



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
August 2020

Previous Meeting **Sunday 19 July 2020** **Lincoln Place**

A sunny afternoon for 16 weeders with very encouragingly some newcomers. Small groups ranged above Lincoln Pl led by an experienced member. Rob, Paul and Mike cleared a patch below Arawang of *Verbascum* and made a start on *Paterson's Curse*, *Brier Roses* and *Mustard Weed*. Doug took Cyril, Simone, Natasha and Charlotte to chip away at *Verbascum* florets as well as a sizeable patch of baby thistles. He also did a mini 'walkie-talkie' pointing out a baby *Kurrajong*, *Cobbler's Pegs*, *St Johns Wort*, *Solanum cinereum* bushes and a *Pyracanthus* with its vicious thorns. Linda, Sean and Alan attacked one large *Pyracanthus* and about six smaller ones. They removed the top layer, and cut-n-dabbed the remaining trunks. Linda will check them again in spring and probably spray any regrowth. The big one would have an extensive root system so is unlikely to die from the small amount of glyphosate dabbed on the trunk. Brigitte, Lyndal and Helen weeded thistle rosettes under two Red-box trees. Rohan did his usual thing and Alan continued his work at Darrell Pl.

Rob Lundie

Canberra Nature Map

Founded in late 2013 by Aaron Clausen, [Canberra Nature Map](#) is a web site providing a platform for the local community to report sightings of plants and animals, using image and/or audio recordings as evidence. Reported

Next Meeting

Sunday 16 August 2020
Mt Arawang

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm

Meet: Horse paddocks on Namatjira Dr

Bring: hat, gardening gloves, small digger, water to drink.

Task: Weeding of invasive, exotic plants. Native plant identification.

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

September meeting: Sun 20, Chauvel Circle

sightings are reviewed by relevant experts and the species formally identified. Previous sightings can be viewed by location (e.g. [Cooleman Ridge](#)) or by taxonomic grouping (e.g. [Birds](#)). It is used extensively by scientific and management bodies to help conserve local species. See its [history](#) and expansion for more detail. Cooleman Ridge has about 2000 reported sightings but most of these are from old bird surveys. It only has a small number of recent sightings with imagery. Canberra Nature Map has formal support from the ACT Government but is largely run by an extensive network of volunteers (including yours truly). People contribute from a wide range of skill and it is always looking for volunteers. If you can report any interesting sightings on the Ridge or offer help in any way, please do so!

Rohan Thomas

Indigenous People and the Ridge

Cooleman Ridge is within an area rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. However, as far as I am aware there have been no significant discoveries of artifacts or cultural sites of importance on the Ridge. Most discoveries of such sites have been made in areas where there have been concentrations of human activity over many generations. In the ACT these areas are found along the river corridors, particularly at river junctions. The junction of the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee Rivers is particularly important, as it was a meeting place for the past 10,000 years of Aboriginal groups moving annually between lower altitude areas to the south and the mountain valleys of the Brindabella and Tindery ranges in the north. Cooleman Ridge is one of many ridges which overlooked the annual movements along the Murrumbidgee River. It is likely the Ridge was visited irregularly by small groups. These groups would have done much more than just wander at random. They would have had cultural and spiritual connections with the Ridge. Along with their hunting and gathering, they would have noted the condition of the vegetation and done necessary caring work. Frequently this would have included the lighting of fires to burn with moderate heat over small patches. It was this style of land management which produced the landscapes and ecologies which we are now working to recover and protect. I think the most we can expect to find of material evidence of the Aboriginal visits to the Ridge would be a lost or discarded stone tool. If you do find what you think may be an Aboriginal artifact there are established procedures that must be followed. Do not remove the object from where it is found. Take note of its exact location. Write a description of the object or take a photo. Report it to the ACT Government agency responsible for protecting Aboriginal heritage.

Mike Morriss

Native Bluebell: *Wahlenbergia multicaulis*

Cooleman Ridge has recently been able to add a new native species to the plant list. Michael Mulvaney found a patch of *Wahlenbergia multicaulis* just beside a main path. Although

we have three other species of native bluebell on the Ridge, this was the first time anyone had seen and identified this one. The native bluebells are notorious for identification. One can often find leaves but no flowers, and at other times flowers and no leaves. This makes a definite identification quite difficult at the species level. Everyone will be aware that the ACT's floral emblem is the Native Bluebell, however the species chosen for the emblem is one that does not grow in Canberra itself. It grows above 1,000m in the mountains. *Wahlenbergia gloriosa* has purple-blue flowers, and crinkly leaf margins, unlike the narrow leaves found on *W. stricta* and *W. communis* which are very common around the ACT, often found on road edges. *W. lutea* is the only one which is easy to identify since the flower, although blue on the inside of the petals, is a buff yellow on the outer surface. And how does one identify the new *Wahlenbergia multicaulis*? Words are not enough. The best idea is to go to [Canberra Nature Map](#) and/or inspect my *Wahlenbergia multicaulis* photos below.



Linda Spinaze (who also took the photos)