



# COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter  
April 2021

## *Previous Meeting*

### **Sun 21 March 2021 Lincoln Place**

After 22 mms of rain on the Saturday and a cold and wet awakening on the Sunday, it was decided to call off the weeding party at Lincoln Place. Although the weeds would have come out more easily, wading through thick, thigh-high grass to find them presented an uncomfortable prospect.

*Rob Lundie*

### **Planting at the Old Dam Sun 28 March**

What a difference a week makes! Our ranger, Chris Holder, had imparted the news that PCS would provide \$1,000 to Cooleman Ridge to spend on plants around the Old Dam. We were unsure of the reasoning behind this, since our group focuses on weeding the exotic plants rather than planting native species, but we couldn't look a gift horse in the mouth. Chris wanted us to spend the money as quickly as possible so that the decision could not be reversed, so we sprang into action. Linda sought ideas from the Group as to which species would be best, and then purchased them from Cool Country Natives. Most of the plants were of species already on our plant list and sourced from local material. We bought some shrubby bushes (callistemon, acacia, leptosperms) to provide habitat and protection for small birds, and a lovely swathe of native grasses to be interspersed with a few forbs to provide openness around the dam and provide an alternative to the Phalaris weed. On Sunday 28th March, we held a special planting event. Meeting at the end of Kathner

## *Next Meeting*

**Sunday 18 April 2021**

**Lincoln Place**

**Time:** 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm

**NOTE NEW TIME!**

**Meet:** Lincoln Place

**Bring:** hat, gloves, digger, water to drink.

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

**Contact:** Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

St were many of our usual weeders, but also 14 Young Landcarers who had been organised through Correa Driscoll from SACTCG. Their original task had been to cut'n'dab briar roses, but we found something much more exciting for them to do.



*CRPCG and volunteers at Old Dam Correa Driscoll*

After everyone had been transported to the Old Dam, Linda set out the plan for the morning and demonstrated the planting process. She then organised people into small groups and directed them to the planting areas. These had been cleared by Paul the day before by whipper-snipping the tall grass.



*Volunteer planting grass seedling Photo: Rob Lundie*

Everyone worked really hard, digging the holes, planting the plants and watering them from water carted from the dam.

The effort and diligence was so impressive that we had finished the exercise within three hours including a lovely morning tea provided by Correa.



*Plantings at the Old Dam Photo: Correa Driscoll*

We now keep our fingers crossed for continuing intermittent rain.

Thanks to everyone who attended:  
CRPCG: Natasha Cole, Lyndal Lewis, Helen Govey, Brigitte Brickwood, Paul Sheils, Peter Flint, Rosalie Pearson, Michael Pearson, Rob Lundie, Chris Oates, Natasha Newman, Miles Keighley, Alex Newman, Linda Spinaze.

Volunteers: 14

Ranger: Chris Holder

SACTCG: Correa Driscoll

We didn't spend the whole amount so we still have \$200 to buy some native grass seed to either propagate or sprinkle around in bare places.

*Linda Spinaze*

## **Grass and Weed Identification Course**

Alan, Helen and Chris attended Grass and Weed Identification training at the Parks and Conservation centre in Weston Creek on Friday 26 March.

The course was led by Alison Elvin, who combined a degree in ecology with several decades experience as a farmer, a researcher and an adviser on native grasses. Her expert mix of technical knowledge with hands-on practicality and a down to earth (no pun intended) style made her an excellent presenter.

Since most participants were familiar with the usual suspects, the discussion on weeds centred more on their control and the need for a strategic and planned approach that identified and set priorities in terms of noxious species, areas to focus on and methods to be used. I think we already do this very well, but Alison emphasised:

- bare ground left after weeding attracts more weeds and needs to be managed. She suggested hoveas and small acacias as replacement ground covers but it was agreed that there is a resource issue and it is easier said than done;
- some weeds are not all bad. Lizards eat flatweed: and clumps of saffron and briar rose provide habitat for birds and small animals. This needs to be remembered in weed control strategies.

The grass identification section was excellent. We saw and handled lots of different native grasses including, among many others, wallaby grass, microlaena, windmill, redleg, Queensland blue, native sorghum, corkscrew and spear grass. Alison focussed on the particular points – leaves, seeds, stems – that identify each species and differentiate it from the rest. We were shown how to use these methods to choose between, for example, hairy panic, native love grass – both good - and African Love Grass – not so good. We learned about the nutritional value of various grasses and their use as animal fodder and in Indigenous cuisine.

We walked around the grounds and were able to identify, in the wild, many of the species we had seen and held. We also handled some of the seeds that these species produce. All in all, an excellent course, highly recommended.

*Chris Oates*