



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
March 2016

Previous meeting
Sunday 21st February
Group Area Central
above Darrell Place

A not too warm morning greeted Linda, Rob, Graham, Rohan, Gosta, Brigitte, Alan, Doug and Roger as they went after their favourite weeds in the area above Darrell Place.

Graham attacked some wild roses, stripping off the rose hips before poisoning the plant. He later calculated his bucket held 3,300 rose hips and, therefore, roughly 79,200 seeds had been prevented from being dispersed across the Ridge—and this from just eight plants. Thanks to Roger and other contributors for a lovely morning tea.

An early map of Mt Arawang

I have come across an interesting map of our district, probably drawn early 1916. This was the time when the Tuggeranong Valley was being surveyed with a view to the building of a military arsenal in the valley. Harry Mouat, one of the ACT border surveyors, was in charge, based at a survey camp on the Tharwa Road.

The map shows the contours and spot heights of all the local landmarks, which include 'Mt Taylor' and 'Forster Hill'. The ridge along from Mt Arawang is not named but spot heights are given. The area to the south of Mt Arawang was called Rocky Hill Paddock. The area to the east and north of Arawang Trig was called Sentry Box Paddock. The only information regarding vegetation was a note 'Scattered green timber' in areas to the north and east of Mt Arawang. All the area was already divided up for grazing. I'm pretty sure

Next Meeting

Sunday 20th March

Group Area South: Mt Arawang

Time: 8.30 am – 11 am

Meet: horse paddocks off Namatjira Drive

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

Task: plant identification and weeding

Contact: Doug Tinney 6288 8589

the whole area was originally part of the Yarralumla estate, acquired by the Commonwealth in 1912.

[Source: National Archives of Australia file A6273, L1915/497]

Jenny Horsfield

Loose dogs, snakes and a cat

In last month's newsletter concern was expressed about the effect of dogs running free on native wild life. Another consideration is the threat to the dogs from snakes. Recently I saw a large brown snake crossing a regularly used trail near Chauvel Circle. Graham also reports that he met a man walking his dog off the leash. When he pointed out the danger of snakes, the man admitted that he had lost one dog in this manner but appeared unconcerned about his present dog!

While free running dogs may be a legitimate worry, I am particularly concerned at having spotted a large white and black cat in the same area. I think it lives in one of the houses backing onto the Ridge but I was disturbed to see it on three occasions up on the Ridge.

Rob Lundie

Woodland Flora book

Sarah Sharp and others have just published *Woodland Flora*, a companion volume to *Grassland Flora*. The new book contains over 400 photographs of plants found in our area—the Southern Tablelands. As Ian Fraser writes in the introduction, this field guide helps to focus on the myriad components of ‘the bush’. The book is available through CSIRO for \$25 and eventually through the Botanic Gardens bookshop.

Alan Ford

Cattle on the Ridge

In the coming weeks you can expect to see cattle on the Bicentennial National Trail Paddock for grazing (fuel reduction). A small area of native regeneration under a large eucalypt in the side paddock will be fenced off to protect some *Indigoferas* and other plants.

Signs

Thanks to everyone who have offered to put up signs around the Ridge before our monthly meetings, and to Doug for coordinating their distribution.

Following a nasty accident on the notoriously slippery road up from Kathner Street, it is hoped that a sign will be erected warning walkers and cyclists of its hazardous nature and inviting them to use the safer nature loop trail to gain access to the Ridge. Craig Wainwright has recently brush-cut the trail to make it more obvious and encouraging.

Walking trails on the Ridge

In February, at the behest of energetic member, David Mackenzie, the manager of Parks South, Scott Seymour and ranger Liam Banyer, agreed to an inspection of tracks on Mt Arawang up from Lincoln Place.

David has been concerned for some time about erosion at many points and the creation of alternative tracks which cause further erosion. Scott and Liam accompanied David and Doug Tinney on a tour of the worst affected sites.

It remains to be seen if, and when, the necessary remedial work might be implemented. In these dry periods, the erosion is evident but not critical. But it will not remain dry forever and experience with recent significant rain events suggests that damage

can happen very quickly. Scott and Liam agreed to a follow up meeting in March where, besides walking tracks and erosion control, the removal of woody weeds would be discussed.

Doug Tinney

On the Bicentenary Trail

Coming up to do some weeding at my patch on Cooleman Ridge recently, I got a lovely surprise when meeting this young woman on her way along the Bicentenary Trail from Healesville (near Melbourne) to Cooktown.



Having just spent five hot days trekking through the Australian Alps with her trusted horse, she was looking forward to a few days' rest in Yarralumla before continuing north.

Her horse sniffed hungrily at my bag but found nothing edible. It really made me believe in the future to meet this young person with such an adventurous mind and such stamina for the long journey.

Gosta Lynga

The end of the Group?

I recently came across a [story](#) about dogs being trained to detect the noxious orange and mouse ear Hawkweed in Kosciusko National Park. Maybe we could train the loose-running dogs to sniff out the weeds on Cooleman Ridge. And then, once located, if we could also train them to dig them out we could wind up the Group!

Rob Lundie