



# COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

## Newsletter May 2012

### *Previous Sunday meeting 15<sup>th</sup> April (Group Area North)*

A perfect autumn day found our party of five amongst a forest of Fleabane *Conyza albida*. Members commented that they had never seen it so prolific nor so tall. After a couple of hours of clearing Fleabane, and the other usual culprits of Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* and Mulleins *Verbascum spp.*, the area looked so much better.

Many new Eucalypt seedlings on the site continue to thrive, as do the increasing numbers of sticky everlasting daisies (*Xerochrysum viscosum*).

Afternoon tea was provided by Gösta. And we were also joined by a new member on the day- welcome, David!

*Tammy*

### *Erosion control made easy*

Anne Ions reports good results from her group's efforts to protect the *Swainsona recta* area on Mt Taylor from kangaroos and humans. They are using strategically placed tree branches as barriers. They use the same materials to prevent erosion, applying Dr David Tongway's method of laying out the branches parallel to the contour lines to slow the water run off.

Our president Anna recently attended a Sustainable Tracks workshop hosted by TAMS that looked at designing walking and bike tracks in a way that would minimize erosion. Techniques used are to follow the contours of the land, measure the slope to ensure the slope of the track did not exceed that of the land, careful consideration of the type and location of a corner and working

### **Future programme**

In the cooler months, we hold afternoon sessions.

#### **Next meeting – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May Group Area Central – Darrell Place.**

- 1.30 – 4 pm
- Plant ID; remove exotic growth.
- Wear long sleeves and trousers, enclosed shoes, hat and gloves. Bring raincoat if it is wet.
- BYO drink & snack.

Contact Doug 6288 8589 if you need any gear or more info.



Upgraded Casuarina Walking Trail on Mount Majura Nature Reserve. Source [www.northcanberra.org.au](http://www.northcanberra.org.au)

with the natural environment to protect existing vegetation and habitat.

Over all the workshop was extremely informative and showed how sustainable tracks can help protect rather than hinder our nature reserves.

## What's around

### Privet

*Ligustrum species*

I thought it would be timely to use this species for this section as Arminel Ryan told me she has just pulled out 35 privet seedlings from a 20cm square patch in her garden. She has also seen many emerging on the ridge!

There are three species of privet that are considered noxious weeds in NSW. These are broad-leaf or tree privet *Ligustrum lucidum*, small-leaf, narrow-leaf or Chinese privet *Ligustrum sinense*, and European or common privet *Ligustrum vulgare*. Both the Small-leaf and Broad-leaf privet originated from eastern Asia. They colonise disturbed land, pastoral



Image: [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au)

areas and native bushland in coastal NSW and so have become widespread weeds. The European privet comes from southern Europe and northern Africa and is a weed west of the dividing range in NSW. All three species were introduced to Australia as ornamental or hedging species. Privet causes extensive environmental and agricultural damage and also impacts on human health as it can cause asthma and other respiratory problems especially in children. It is still unknown however if it is the pollen or perfume of the flower that causes these reactions.

Privets reproduce primarily by seed and can produce up to ten million seeds each growing season. Privet seedlings can grow in shade or sun and will outgrow and outcompete native vegetation. Unfortunately privets are still present in urban gardens, public plantings, hedges and windbreaks however it is thought that new plantings of privet have declined.



Image: [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au)

Information from NSW Agriculture <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/weeds/profiles/privet>

### Bathurst Burr Update

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Cooleman Ridge Parkcare Group committee sent a letter to Chief Minister Katy Gallagher about the Bathurst Burr infestation that occurred as a result of contaminated soil being brought in for the works on the drains. We have finally received a response. According to her letter there was no guarantee that the soil would be weed free and so an environmental bond was provided by Roads ACT to PCS. The letter states that "The bond would allow for monitoring and control of any weeds resulting from the importation of topsoil, from the end of the project maintenance period for a period of two years."

This is good news as we now have assurance from the Chief Minister that there will be a 2 year weed eradication program resourced from this bond. Your watchful eyes will also be invaluable to this program as it is you who will be able to alert us to any reoccurrences of which we can inform PCS. *A copy of the letter is now on our website!*

### An Update from Waterwatch!

Our poor old Murrumbidgee River and Lake Tuggeranong did not have an enjoyable summer

Anna See [anna.m.see@gmail.com](mailto:anna.m.see@gmail.com)

this year. The Murrumbidgee recorded the highest turbidity readings seen for years. They were even worse than in 2009 when the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee conducted an enquiry into why the river was in such a state. The difference this year is that we understand why. Talking to Antia, the Cooma/Monaro Waterwatch Coordinator, many of the tributaries in her region had been reduced to carp infested mud holes over January due to low flows in spite of above average rainfall in December. The big flush that put Cooma on flood alert came very late in the season. Sites in the Gudgenby and Naas catchments were flooded by the same storm fronts. Antia also informed me of a significant storm event in the Bredbo region on the 20<sup>th</sup> January that resulted in a 'hot chocolate' effect in the 'bidgee'.

Lake Tuggeranong was a stinky bowl of blue/green algae for most of the summer. The smell was palpable as you drove any nearby roads downwind of the lake. A lot of media frenzy was generated along with the algal growth.

Martin Lind

*Waterwatch Coordinator, Southern ACT  
Catchment Group*

Web site URL: [www.coolemanridge.com](http://www.coolemanridge.com)