



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter November 2013

Previous Sunday Meeting 20th October Kathner Street

It was a lovely afternoon, with light breezes only. This working bee followed on from the AGM (see report next column). While the official proceedings took place, our newest volunteer and her little daughter weeded *Wild Oats *Avena spp.* on Fencepost Hill. AGM completed, members took on similar practical tasks. Anna and Doug did some track-clearing, then joined Rohan and Gösta heaping up more weeds on Fencepost Hill. Arminel applied glyphosate to *St John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* at our Chauvel site, while chauffeur Pat sat in the "new" diesel 4WD studying for the upcoming Frogwatch Census night.

Future programme

In the warmer months, we meet in the mornings.

Next Meeting – Sunday 17th November

Group Area Central – Darrell Place

Time: 8.30 am – 12 midday

Plant ID; remove exotic growth. Maybe some planting. Wear long sleeves and trousers, enclosed shoes, hat and gloves.

BYO drink & snack to share. The

Kambah Tea Trolley is expected to attend.

For more information, contact Arminel

6231 7392

For the diary –

Wed 11 December ParkCare & Landcare Christmas Party at Mulligans Flat Woolshed, 5 – 7 pm. RSVP by 1 Dec to Jasmine Foxlee 6205 7384 jasmine.foxlee@act.gov.au

New Committee for CRPCG

Our Annual General Meeting took place on 20th October, with eight members present (a quorum). Our Ranger, Brad Green, also attended. Committee members for the next year are as follows:-

President	Anna See
Vice President	Alan Ford
Secretary	Rob Lundie
Treasurer	Rohan Thomas
Public Officer	Doug Tinney
Committee Members	Jenny Horsfield Doug Tinney Arminel Ryan Gösta Lyngå

Rohan continues to be our Webmaster, and Arminel remains editor of the newsletter. Thanks to Malcolm, our Returning Officer, for conducting the elections again.

New ParkCare Support Officer

Craig Wainwright has joined Jasmine Foxlee on the Community and Visitor Programs Team, located at Stromlo Depot. We are delighted to hear this, and extend a warm welcome to him.

Cutting & Dabbing

Wednesday Weeders continue to deal with the usual woody weeds on Arawang, but also report finding what seems to be *Tree of Heaven *Ailanthus altissima* and *Chinese Pistachio *Pistachia chinensis*. We hear that *P. c.* is to be planted all through Molonglo! Hardly a politically (or practically) correct choice!!

What's around

Australian bush fly (*Musca vetustissima*)

(There are over 180 other species of muscids in Australia, including the housefly, *Musca domestica*, which prefers shaded areas as found in houses.)

Kingdom: *Animalia*; **Phylum:** *Arthropoda*; **Class:** *Insecta*; **Order:** *Diptera*; **Family:** *Muscidae*;
Genus: *Musca* (Lat. = Fly); **Species:** *M. vetustissima* (superlative form of Lat. adj. *vetusta* = most venerable, oldest)

As you encounter your first bush fly of the season, pause for thought – it is just one of some 8,000 different species of flies that inhabit the Australian continent. Departing tourists consistently class *M. v.* as their worst experience of Australia!



Image from Queensland Museum's Find out about...website; notes from same site, and from Dr Philip Spradbery.

Biology – Bush fly maggots live in dung. Female bush flies crawl into your mouth, eyes and nose searching for protein for their egg development. Gravid females ride on your back, waiting for you to provide dung!

Description - Length 4-7 mm. The grey-dusted thorax has two dark stripes which split into four near the front. Female: eyes not touching, abdomen black and grey; male: eyes touching, abdomen yellow with a black base and central stripe.

Distribution – Bush flies are native to Australia and widespread in drier areas, including the arid interior, but are not found in Tasmania.

Control – CSIRO Entomology's introduction of nearly 50 species of dung beetle from Africa, Europe and Asia Minor has helped reduce the number of bush flies in Australia. These introduced dung beetles bury cattle dung before the bush flies can complete their development. Many of these dung beetles require rain before they emerge as adults from the ground. Drought conditions can therefore reduce dung beetle density, and bush fly numbers may increase. Many native birds and some reptiles also feast on bush flies.

Kangaroo corpses clean-up

As well as his sickening job of scraping road kill off the tarmac of the Southside of Canberra, our Ranger Brad gets to look at less-damaged carcasses. Rangers "...get a lot of calls from the public saying that a roo has been mutilated and the ears cut off etc, but it is just the foxes cleaning them up. Foxes target the ears, cheeks, and head region first for some reason and then expose the stomach. Eagles will tend to tear strips off the carcasses and if the stomach is exposed go there." Brad also tells us that badly injured roos will travel quite extraordinary distances before dying.

Floral treats

Gösta reports that the lovely Donkey Orchids in Reet's Patch are in flower. Variable Saw Sedge *Lepidosperma laterale* (What's Around, May 2006) flowered at our Chauvel site last month. Sticky Everlasting Daisies *Bracteantha viscosa* have become blooming common!

***Tweedia spreading**

Doug found these blue-flowered garden escapes above the drain at Arawang - a new location. The original weeds were found at the base of Cooleman Trig, above Monkman. Featured in our newsletter of January 2011, it's currently called **Oxypetalum coeruleum*.

Key achievements

The AGM noted the success of two of our campaigns. They are removal of pine wildings since 2003, and leading the attack on Bathurst Burr introduced during the Chapman drainage works.

Centenary Trail Signage

They're up! There are new interpretive signs along our Ridge, and increased numbers of visitors have been noted. Our printed Nature Trail brochures at Kathner Street have proven popular with the throngs.