

COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter April 2014

Previous Sunday Meeting 16th March Group Area North (Chauvel)

Good weather and an afternoon start brought out a drove of members. We were delighted to find four of our Forest Mint *Mentha laxiflora* have survived the summer. There was *Glycine tabacina* everywhere. We noted new clumps of Slender Rat's Tail Grass *Sporobolus elongatus* and Purple Wire Grass *Aristida ramosa*.

Three volunteers removed masses of seed heads from St John's Wort **Hypericum perforatum**; another three attacked the perennial introduced pasture grasses **Phalaris aquatica** and **Paspalum dilatatum**, still thriving in the richer soil of the drainage lines. Several of us ranged further, to work again on woody weeds, to remove Fleabane **Conyza spp.**, and to deal with the usual suspects (Skeleton Weed **Chondrilla juncea**, Goatsbeard **Tragopogon dubius** etc etc.) We enjoyed a convivial afternoon tea, presided over by President Alan. Thanks again to tea laddie Pat!

Juggling Jobs

Doug is newsletter editor while Arminel and Pat are on Walkabout. Please make his job easier by sending in a contribution! President Alan will be absent 13 June-6 July and 4-14 August.

Craig Grasps the Nettle (Trees)

The Wednesday Weeders thank Ranger Craig his help on the north face of Arawang. He has chain-sawed down the rest of the copse of **Celtis australis**. The feral bees spared him – just!

Future programme

We weed on Friday mornings at Kathner Street and at Mt Arawang on Wednesday mornings.

NO MEETING SUNDAY 20TH APRIL

Due to the absence of Committee members over Easter, the usual working bee will not take place. Take a well-earned break, folks!

**The May Meeting will be on Sunday 18th,
at GAC Darrell.**

The Cactus Mystery

Doug removed a stand of Prickly Pear **Opuntia stricta** from the NW side of Arawang, chopped it up and put the pieces in four sturdy plastic bags. He and David H. dragged these down the hill and placed them at the fence above the drain above Lincoln Close. When Craig Wainwright came to cart them away, they had vanished into thin air!

'Frican Lovegrass Gaining Ground

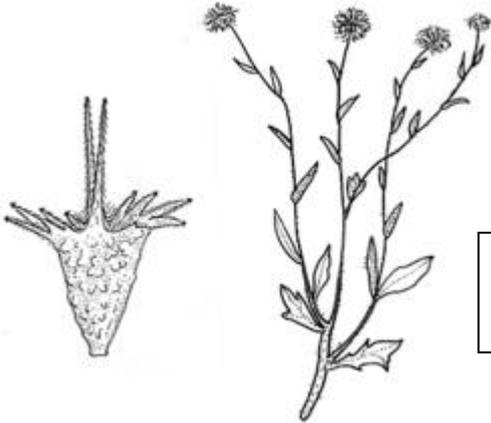
Eragrostis curvula is rising like a tide to engulf the Reserve, with seasonal conditions favouring it. We see road verges, median and nature strips, suburban open space and lawns dense with its soft, dancing seed-heads. Insidious single tussocks soon multiply, thriving on mowing, slashing and burning. They choke other plants out. The cut-off drain, as well as animal and human tracks in and through the Reserve, are highways for the spread of this horror. And horror it will be in a fire, for it burns fast and hot. Kill it quick before it multiplies more!!

What's around

Calotis lappulacea

Common Name: Yellow Burr Daisy

Member David Hughes found numerous clumps flourishing in a recently burned patch above Chapman.



Drawings
from
PlantNet

Family: Asteraceae - from Gk. = star

Genus: *Calotis*—from Gk *kalos* = beautiful + Gk. *otis* = ear (the first species named in the genus, *Calotis cuneifolia*, has an ear shaped pappus).

Species: *lappulacea* – perhaps from Lat. *lappa* = burr.

Description: Perennial, erect herb or small shrub to 50 cm high. **Leaves** 5-25 mm long, 1-4 mm wide. **Heads** 5-15 mm diam. Ray florets yellow.

Flowering: throughout year.

Distribution and occurrence: Grows in sclerophyll woodland and pasture, widespread on all types of soil.



Photo D. Hughes

Member David Mackenzie provided the following interesting commentary on “David’s Daisy” –

“I planted *Calotis sp.*, possibly *C. lappulacea* in my O’Connor garden in the early 70s. When it argued with my socks, I decided it was not for a suburban garden and it lost the argument permanently. An artist friend thinks otherwise, she recently collected the seed heads and, using their hooks, joined them into delightful aggregations.

“Rod Randall lists *C. lappulacea* thus:

Weed: There is a published reference to this plant as a weed somewhere in the world.

Nn: This plant is an Australian native species that has naturalised beyond its native range within Australia.

1: This plant has been recorded as a weed of the natural environment.

4: This plant has been recorded as a noxious (declared) weed. This is a legal category and may take the form of a prohibition on entry, sale and movement to requirements to eradicate or control.

“Regarding it being a 'noxious (declared) weed', I did a rather superficial Google search and did not find any listings.

However, if Rod found a listing, I'm sure it is listed somewhere, most likely in one or more wool growing shires.

Vegetable matter, or 'shiv' in wool is a serious downgrading in price, burrs of any nature contribute to it and, as a former wool grower, I am not at all surprised at reports of it being of concern to wool growers.”

Friends in High Places?

Bamboo escaping from a garden next to the Ridge had members very worried. Our various noises about it seem to have been heard – officials unknown attacked the canes outside the property boundary, and the bamboo inside has now been tackled too. Thanks to all those anonymous helpers and the responsible residents.

Wombat Watering Holes

We’ve had a report of a big wombat turning up in daylight in a backyard in Kambah, surprising the residents by drinking from their swimming pool. The stolid marsupial was apparently unfazed by the salt, the household dog or the owners. To what extent are backyard pools supplementing the available dams and pools on reserves, we wonder?