

Brought to you from No.89 Warragamba Ave,
Duffy!



Previous Sunday meeting, March 20th

The Canberra Day long weekend siphoned off quite a few of our members, but those who were still in town spent a pleasant afternoon at GAN/Chauvel. The walk up by Malcolm's area was interrupted to deal with the latest *Pinus radiata* to be spotted: its location already having been recorded, it was chopped out. This brings our post-fire count to 5. The seedling was under the canopy of a dead tree.

Further away from the trail there is an *Acacia pravissima* seedling. Although this is an ACT species it belongs to cool hillsides and damp gullies – so does it belong with us? A more clear-cut case is the Snowy River species *A. boormanii* in Gösta's area, but removal would call for considerable grit. While ranging round GAN, Malcolm discovered an example of the local *A. rubida*, a first for the Ridge.

Hand weeding focuses attention on ground level detail and it was a delight to find so many native forbs thriving amongst the Wild Oats. We came across several Hardenbergias, though none had been recorded in the area before May last year.

We made our way down again past the building excavation dirt piled inside the Park, gasping at its extent. Since first reported it has been cordoned off with green fabric weighed down with blue metal, and the building apparently continues uninterrupted. ☼

Future programme

Provisionally 2005 looks like this, rotating through the three Group Areas (GA) when there is no special programme:

April 17th Woody weeds – behind Cooleman Trig
May 15th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
June 19th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
July 17th Lichen Walk –Jack Elix
August 21st GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
Sep 18th Brendan Lepski Plant Walk
Oct 16th ? AGM
Nov 20th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
Dec 18th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID ☼

March log

040305 **Acacia boormanii*, **Solanum triflorum*, **Setaria italica* flowering in Gösta's area.
Echidna still visiting burrow
110305 No further sign of echidna burrowing
180305 **Acacia pravissima*, **Pinus radiata* below Malcolm's area
200305 *Acacia rubida* in GAN. First recording
250305 *Eucalyptus blakelyi* in bud; echidna burrow open. ☼

Pauline Lyngå, 6288 7009, gosta@webone.com.au April 2005

COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter April 2005

Next Sunday meeting, April 20th

- Cutting and dabbing of woody weeds on the west side of Cooleman Trig, with incidental plant ID and weeding
- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at the Monkman St entrance
- bring hat, gloves, weeder, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet. Doug comes with herbicide and loppers ☼

Fuel Management discussion

Report from David Mackenzie:

