

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

**Task:** Plant identification & weeding.  
Annual attack on Spurge *Euphorbia depauperata*.

**Contact:** Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

## **For the Diary - AGM November**

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November at 11 am.  
Darrell Place.

## **Creepy Crawlies on Camera**

Worms galore!  
Waterwatchers, wrapt, watched worms wriggling on wet tracks.

*Photo: Pat Ryan.*



Unfamiliar dark caterpillars have been about for the past month. We're in the dark about their identity. Any clues, any one?  
*Photo: Malcolm Gill*

## What's around

### *Acacia pravissima*

Common Names: Wedge-leaf Wattle, Ovens Wattle



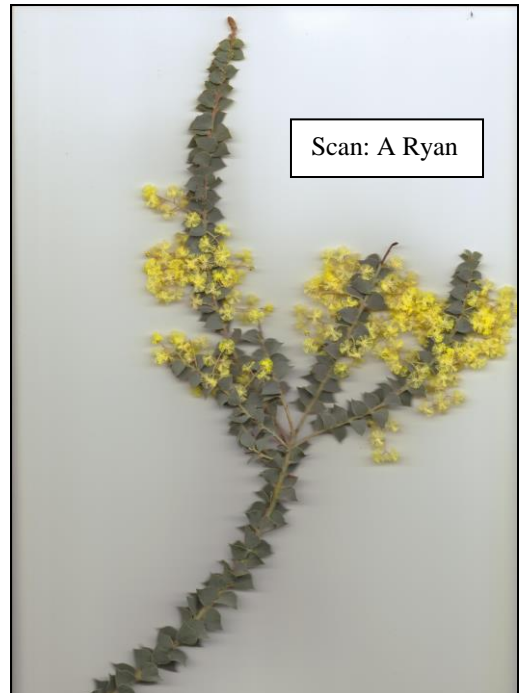
Another of our local Acacias with an international reputation - but this one has gained the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit! It is apparently grown under glass in some overseas climates!

Drawing from  
PlantNET.

**Family** - Fabaceae  
**Sub-family** - Mimosaceae  
**Genus** - *Acacia* (= spiky, from Gk. name of a thorny one)  
**Species** - *pravissima* (Lat. adj. = most crooked, referring either to the distinctive branching habit, or to the unusual, asymmetrical shape of the phyllodes.)

**Description** - Well-proportioned erect or spreading shrub or small tree, 1 - 8 m high. *Branches* often slightly arching to pendulous. *Bark* smooth or finely fissured, grey; angled branchlets. "*Leaves*" are phyllodes, broadly triangular to 16 mm and almost as wide. *Flowers* - Yellow heads to 5 mm, in clusters with the branch usually protruding through the cluster. *Fruit* - Flat pods 3 - 8 cm x 5 - 6 mm, straight or slightly curved.  
**Flowering** - September - November  
**Occurrence** - Cool hillsides and damp gullies.  
**Distribution** - Chiefly on the Ranges south from the ACT, extending south-east to Mt Buller in Victoria. ("Ovens Wattle" refers to its occurrence in the Ovens River Valley.)

**References** include various online sites, but particularly PlantNET, and the Field Guide to the Native Trees of the ACT (National Parks Association of the ACT Inc., Canberra 2007)



### ***Stairway to Heaven?***

The track on the south side of Mt Arawang from the wooden bridge up to the summit has been in a bad way for some time. With funds becoming available, Parks engaged contractors Makin Trax to repair and/or rebuild the route up the back of the hill. The worst section, the lower two-thirds, has been realigned and remade. Walkers/runners now wind through rocky outcrops and curl past corpses of trees. The design draws eyes to the great views over Tuggeranong and the Murrumbidgee corridor to the south. Much more fun than the head-down-watching-where-the-feet-go-to-avoid-breaking-an-ankle that was the old track.

The top one-third is not as picturesque. It follows the old line straight up the ridge. Being the steepest part of the climb, you do tend to concentrate on survival and not the view.

While this section could have taken a wide sweep to the right and been a more enjoyable walk, that would have opened up a previously untrammelled area with the consequent introduction of weeds and collateral damage. The old conundrum of recreation versus environment.

Never mind, we now have a great new access track which all should try.

Doug Tinney