



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter April 2011

Previous Sunday meeting 20th March GAC Darrell

Despite a wet afternoon, our first autumn working bee was well-attended. Both Native Millet *Panicum effusum* and Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra* have grown dense and high. As Rob Lundie's photo below shows, we are rewarded for previous weeding sessions at this site.

The team concentrated on removing Great Mullein *Verbascum thapsus* and St John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum*. Unsurprisingly, we found the African Lovegrass *Eragrostis curvula* infestation near the big Reservoir now spreading along the track through our site. Bags of this weed were removed.

We finished up yarning over a cuppa with tea laddie Pat at the Kambah Tea Wagon. Graham's fresh-baked cookies complemented the Ryans' shortbread, fresh figs and fruit cake. Hard yakka needs good tucker!
PS - We note that ACTEWAGL has removed the big Pine Wilding near the Reservoir.



Future Programme

Next Meeting – Sunday 17th April

Time – 1.30 – 4 pm

Location —Kathner Street Nature Trail, especially near Points 1,2,3,4 and 16.

Tasks – Tidying up for the 20th Anniversary.

Plant ID –as required.

Meeting Place - Kathner St car park and entrance, Chapman.

Bring - hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack.

QUERIES - RING ARMINEL ON 6231 7392

Reminders –

Heritage Festival Guided Walks

Sunday 10th April 10 am. Meet Doug at Guinness Place, Chapman. Assemble at the entrance to the Ridge.

Saturday 16th April 10 am. Meet Doug at Kathner St.



20th Anniversary Reunion on the Ridge

Preparations continue for our gathering on Monday 18th April. So far, we have X acceptances.

Radio Landcare 2XX FM 98.3

Listen in 9 – 10 am on Tuesday 19th April for an interview on our 20th Anniversary.

New Works, New Weeds

Members may have noticed that the first section of the Chapman drain landscaping has been compromised by germination of Bathurst Burr *Xanthium spinosum*. The authorities have been informed. We'll keep you informed, too.

Read all about us!

"A Bush Capital Year – a Natural History of the Canberra Region" (CSIRO Publishing) is a charming book by local naturalist Ian Fraser, illustrated by Peter Marsack. It includes two pages on Cooleman Ridge, discussing a Swift, the White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapis caudacutus*) and its autumn insect harvest.

FT = Fire Trail

The maze of vehicular tracks on Cooleman Ridge have new names and signage. BNT = Bicentennial National Trail; LU = Light Unit.

What's around

David Mackenzie's photo below shows the South American invader Khaki Weed **Alternanthera pungens*. David found it beside the Management Track, near the wooden footbridge leading to the Arawang Summit trail.

Family Amaranthaceae

Gk a (not) + marainean (to waste away), ie. a flower believed to grow on Mount Olympus which never died.

**Alternanthera pungens*

L. alterna = alternating + anthera = anthers (referring to the arrangement of fertile stamens next to infertile ones in the flower).

L. pungens = sharp

Flowers spring to autumn.

Description: Prostrate herb with perennial root system and annual above ground growth. Taproot often large and woody. Stems have short silky hairs. Leaves ovate to circular, hairless to sparsely hairy, margins entire; leaf stalk 0.2–1 cm long. Inflorescence ovoid, 6–10 mm wide. Fruit 1–1.5 mm long. Seeds about 1 mm wide, brownish, globe-shaped.

Distinguished by prostrate habit and stems that root at nodes; opposite leaves, 0.5–6 cm long, 0.6–3 cm wide; flowers in axillary clusters and each flower surrounded by spiny bracts; fruit not opening at maturity.

Dispersal: Spread by seed within spiny bracts that adhere to tyres, clothing and animals. Local spread may also occur through spreading stems that root at nodes.

Information from WEEDeck field guide card H79



Common Brown Butterfly

Heteronympha merope,

Family
Nymphalidae

Corpse scanned by Arminel and Pat – identified through the Insect ID service – see details below.

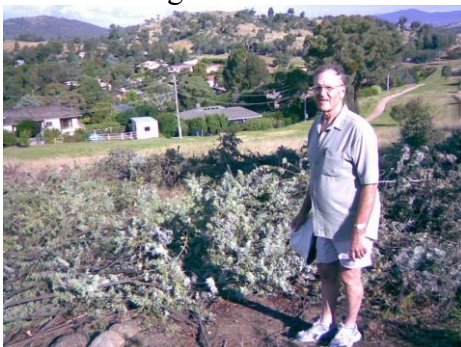


Grebes breeding at Old Dam?

At the end of February, our Waterwatchers saw a pair of Australasian Grebes *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae* at the Old Dam. To our delight, at the end of March, there was a baby out on the water!

Transformational work

Graham continues to fell Cootamundra wattle *Acacia baileyana* behind Chapman. He reports that almost all those he laid low last year have died. Arminel's picture below shows him "resting on his laurels".



All along the Ridge, clouds of these pretty butterflies are fluttering by. They are females, impregnated in spring or early summer, now emerging from aestivation to lay their eggs. Their mates don't live past December. Their fascinating story is told by Ted Edwards in "Bombarded by Butterflies" *Fronde No 67 April 2011*. (Friends of the ANBG newsletter).

Insect Identification Hotline - 6162 1914
Free service to ACT residents manned by entomologist Dr Phil Spradbery.