



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter March 2015

Previous Meeting Sunday 15th February - Nature Trail etc

Seven sturdy volunteers patrolled the boundaries of the fenced regeneration area and checked nearby areas. New growth of exotic annual pasture grasses here is struggling with a rust infestation.

Target weeds included **Eragrostis curvula* African Lovegrass, **Hypericum perforatum* St John's Wort, **Rosa rubiginosa* Sweetbriar, and **Rubus fruticosus* Blackberry. We uprooted rosettes of *Echium plantagineum* Paterson's Curse and *Verbascum thapsus* Great Mullein, and removed lots of *Solanum nigrum* Black Nightshade. Six persistent eucalypt stumps on the dam wall had poison applied again. Some more *Mentha parviflora* Forest Mint went in.

The "Friends of Fencepost Hill" work party mopped up weeds and spread new seed on Friday 20th Feb. That follow-up is so important! Thanks, everyone!

Future programme

**ACHTUNG!! – We revert to afternoons
this month!**

Sunday 15th March

Group Area North - Chauvel

Access via Chauvel Circuit or Kathner
Street entry, Chapman

Time:- 1.30 pm – 4 pm.

Bring:- hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack,
raincoat if it is wet.

Tasks:- Plant ID and weed removal. Maybe
some planting, conditions permitting.

For more info, contact Doug 6288 8589

Neighbourhood News

On Sunday 15 February I joined a group of about 15 keen local people who are contributing to the new ParkCare group on Urambi Hills. This group, under the leadership of Louise Curham, had planned a morning walk to inspect the western slopes of the Hills, view the watercourse known as Barney's Gully and then walk back up to the park entry after skirting the dry eroded gully that runs parallel to the hills. A massive planting exercise last winter saw many local trees and shrubs planted on the hillside, and there has been a good survival rate. The gully itself has been fenced off from cattle, and last winter Parks and Conservation rangers oversaw another large planting exercise in the eroded gully. So this small and attractive nature park is finally receiving some much-needed attention from both the department and the community. Louise is working with Parkcare to plan a program of works that will meet the area's needs. She and her group are very keen at this stage to learn more of the natural history of the area. There are a few fine old trees on the reserve and some patches of nice grasses and forbs, but the main impression, alas, is of hillsides clothed in St Johns Wort and grassy paddocks ringed with African Lovegrass. The group has a big task ahead of them and it is wonderful to see their enthusiasm. Let's support them if we can.

Jenny Horsfield

Nasty News

A small **Araujia sericifera* (Moth Vine) turned up on Arawang. This pernicious plant has been removed and taken to the National Herbarium. Watch this space!!

What's around

Red-necked Wallaby *Macropus rufogriseus*

"Red-necked" has unfortunate connotations. Doug prefers the dignified term "Red-shouldered". Ed.

Kingdom: Animalia; **Phylum:** Chordata; **Class:** Mammalia; **Infraclass:** Marsupialia; **Order:** Diprotodontia; **Family:** Macropodidae; **Genus:** *Macropus*; **Species:** *M. rufogriseus*; **Sub-species:** *M. r. banksianus*, Red-necked wallaby

Identification: Body length 82 cm; tail length 80 cm; weight 15 kg. Weak face stripe; weak to absent thigh stripe; rusty-red shoulders and upper back; rest of body silver tipped with grey.

Habitat and Range: Dry open forests with some brushy undergrowth, grasslands, roadside verges, paddocks and backyards. Coastal eastern Australia from Gladstone, Qld south to SA/Vic border. Sub-species on Tas. and Bass Strait islands is *M. r. rufogriseus*. (It's also a pest near Canterbury in NZ – transported there in 1870!)

Threats: Creekside and ridge-top clearing, cars and dogs.

Traces: Droppings pear-shaped, slightly pointed at broader end (25 mm long by 15 mm long at broadest end).



Notes: We're not aware of any previous record of *M. r.* on Cooleman Ridge. Photographs taken by horse-rider Meg Doepel on 15 Feb show one! Ian Fraser has confirmed the identification.

Online References – Queensland Museum, Wikipedia

Image – Queensland Museum Website

Thanks to Ross Bennett, who alerted us to this exciting observation. Thanks also to former P & C Ranger, Meg, for providing details and photographs (to be published online). It is great to have such allies!

Other Macropods on Cooleman Ridge – The largest and commonest is Eastern Grey Kangaroo -*Macropus giganteus*. Wallaroos, which are stockier and very shy, are also present - *Macropus robustus*. Male Wallaroos are almost black; females paler with a yellowish tail. (See articles, Newsletters May and June 2013 and mentions in June and September 2014). Swamp wallaby - *Wallabia bicolor* - has not featured in our recent records, but we reported one killed on Namatjira Drive near the Kambah Fire Station (Dec 2010). Meg also reports seeing them along the southern side.

Heritage Matters

Ross Bennett, of Arawang Homestead, has given us an important 1993 document, prepared by Eleanor Hearder for Dr Brian Egloff, U.C. It is entitled *Cultural Heritage Conservation Management Study – Arawang Homestead and its Surrounding Area*. We will publish relevant extracts from this in coming issues of the newsletter.

We are most grateful to Ross for this gift, and for the other information and background that he has generously provided.

Stock out and about!

On 2 March, a member reported a thirsty stray cow near the square reservoir.

Meredith Cosgrove - "Photographic Guide to Native Plants of the Australian Capital Territory".

\$45

Available from meadow-argus.com

Management Matters

Arminel Ryan and I attended a planning meeting with Craig, Wade and Kate of the Parks Service on 16 February. Among the items discussed were possible environment grants for signage at the two dams and for experimental repairs to the drain. Rabbits and African Lovegrass were also mentioned.

El Presidente Alan

Passing the Batons

Doug will be editing these monthly newsletters while Arminel goes walkabout. Please send news items to tinneydoug@hotmail.com.

At Athllon, our Ranger is now Ani Kunz. Welcome, Ani! Thanks and god luck to our previous Ranger, Brad Green. The new Ranger in Charge is David Dobroszczyk.