



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
December 2020

Previous Meeting **Sunday 15 November 2020** **Lincoln Place**

A sunny but not too warm morning greeted 10 weeders (Brigitte, Helen, Lyndal, Paul, Mike, Rohan, Chris, Rob and Jenny). Linda briefed the group before it set off to battle the very tall oats for the weeds they knew just had to be there given the wet Spring. Hard to think when the grass was shoulder height and more. Helen got stuck into a large patch of thistles. Lyndal and I tackled the mustard weed, some Paterson's Curse and thistles. We did not make much of an impact but hopefully we didn't leave too much exposed loosened dirt under the trees which would make an ideal area for seed to take hold. Rob worked along the edge of the tracks chopping out mustard weed and St John's Wort.



Helen weeds thistles amongst the long grass
Photo: Brigitte Brickwood

Chris pulled out Paterson's Curse from either side of the track and helped Mike remove some high and grotesque thistles and St John's Wort. Paul and Mike got stuck into *Verbascum*.

Next Meeting **Sunday 20 December 2020** **Mt Arawang**

Time: 8.30 am – 11.00 am

NOTE NEW TIME and MORNING TEA

Meet: horse paddocks on Namatjira Drive

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

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

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

Rohan braved the long grass, spraying whichever weeds he could identify. Jenny came later working near the main trail. Paul managed to spot a native forget-me-not (*Cynoglossum australe*) on the left hand side of the track where it rises up to a rocky point before reaches the low saddle.

Brigitte Brickwood

Christmas Morning Tea

Everyone is invited to share morning tea with us after the weeding party on:

Sunday 20 December at 10.30 am

Meet at the south end of Mt Arawang

Due to Covid restrictions we won't encourage sharing food, so please bring a snack and a drink for yourself. If you wish to bring a Covid-safe treat to share, please do so.

Looking forward to ending 2020 on a high.

Linda Spinaze

Lizards on the Ridge

[In last month's Newsletter, I wrongly identified the water dragon as a Gippsland when it was an Eastern Bearded. Margaret Ning kindly agreed to ask her husband to write about lizards on the Ridge, - Ed]

When I was asked to write about the lizards of Cooleman Ridge, two questions immediately came to mind: what species are likely to be on the Ridge; and what species have been cited there. The [Canberra Nature Map](#) (CNM) is a great resource to help answer these questions, as is the Group's [website](#) and Ross Bennett's *Field Guide to the Reptiles & Frogs of the Australian Capital Territory*.

Four of the five groups of lizards in the ACT region are present on the Ridge. To see these lizards, simply click on the name in blue.

Dragons

The [bearded dragon](#) (*Pogona barbata*) is not uncommon and may often be found basking on the Ridge. It is one of six dragons in the region. Another common Canberra dragon is the water dragon but it is unlikely to be present as it requires access to large water bodies. However, Jacky dragon, another widespread dragon has not been recorded on the Ridge, but could turn up at some point. The other three Canberra region dragons have particular habitats not found on the Ridge.

Skinks

Two small, one medium and two large skinks have been recorded on the Ridge: [robust striped-skink](#) (*Ctenotus robustus*), [delicate skink](#) (*Lampropholis delicata*), [Boulenger's skink](#) (*Morethia boulengeri*) and [Cunningham's skink](#) (*Egernia cunninghami*). The Cunningham's skink is a large animal and commonly found in family groups. It has been seen basking in the sun on the cement platform west of the large reservoir. The [eastern blue-tongue](#) (*Tiliqua scincoides*) has been seen on the Ridge, but not the shingleback (*Tiliqua rugosa*). There are five other small skink species that could be present on Cooleman Ridge but they have not been recorded on the CNM.

Legless lizards

There are four species of legless lizards in the Canberra region, of which the [pink-tailed worm-lizard](#) (*Aprasia parapulchella*) and the [olive legless lizard](#) (*Delma inornata*) are present on the Ridge. They shelter under the numerous small rocks found there, and the removal of these rocks (to build cairns for instance) can affect their survival. The striped legless-lizard, a grassland specialist, is unlikely to be present, but the Burton's snake-lizard, which is rarely sighted, may be present.

Geckos

The [southern marbled gecko](#) (*Christinus marmoratus*), common in Canberra, but usually only seen at night, has been recorded on the Ridge. The eastern stone gecko, may be present but is rarely sighted in Canberra.

Monitors (Goannas)

The Canberra region has two monitors, Rosenberg's and lace monitors. Historically both may have been present on the Ridge, but there are no records of them. It is possible that they may reappear at some time in the future.

Geoff Robertson

Volunteer Manager Award

On Clare Sullivan's initiative, the Group nominated our President of six years, Linda Spinaze, for this year's ACT Volunteer Manager of the Year Award. Many Group members contributed comments about Linda's management style: low-key, leading by example, accepting new ideas and always ensuring new members are made welcome. She rightly received a Certificate of Recognition for her efforts, which we hope will ensure she stays on as president for another six years.

Rob Lundie

A Happy and Safe Christmas and New Year to Everyone