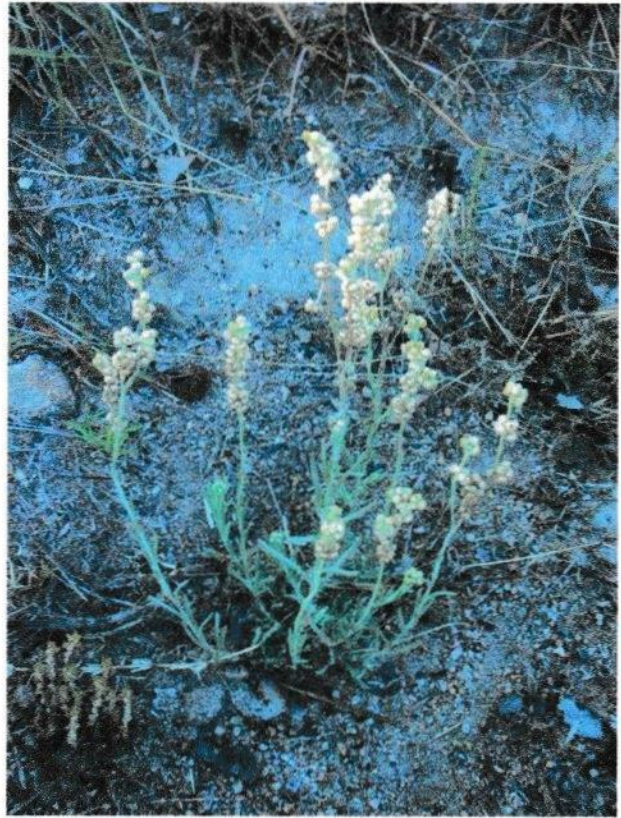
CNP proposes to use grazing as one of four treatments in a trial seeking a way of reducing the wild oats population on the ridge: oats have been dense since the fire and could be out-competing the native species. Three treatments that reduce seed production, grazing, slashing, herbicide applied to the tips of the grasses with a wick-wiper are to be compared with doing nothing. Remove the tips every time the grass tries to flower and you could reduce its population to where the native species can out-compete it. That is, provided another weed hasn't been favoured by the process and replaced the grass. Group representatives met with Park Staff at Athllon Depot on 14 March to discuss the trial and reiterated the Group's strong opposition to grazing for any purpose. However, there appears to have been a directive to use grazing and nothing we have been able to do has stopped it. Because the design of the trial is compromised by the inclusion of grazing (it imposes severe limitations on the physical layout), the Group was concerned that a valid result is unlikely to emerge. It will be a short term trial, say three years, so it's unlikely the results will reflect a range of seasonal extremes. Monitoring will be done by a CIT student as part of a Natural Resources Certificate course but the report will need to be completed before the end of each academic year: before the next student gears up, a lot can happen without any monitoring, especially if there is good rain. There will be no census taken of native and exotic species before and after the treatments so the effect on native species composition can only be guessed unless the Group does the census, a huge job they are ill equipped in terms of both time and skills to do. Qualified support was given for a well designed trial which excluded grazing. Cattle select the most palatable species but no one knows what these species are and they need not include oats; there is no controlling what they eat. On the other hand, carefully operated slashing and wick wiping are designed to minimise damage to non-target species. A compromise approach that could provide a suitable outcome, namely a simple comparison between slashing, wick wiping and doing nothing is apparently not acceptable to CNP. If there is doubt about which treatment is the better, then there is a strong likelihood that there is no difference, a lot of expense is spared and the conservation role of the Ridge is not compromised. ☼

What's around

Family: ASTERACEAE



**Carthamus lanatus* – Saffron thistle
Exotic annual herb to 1m
lanatus L: woolly
Native of Europe



Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum – Jersey Cudweed
Annual to 45 cm
pseudo Gr: false, *gnaphalium* Gr: woolly
luteus L: yellow, *alba* L: white ☼

Volunteer Insurance

From Doug:

Steve Welch, ACT Landcare Facilitator, who works for Environment ACT, has written to advise of a change in personal accident and public liability insurance arrangements for Park Care and Urban and Rural Landcare groups in the ACT. The insurance is for existing groups undertaking approved on-ground works on land managed by Environment ACT and Canberra Urban Parks and Places.

Steve writes: "Recent investigations into insurance options for volunteer groups suggests that the previous arrangement whereby group members were insured under the auspices of their umbrella Catchment Group provided insufficient security of coverage. Therefore, effective from 1 April 2005, Environment ACT and Canberra Urban Parks and Places will finance the purchase, on behalf of each active group, of the new Aradlay National Landcare Program Policy underwritten by Allianz Australia Insurance Limited."

Environment ACT is to hold information sessions to answer questions groups may have about the new insurance arrangements. Until we have the details of what's required, it's advisable to continue to complete an activity record for each occasion you work on the Ridge. ☼

Pauline Lyngå, 6288 7009, gosta@webone.com.au April 2005

Work for the Dole

The crews will work on the Ridge Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th April (not 6th and 7th as announced last month). Other details remain unchanged:

Wednesday 13th April, 8am to 4pm. Doug will be with the team above Lincoln Close, cutting and dabbing woody weeds.
Thursday 14th April, 8am to 4pm. Jenny will be with the team clearing up at the Chapman School site, above Redgrave Pl. Join in if you can. ☼

Chapman School

A very successful Saturday working bee was held in the Chapman School Trail area – well attended by enthusiastic staff and parents. They replaced fire damaged posts and repainted the numbers, repaired the pamphlet box and generally tidied up the area – which should get the Work for the Dole crew off to a good start on April 14th. The revised pamphlet is ready and copies will be topped up in the box by the children when needed. ☼

Reptiles

Unfortunately Meg is unable to lead our walk April 17th. So we'll postpone it till springtime. ☼

Web site

Our web site URL is:
<http://coolemanridge.inventivedingo.com> ☼