



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
April 2024

Previous Meeting

Sunday 17 March 2024

The Old Dam

An overcast but pleasant afternoon but at first I thought it was only going to be me and Rob Lundie but then thankfully Jenny Horsfield turned up. As we set off up the track Ben the Ranger drove in behind us. He had come to meet us and to help out. He had met up with the Oakey Hill group in the morning and as our meeting is now in the afternoon he was able to join us as well. He explained that he looks after four groups but coincidentally they all meet on the third Sunday of the month. When we got to the Old Dam thankfully Jen Walton also turned up. We started with the African Love Grass (ALG) on the seat side of the dam and then split up with Rob, Jenny and Jen weeding around our plantings on the north-east and south-west. I worked on digging out the paspalum on the southern end when I wasn't distracted by the Patterson's Curse. Ben was hand weeding in the south-western area and I was able to have a good chat with him. He said he had worked at the Botanical Gardens before becoming a southside ranger and was enjoying learning about the nature parks down here. Together we removed a lot of ALG, St Johns Wort, Patterson's Curse, thistles, Verbascum, paspalum and some fleabane and briar roses.

Paul Sheils

Next Meeting

Sunday 21 April 2024

The Anniversary Seat

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm.

NOTE NEW TIME

Meet: Darrell Place.

Bring: hat, gloves, water to drink.

Task: weeding – attacking woody weeds

Contact: Linda Spinaze 62886916

May meeting: Sun 19 Darrell Place

Tribute to Malcolm Gill

Malcolm Gill, what a contributor in many aspects of life from CSIRO, Bushfire Council, Researcher, advisor, volunteer and a "real good bloke." I wish him all the best and continue to treasure our discussions and conversations over many years. What an honour to be associated with this sharing, gifted person.

Tony Brownlie

Birdwatching on the Ridge

On a cloudy Thursday morning I joined a group of five friends to go birdwatching on the Ridge. We started from the end of Kathner St, slowly walking up to the dam, around to the Old Dam, up the Wombat Track, back along the front fire trail and down the nature trail with excursions in amongst the trees. As

our expert guide, Coral Dow, noted, it was a perfect day for migrating/dispersing birds coming down from the mountains and moving through Cooleman Ridge. With her help and scribe, Heather, I was amazed at how many different birds (29) we were able to spot. A highlight was the mixed feeding flocks of small birds dominated by Grey Fantails.

Here is a list of what we saw:

Little Pied Cormorant, Galah, Crimson Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Kookaburra, Flame Robin (Female), Scarlet Robin (pair), Golden Whistler (female), Grey Fantail (the dominant species in the mixed feeding flocks), Willie Wagtail, Superb Fairy Wren, Speckled Warbler, Brown Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, Striated Pardalote, Spotted Pardalote, Red Wattlebird, New Holland Honeyeater, White-plumed Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater (these are the common migraters in Autumn, two or three large flocks flew overhead), Silvereye, Red-browed Firetail, Common Starling, Pied Currawong (quite a few on the move down into the suburbs) Australian Magpie, Grey Butcherbird (heard), Australian Raven (heard).

Rob Lundie

Azolla Dissipating

The Azolla fern which has covered the Old Dam for over a year is now gradually dissipating and is largely confined to the edges. Interestingly I noticed several fronds floating in the trough at the bottom of the tank situated across the track from the dam. There is a lot of green slime in the trough, so I wonder if that has anything to do with the Azolla growth there.

Rob Lundie

I'm baack!

It has been a few months since the Bicentennial Nature Trail (BNT) just north of the Old Dam was repaired. Since then, the wombat has made no serious attempt to reestablish its burrow. There has just been a scattering of earth to one side of the repair. Maybe it was just marking its presence. Maybe the ground was too hard. However,

following the decent rain this month (84 mms to 11 April), the wombat has started digging a new burrow beside the BNT on the uphill side. How long before it attempts to go back under the trail? Watch this space.

Rob Lundie

Australian Owlet-nightjar



Australian Owlet-nightjar Photo: Jen Walton

This Australian Owlet-nightjar was spotted in an old tree near the Old Dam.

Jen Walton

Loving the Ridge

A man sits on the Anniversary Seat remembering his wedding two years ago at this very spot. A new Chapman resident with his dog recently discovers the Seat. He loves just gazing across the valley.



View from Anniversary Seat Photo: Fran Wild

Rob Lundie

Late News: Mt Arawang track upgrade imminent.