



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARKCARE GROUP

Newsletter November 2001

We held our October meeting in lovely spring weather - just right for the ten of us splashing about in the Kathner Street dam, overseen by a relaxed Little Black Cormorant. Erika brought along the Waterwatch gear and we made our acquaintance with several of small creatures.

Erika reports: An interesting and productive afternoon was enjoyed by our group trying to find out the water quality in the New Dam. We did not find many creatures, could not identify some but had a few with high scores. I am happy to say that with the dam pollution index of 4.5 the water quality is good. Many thanks to everybody for your help.

Details: 1 freshwater mussel, 11 dragonfly nymphs, 5 beetles, 3 snails. pH 7.8

Then we spent some time discussing our programme for the coming months - as fluid as the waters of the dam itself. To get to know the whole Ridge, and to care for the whole Ridge, we plan to sweep its length and breadth for woody weeds, starting at the Mt Arawang end. We'll cut and dab as we go, noting the occurrence of *Hypericum perforatum* (St John's Wort) for reporting to the rangers. Where we stop in November we'll start again in December. We'll take a break when we get to Tina's thistles and concentrate on them, we'll survey some trees on the way, and we'll have some theme walks. ☺

Sunday meeting

- Sunday 18th November
- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at the far end of Hake Street, Kambah, where there is adequate parking
- bring hat, gloves, drink, snack, loppers or secateurs. Spray will be available.

Please note that children must not be close to where spray is being used. ☺

Equipment minders

Our whipper-snippers now have the following phone numbers

- 6288 4122 (Malcolm)
- 6288 0015 (Kath)
- 6288 3509 (Danny)

Each whipper-snipper is accompanied by a maintenance bag with care instructions. With the one at Malcolm's there is a hard hat.

I emphasise that users must wear glasses and boots.

All equipment is to be cleaned on the Ridge - both as a courtesy to the next user, and to save the minder's garden being over run by weeds.

Bess has more equipment to be cared for and will distribute it at our next Sunday meeting

- loppers
- gloves
- trowels
- 5 litre empty herbicide container
- apron

The question has been asked - What do we do if we find stones displaced? cubby houses erected? fireplaces constructed? uncontrolled dogs or cats? off-trail horses? rabbit warrens? invasions of noxious weeds? unusual fauna? Let Janice or myself know - we'll pass it on to the rangers, and we'll compile an incident log for the Group records. ☺

School holidays brought us some unexpected help. One Year-Tenner, as part of his school's Community Service Programme, spent a couple of solid mornings on the Tree Survey, finishing with vigorous mattocking of Phalaris. It was magical watching the clumps melt beneath his blows. Thanks, Nick.

Another Year-Tenner elected to study the vegetation of Mt Arawang for his project. We were lucky enough to stumble on colonies of *Stackhousia monogyna* (Candles) and *Bulbine bulbosa* (Bulbine Lilies), as well as some late *Wurmbea dioica* (Early Nancies). I learned a new name for *Verbascum thapsus* - Bushman's Toilet Paper. Welcome back, Patrick. ☺

Grassy Ecosystems:

A series of field days across the Southern Tableland.

Sarah Sharp has asked Ann Connolly to let us know that this series includes 2 field days in Canberra.

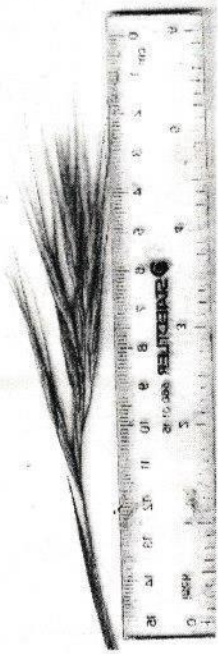
- 1) 13 November 2.00 pm Gungahlin Grassland Reserves - Crace Nature Reserve, corner of Bellenden St and Hoskins St
- 2) 15 November 2.00 pm repeat of the above.

The field days continue after that in the surrounding region until 5 December.

Sarah has given Ann a few copies of the full program so if you would like one just let her know and she will mail it to you. ☺

What's around

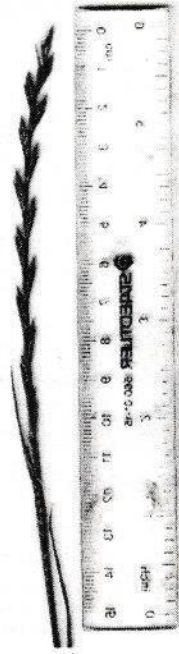
As exotic annual grasses, these have shallower root systems than native grasses and thus pull up more easily



Bromus diandrus

Great Brome

Robust annual with flattened spikelets. *Bromus* comes from the Greek for oats, and *diandrus* means with two stamens.



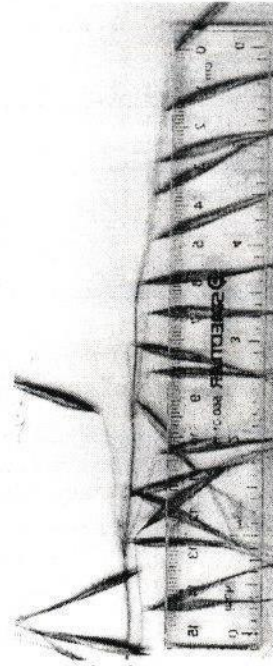
Lolium species

Ryegrass.

Species identification is difficult because they hybridise readily. Tufted annual.

Note that this is a very different grass from *Secale*, Cereal Rye.

Lolium comes from the Latin for Darnel - and what is darnel? A noxious weed of the genus *Lolium*



Avena barbata

Bearded Oats

Tufted annual

Avena comes from the Latin for oats, *barbata* comes from the Latin for beard

Now for the good news. If you look to the horse paddocks below the Kathner Street dam you see a vivid display of *Echium plantagineum* - Paterson's Curse. In the adjacent areas, caretaken by Erika, and by Alan, there is only a sparse scattering of these plants. Great work!

In Reet's patch, *Diuris sulphurea* - Tiger or Hornet Orchid - are coming into flower. They must exist somewhere else on the Ridge - can anyone report further sightings? Reet's pink *Diuris dendrobioides* shows up later.

The National Parks walkers spoke of a magnificent display of *Bulbine bulbosa*, on the western side of the Ridge. Perhaps it is the same colony as you come upon by entering from Darrell Place, following the track through two gates and going towards Guinness Place. ☺

Activity figures

In October, 23 people were reported working 90 hours on park care: weeding, whipper-snipping, tree survey, revegetation, promotion, waterwatch and administration.

Additionally, one of our members has chalked up 70 hours whipper-snipping in the last three months. Please notify Janice at the end of each month how much time you spend on Parkcare. Phone her evenings excepting Tuesdays on 6288 3953, or email her at janice.paull@aph.gov.au ☺

Library and records

You will find attached a list of the material held by Alan - e-mail: alford@cyberone.com.au - which is available for borrowing. If you haven't got access to e-mail, phone me and I'll ask Alan to phone you. Janice holds the group's records and photos. ☺

If the high-octane buzz of a free fall skydive from 10 000 feet just leaves you feeling jaded, turn to the tranquillity and panoramic views of Cooleman Ridge. Cooleman Trig is all of 727 metres high, while Mt Arawang soars to 764 metres. The Ridge is 3.8 km long, and up to 1 km wide. We could guess the area to be about 190 hectares - quite a lot to keep an eye on. ☺

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