



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
March 2025

Previous Meeting

Sunday 16 February 2025

One Tree Hill

It felt like Autumn as we gathered at the end of Kathner St in cool but sunny and still conditions before walking up the steep trail and onto One Tree Hill – perfect weeding conditions. On the way Linda pointed out a variety of grasses and explained how to identify them. Throughout the morning 10 of us (Linda Spinaze, Paul Sheils, Hamish McGlynn, Rob Lundie, Helen Govey, Jenny Shapcott, Doug Tinney, Pampa Ray and young son, Prit, and very welcome newcomer, Uros Rokvic) took out large briar roses, pyracanthus, two large areas of blackberry and the usual Verbascum and fleabane. After recent rain, the view of the Ridge was magnificent. So green and both dams full! Although, as Doug pointed out, the grass hides a multitude of sins, but we decided not to go there!

Meanwhile, Alan Ford went to work on his patch after dropping off some historic Group documents following a clean-up. This is a good reminder that any such documents should be given to Linda for the Group's archives.

Linda also reminded us that the next meetings from March to October will begin at 1.30 pm and finish at 4.00 pm.

Rob Lundie

Next Meeting

Sunday 16 March 2025

The Old Dam

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm.

NOTE NEW TIME

Meet: Freebody Place

Bring: hat, gloves, water to drink.

Task: Weeding

Contact: Linda Spinaze 0417276497

Snake Awareness

Everyone seems to have a snake story! Even just a few days ago a man who lives a couple of streets away from the Ridge found a Red-belly Black snake in his sock drawer! Snakes are definitely part of our habitat. Recently, a couple of us attended a session on Snake Awareness by Associate Professor Gavin Smith from the ANU, presented by Parks and Conservation (PCS). The snake we most often hear about is the Eastern Brown. This snake can be extremely venomous but apparently is timid and very sensitive - it really wants to stay out of our way. Prof. Smith is hoping to present these snakes in a different light, to show how important snakes are to our ecosystem and how, as we become more urbanised and encroach on the snake's habitat, we need to change our behaviours and perceptions to be able to live alongside them. However, snakes do come into our yards, particularly if the summer has been dry. There

is an ANU study which is tracking snakes to see how they fare when translocated from backyards to the bush. Unfortunately, the snakes do not do well, losing body condition and behaving erratically as they are very disoriented. This exposes them to greater risks from predators. Immediate first aid management was reinforced. If you are bitten by a snake, lie or sit down. Do not move at all. Try to remain calm to slow your circulation. Call 000 (can try 112) and if no reception hopefully you have a snake bandage in your pack. These bandages have a central band which appears as rectangles. However, as it is wound over the bite and up the limb, the correct tightness of the bandage is indicated by the rectangles now showing as squares. Best of all, be alert for snakes when in the bush or long grass. At home, tidy your gardens and particularly enclose your compost bin so that mice are not attracted to it which of course in turn will attract snakes!

Helen Govey

Power Tool Induction Training

Linda Spinaze and I attended the Power Tool Induction Training session held on 27 February. There were 10 participants, and it was one of five training sessions with a total of 50 participants from various Park Care and local Landcare groups. The session began with a slideshow introducing the battery power tools available for loan and the rules and procedures that will need to be followed. The tools we will have access to are:

- 1.Brush Cutter with either plastic blades or circular saw type cutting blade depending on approved task requirement.
- 2.Pruning Saw for woody weeds - maximum diameter 50mm.
- 3.Hedge Trimmer. Useful for getting into blackberry clumps.
- 4.Self-propelled Lawn Mower. Unlikely to use this on the Ridge.
- 5.Drill with approved drill bits. Unlikely to use this on the Ridge.

Prior approval from the Ranger is needed before applying to borrow the tools from PCS. Maximum loan period is four days. Exclusion zones are required when using the tools, eg. brush cutter 15m and hedge trimmer 5m. Signage will be provided to mark the zone for the awareness of the public and other volunteers. After the theory component we

left Stromlo Depot to do a substantial and individual practical component and were assessed on our ability to safely and effectively use all the tools. Only volunteers who have done the induction course are allowed to use the tools. Their use is in a trial stage and there will be a review after six months to adjust components of the plan. So hopefully all will go well. We thank PCS staff for their efforts in getting the project to this stage considering the risk and work health and safety framework that needed to be complied with during this process.

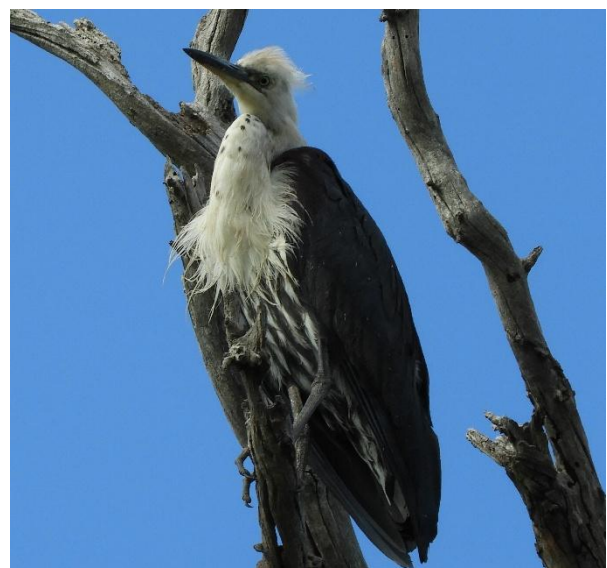


Linda being assessed by Lauren in the use of the brush cutter
Photo: Paul Sheils

Paul Sheils

Ridge Sighting

What a thrill it was for my visiting English friend to see two Pacific Herons fly across the Old Dam and settle in the dead tree nearby. I had never seen herons on the Ridge so I was similarly pleased.



Pacific Heron

Photo: Carrie Foggitt

Rob Lundie