



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter December
2013

Previous Sunday Meeting 17th November GAC Darrell

This was our first morning session for the summer, and a glorious clear warm day. President Anna was already at work, checking our survey site, when the six of us walked up the gentle slope from Darrell Place with our gear. Two of the party set off to attack “fruit trees” (probably *Celtis australis* – see item page 2 and photo of Graham by Rob Lundie), while another dedicated his time to Briar roses *Rosa rubiginosa*. The big Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* patch, attacked over several previous sessions, had only a small amount of regrowth – now all uprooted. The patch of St John’s Wort *Hypericum perforatum* cut and sprayed last session had not regrown.

Likewise, the heap of African Lovegrass *Eragrostis curvula* chipped out last time had spread no further. Gratifying, too, to find only a few new seedlings of Cootamundra Wattle *Acacia baileyana*, with a single sapling requiring poison. Small gains in the battle here!

An eighth member joined us, having worked his way along the Ridge, weeding. Over morning tea, Anna told us about the Woodland Restoration Project (see item next column). Then most of the group knocked off.

Smoke Signals at Kathner St

A stolen car was set alight at about 3.20 a.m. on Thursday 18 November. Fortunately, the 3 metre flames did not travel, because it was after the tremendous rain we’d had.

Future programme

In the warmer months, we meet in the mornings.

**Next Meeting – Sunday 15th December
Group Area South – Arawang**

Time: 8.30 am – 12 midday

**Parking at the Horse Paddock Entry,
Namatjira Drive**

Plant ID; remove woody weeds. Wear long sleeves and trousers, enclosed shoes, hat and gloves. BYO drink & festive treat to share. The Kambah Tea Laddie is expected to attend.

**For more information, contact Arminel
6231 7392**

Hooray! Woodland Restoration

The ACT Government and Greening Australia are currently undertaking a woodland restoration project. So far work has been carried out in the Belconnen Hills, Majura Valley and Kowen areas. Currently, the parties are at the planning stages for the Callum Brae area, which includes Cooleman Ridge. The project is aimed at enhancing existing woodlands and improving connectivity between them. We hope to see some useful work on our Reserve as a result of this welcome initiative.

Making Contact

Rob Lundie has now taken over the reins as Secretary for Cooleman Ridge ParkCare Group. His email address is

lundier@webone.com.au

His phone number is 6288 4125.

What's around

Common Hover Fly (*Melangyna viridiceps*)

Kingdom: *Animalia*; **Phylum:** *Arthropoda*; **Subphylum:** *Uniramia*; **Class:** *Insecta*; **Order:** *Diptera*; **Superfamily:** *Syrphoidea*; **Family:** *Syrphidae* (Classification from Australian Museum website.)

Hover Flies, sometimes called flower flies or syrphid flies, make up the insect family Syrphidae. About 170 species (of the 6,000 species so far described) are found in Australia. Hover Flies are common throughout the world and can be found on all continents except Antarctica. They are harmless to most other animals despite their mimicry of more dangerous wasps and bees, which serves to ward off predators. Many are beneficial to farmers and gardeners.

Genus: *Melangyna* (apparently from Gk words meaning Black and Female); **Species:** *M. viridiceps* (apparently from Lat. *viridi[s]* = Green + *ceps* = head, cap)



Description: A slim bodied fly with reddish brown eyes, dark thorax and black and yellow banded abdomen. Like most other flies, Hover Flies have very large eyes and short antennae. They have one pair of colourless, transparent wings.

Reproduction: Tiny white eggs are laid amongst aphids. The larva is a brownish grub.

Size: 15 mm.

Distribution: widespread in Eastern Australia.

Food: Larvae are aphidophagous – ie they eat aphids. The adults eat honeydew produced by aphids but are also plant pollinators, feeding on pollen and nectar.

Behaviour: They often hover over flowers, especially white or yellow ones.

Information from F.D. Hockings *Friends & Foes of Australian Gardens* 1980, australianmuseum.net.au; Wikipedia, OzAnimals.com, BrisbaneInsects.com, and Dr Philip Spradbery. Image from Brisbaneinsects.com.

Knowledge Sharing

We hear that the Australian Native Plant Society (ANPS) ACT has wonderfully helpful Wednesday Walks. Linda encourages anyone who is keen to know their native plants to join these gentle meanders of a few kilometres, stopping often to look at plants.

Have a look at the website

<http://nativeplants-canberra.asn.au/>

CIMAG Scores

In 2006, Indian Mynas were the third most common bird in Canberra. Thanks largely to the work of the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group, the Myna is now down to 20th on the list. CIMAG has recently received Keep Australia Beautiful's Environmental Innovation and Protection Award for its remarkable achievement. Congratulations, CIMAG!!

Canberra Chronicle Tues 26 Nov. p. 4

Striped Skink *Ctenotus robustus*

We found a dead specimen of this fairly common lizard. President Anna has identified it, using Ross Bennett's *Reptiles & Frogs of the ACT*. (NPA 1997)

Arminel Ryan ryan@pcug.org.au

Celtis australis

The Wednesday Weeders are also working on a dense copse of this woody weed, growing on the north slope of Mt Arawang. *C. a.* is in the Elm family – Ulmaceae. Noted in our Plant List, with the common name of Thistle Tree, it appears to have regenerated after the 2003 fire.



Horse Whisperings

The ACT Equestrian Association held a recreational trail ride on the Bicentennial National Trail on Sunday 10 November, with over 20 riders leaving Kambah Pony Club early in the morning and passing through our Reserve.

Web site URL: www.coolemanridge.org