



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter November

2008

Previous Sunday Meeting October 19th

In spite of this meeting kicking off with a crisp AGM it was attended by 8 of our members. Various reports are attached to this newsletter.

As planned, this recurring event was held at GAN (Group Area North) with access from Kathner St and Chauvel Circle. The steep and rough ascent was too intimidating for one of our members and it was decided that in future we will meet closer to a parking area, making it easier for all to attend, as well as easier for records and other material to be carried in.

The work party that followed extended the regenerated area. Native plants were showing their stamina, whereas the exotics were severely stressed by the drought. This was also an opportunity to inspect works in the Asset Protection Zone where rocks have been relocated to facilitate slashing, vegetation has been cleared, and grass seed (both native and sterile exotic) have been scattered. ☼

Future programme

Please note that during the summer months of November, December (14th!!!), January and February we will, as in previous years, meet at 8am.

Next meeting, Sunday 16th November

- revisiting the Euphorbia infestation – herbicide and manual removal
- **8-10.30am**
- meet on the top of Cooleman Trig
- bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet.

Herbicide will be provided. Plants will be bagged and hauled to the presidential trailer for transport to Green Waste. ☼

The Sustainable Cities Awards

These were presented on Tuesday 2nd September 2008 and the Parkcare Program won in two categories:

- Habitat Conservation/Protection of the Environment; and
- Community Pride.

These awards recognise the important role that ParkCare plays in the management of Canberra's Nature Reserves and Namadgi National Park. ☼

Poa labillardieri

We accepted 80 *Poa labillardieri* (River Tussock) seedlings from Greening Australia, cost zero. They needed to be planted promptly as it would probably get too hot to be sure of establishing them if they were left any longer. This was a task that Jenny, Erika and Arminel shouldered one Friday morning in mid October, and the survival rate is looking good.

We are removing *Phalaris aquatica* from the drainage line above the Kathner St dam so *Poa l.* could help replace that and minimise the risk of gullying in heavy rain. Appropriately it is recommended for open sunny locations in drainage lines and riparian and damp areas, where it provides good habitat for frogs. It also cleans runoff by filtering out mud and any rubbish. It is a tall-growing grass but it is not known to carry more fuel than Phalaris.

The actual planting was a breeze - a mattock blow, stick the seedling in the hole, water in with about a cupful of water, and firm down by standing either side of the plant. As we have water in the dam at present, we could use it for the purpose. Convenient! Further watering is probably not necessary.

Although not commonly observed on the Ridge it has recently been seen close to the southern border fence, west of Mt Arawang. ☼

Insurance

The insurance that is taken out on behalf of Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group (and other Park Care and Landcare groups) by Parks Conservation and Lands is under the National Landcare Insurance Program. This policy covers personal accident and public liability. Arminel has a copy of the policy if anyone would like more detail.

PCL can provide a copy of a Certificate of Currency from this policy, if members require evidence that they are covered.

In terms of the paperwork that supports this arrangement, Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group keeps a register of members. Members are asked to keep a personal record of the time they devote to work on the Ridge and/or for the Group. Parks provides a form for this purpose, which was circulated with last month's newsletter.

When a Group activity is held, a different form is used, provided by SACTCG, on which all participants' names are recorded.

Data from personal records and the Group activity sheets go to our Vice President and Chief Bean Counter, Doug Tinney. Doug collates the statistics and provides that information to Parks.

The personal records and forms on which the statistics are based should be retained for a reasonable period. This is because, in the event of an insurance claim by one of us or by a third party, they would act as key documentation. ☼

What' around

Family: POACEAE - the Grass family



**Poa bulbosa* – Bulbous Poa
Tufted bulbous-based exotic perennial to 0.5 m high
poa G: meadow grass,
bulbos Gr: bulb
Native of Mediterranean region



Poa labillardieri – Tussock
Course native caespitose perennial grass to 1.2m high
poa G: meadow grass,
Jacques Labillardiere French botanist
published *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen* in 1804-07 based on his own collection



Poa sieberiana – Fine-leaf Tussock
Caespitose native perennial to 1 m
poa G: meadow grass
F. W. Sieber – 1789-1844.
Botanist born in Prague. He collected in NSW in 1823

Focus on Feathers

To celebrate Parks week, a group of 15 including members of the general public spent a delightful two hours early on Saturday 11th October, watching birds and sharing knowledge about the flora and fauna of the Ridge.

Our youngest member, Tobias Hayashi, led the walk and pointed out avian highlights including Double-barred Finches and a Southern Whiteface. What a help it is to be told where to look! We didn't see the Regent Honeyeater or the White-throated Nightjar which Tobias had recently encountered, but their presence in an area planted by our Group years back with trees and grasses is encouraging of our work as regenerators.

We also saw reptiles: a placid black snake high up a warm slope, and a swift-moving brown snake with a hole at the base of the Kathner St dam wall.

Thanks to Tobias our bird list has expanded further in recent weeks with the addition of Painted Button-quail, Sacred Kingfisher and Pallid Cuckoo. ☼

More

Malcolm has had 7 Chuffs (including 2 young) in his garden and seen one bird on the nest. He's also dealt with another 2 pine seedlings.

Reet has 2 *Diuris sulphurea* in flower – earlier than in previous years (none last year).

Cattle have spent a couple of weeks in the fenced Fuel Reduction Trial area, feasting on the native plants but avoiding *Verbascum* and *Plantago*. They have, however, eaten *Phalaris*. Now they are on the Equestrian Trail so gates across it, and our Nature Trail, are padlocked. Less agile walkers and horse-riders have no recourse but to turn back if they do not carry the code to the locks. ☼

Snakes

From Parks we have received snake-bite advice.

If someone is bitten by a snake:

- Do not wash the wound. Medical staff can use excess venom to identify the snake.
- Venom travels through the lymph system, which is close to the surface. Apply a firm pressure bandage over the bitten area and around the affected limb, using a crepe or conforming bandage or other suitable material such as pantyhose.
- Bandage from the bite to the fingers or toes then up to the armpit or groin.
- Apply a splint to immobilise the limb.
- Do not give alcohol, food or drugs as these will stimulate fluid movement.
- Keep the patient still by having them lie down.
- Reassure the patient.
- Call an ambulance or take the patient to hospital. ☼