COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter March 2012

Previous Sunday Meeting
19 January GAS Arawang

Rain threatened as we trudged up to Group Area South. It continued to threaten all morning, but in fact the storms didn't arrive til evening. Nevertheless, we'd decided that foliar spraying wasn't an option and that we should stick to cut-and-dab. So that's what Graham and Rob stuck to, and they did indeed get stuck into it with a will, hacking back the flourishing blackberry patch and applying poison to the cut canes. Others pulled out Great Mullein *Verbascum thapsus*, Fleabane *Conyza sp* and Tall Fescue *Festuca elatior*. New *Cassinia* bushes are growing near the rocks and an *Indigofera* has also appeared. As well as the hardy Resurrection Fern *Cheilanthes sieberi* (our emblem), we found delicate Necklace Fern *Asplenium flabellifolium* sheltering under a boulder. Well done, the team, and thanks to Pat for providing provender after the working bee.

Arminel

We found a lovely **scorpion** at this site. Of the three species of scorpions in the ACT, our scorpion was likely to be *Urodacus manicatus*, a Black Rock Scorpion. Black Rock Scorpions live in a little scrape under a rock or log, waiting patiently to feel the vibrations of their prey passing by. They eat small insects, spiders, worms and other scorpions.

Unfortunately we didn't get a photo of the scorpion, as a camera was not at hand, but would we want to get that close anyway? Australian scorpions are not likely to kill you but will give a painful sting. Another very interesting fact about scorpions is that they fluoresce under UV light. *Tammy Lee*

Note new web-site address below!

Future programme

This month, we revert to afternoon sessions.

Next meeting - Nature Trail
Sunday 18th March
Meet at Kathner Street entrance.

- 1.30 – 4 pm
- Plant ID, trail clearing & removing exotic growth.
- Wear long sleeves and trousers, enclosed shoes, hat and gloves. Bring raincoat if it is wet.
- BYO drink & snack. (The tea laddie will provide tea & coffee.)

Contact Arminel 6231 7392 if you need any gear or more info.

Thorny problems

The woody weeds are coming back with a vengeance. Sweet Briar *Rosa rubiginosa*, Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus*, Firethorn *Pyracantha angustifolia*, and African Boxthorn *Lycium ferocissium* pose risks for Parkcarers. These bushes have fierce spines. So too does Bathurst Burr *Xanthium spinosum*.

Tips to remember

Welders' gloves give forearm protection but are heavy and only come in large sizes.

Check with your doctor to ensure your **anti-tetanus shots** are up to date. Take care with any deep penetrating wounds, even small ones. Blood poisoning is possible.

A **foreign body (ie thorn) in a finger joint** can cause real harm – consult a doctor.

You can't always remove a thorn fragment easily. Magnoplasm (a **drawing ointment)** works wonders - apply generously and hold in place with sticking plaster. *Arminel*

Our President, Anna See, has moved from the Conservation Council and is starting a new job as Coordinator for the Molonglo Catchment Group.

Arminel Ryan ryan@pcug.org.au

Web site URL: www.coolemanridge.com

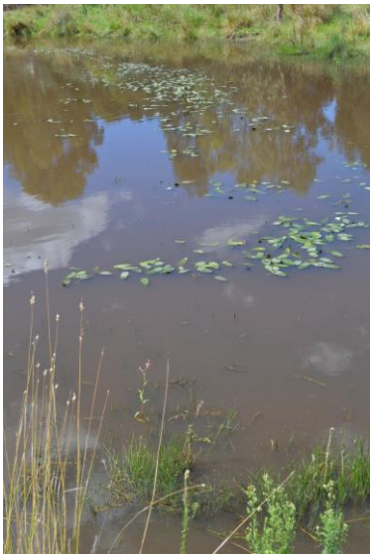
What's around

Ottelia ovalifolia

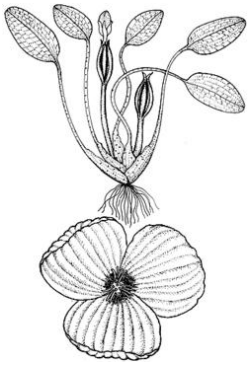
Common name: Swamp Lily

This pretty native lily grows in stationary and slowly flowing freshwater to c. 1 m deep, usually with high nutrient levels. It prefers full sun. In the Old Dam behind Cooleman Trig, its flowers will soon be visible again as the water level drops.

Family: Hydrocharitaceae
Hydro *Gk* = water; chari *Gk* = grace ie gracing the water. *Ottelia* comes from the native Malabar name *Oubanguia* from the name of the River Oubangui, Nigeria o*valifolia* Lat *ovalis = oval-shaped,* from *ovum = an egg;* + Lat. *folium = a leaf*



Photos Pat Ryan. Most information & line drawing from PlantNET. Information on the origin of the name *Ottelia* from David Gledhill *The Names of Plants 3rd Ed* Cambridge University Press 2002 – online publication



Description: Tufted aquatic perennial or annual with submerged and floating leaves and flowers.
Submerged leaves strap-like; floating leaves elliptic, to 16 cm long, 3–6 cm wide. Flowers bisexual, both chasmogamous and cleistogamous. Chasmogamous flowers emergent, to 6 cm diam.; spathe thick, tuberculate, ridged, 2-lobed, 3–6 cm long. Outer perianth segments 1.5–2.3 cm long, green; inner ovate to circular, 4–5 cm long, white with a maroon base. Stamens in 3 groups of ± 4 stamens. Styles 6–9. Developing fruit withdrawn into the water as it matures; seeds 2–3 mm long, finely hairy.
Cleistogamous flowers submerged and with reduced perianth segments.

Cabbage Whites

Most of us know this butterfly, whose green caterpillars inflict such damage on our garden brassicas – cabbages, cauliflowers etc. Its scientific name is *Pieris rapae*.
The Cabbage White has a wingspan of 45mm. Above, it is white with a black tip to the forewing and base of the wings. Males have one black spot on the forewing and females have two. Beneath, the forewing is white and the hindwing yellow.
On Cooleman Ridge, these butterflies seek out yellow-flowering Buchan Weed **Hirschfeldia incana*. At other seasons, they will be attracted to Peppercress **Lepidium africanum*. Both these common weeds are Brassicaceae.

Insect Identification Hotline – 6162 1914
Free Service to ACT Residents

Greencorps on Track 6/7/8 Feb

A group of youngsters undertook some track repairs at the top of the foot-track from the Lincoln Place Bridge to the saddle. Sediment was removed behind steps, making a 'gap' right behind the wood, on the high side. This is to allow water to flow into the gap and drop its sediment. The slower moving water then moves on. (Often people fill this gap up to the level of the step, thinking the soil has been eroded.) The trainees now understand and appreciate the ways the water can erode a track, with regard to volume of water, velocity of water, or both. They applied different techniques, using on-site soil scavenging, or introducing wood and stone, to direct flow.
Thanks to team leader Deb Kellock, to Park-Care Co-ordinator Phil Selmes, and to Ranger Nina Bruns for facilitating this work, and to Alan and David for their involvement.

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