



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter November
2003

Previous Sunday meeting, October 19th

The week's bombshell was the scheduled resumption of cattle grazing on Cooleman Ridge – discontinued in the early 1990s for conservation reasons. This decision was made, shockingly, without any consultation with our Group. So on Sunday 19th, at 32 Monkman St, we had a crisis meeting, moving under cover at Elizabeth's as the rain came down. Having phoned all members I was able to present the responses of those I made contact with. One member was in favour of grazing behind the houses if no other means of removing the long grass could be found. The remaining views were strongly against cattle grazing. Although it was indicated to us that two rangers would attend our meeting, they did not come. Six of our people agreed to meet CNP rangers on the Ridge on the following Tuesday, time and date dictated by CNP. We resolved to write a letter to the Chief Minister who is also Minister for the Environment requesting him to reverse the decision to graze cattle on Cooleman Ridge. Many of our supporters also have written to the Chief Minister in this vein, but to date (4th November) I have heard of no response. A letter was also to be sent to the Bushfire Management Committee. Kerrie Tucker was to be asked to put a question to the Chief Minister and the exchange can be read in Hansard¹. ☼

Next Sunday meeting, November 16th

After considerable thought we've decided to stick with the plan to weed round the Kathner St dam. This is the gateway to our Ridge and the work of the two caretakers in the vicinity help pre-empt any view that we have nothing worth conserving on the Ridge.

- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at Kathner St (dam)
- bring hat, gloves, drink, snack, weeder, raincoat if it is wet ☼

Future programme

December 21st somewhere close to a Park entrance, and under shady trees. Any requests? ☼

October log

031003 **Malva parviflora*, **Linaria arvensis*
**Capsella bursa-pastoris* flowering.

171003 *Convolvulus erubescens*, *Geranium solanderi*,
Goodemia hederacea flowering

311003 *Diuris sulphurea*, *Chrysocephalum*
apiculatum, *Xerochrysum viscosum*, *Hydrocotyle*
laxiflora, *Opercularia hispida* *Senecio quadridentatus*
flowering ☼

Athllon Drive meeting

The meeting held late yesterday afternoon (5th November) to present fuel management strategy in CNP was addressed by Geoff Wells, manager of Parks and Conservation Service. Several representatives of Park Care and other conservation groups were present as well as a contingent from CNP. Eleven of our members made it their business to attend and accounted for a good third of the roomful.

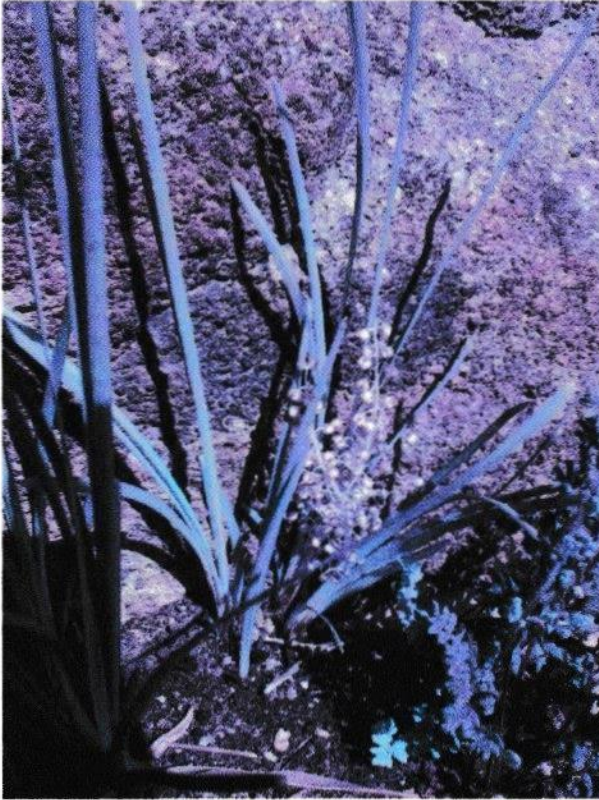
It was very pleasing to have Geoff's assurance that any areas of high conservation value would be fenced off from cattle – with particular reference being made to *Diuris species* and *Bulbine bulbosa*. Although we do not accept cattle grazing on Cooleman Ridge under any circumstances, we are more than happy to point out areas of high conservation value to CNP.

A strong message was sent, and acknowledged, that consultation with concerned groups has been inadequate and that this must improve.

A carefully worded resolution was accepted by an overwhelming majority and has been sent to the Chief Minister/Minister for the Environment. The resolution follows "What's around" overleaf.

¹ <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/start.htm>

What's around



Lomandra filiformis – Wattle Mat-rush
Perennial tussock
loma Gr: fringe referring to anthers in some species,
andros Gr: man
filum L: thread ☼



Lomandra bracteata
Perennial tussock
loma Gr: fringe referring to anthers in some species,
andros Gr: man
bractea L: thin plate of shining metal

The species featured in July's newsletter and named as *Lomandra multiflora* was actually *Lomandra filiformis* I believe. Please note this on your copy till another verdict comes along. ☼

Resolution

Members of Park Care Groups meeting at the Athllon Drive Depot of Canberra Nature Park on Wednesday November 5 2003 wish to express the following views:

1. We are deeply concerned about:

- (a) inappropriate management strategies being adopted in CNP to reduce fuel loads;
- (b) the conflict between these strategies and conservation values of Canberra Nature Park, values that the Park Care Groups endeavour to uphold and increase;
- (c) the recreational values of Canberra Nature Park, an aspect that we have addressed by, among other initiatives, designing nature trails in close collaboration with rangers of Canberra Nature Park; and
- (d) the implications of the decision to graze cattle on Cooleman Ridge and other areas of Canberra Nature Park both now and in the future.

2. We have been convinced by experts on fire management and conservation that the action of providing cattle grazing opportunities in Canberra Nature Park is not optimally addressing the issue of fire prevention while posing serious threats to the conservation and recreation functions of the areas.

3. We are dismayed by the lack of consultation preceding the decision to open part of Cooleman Ridge to grazing: experts were not consulted nor was the active and awards winning Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group informed or consulted.

In view of these concerns we request that all cattle grazing in Canberra Nature Park be terminated immediately.

Finally

The grand response from our members has shown once again that you do not need to be a hands-on weeder to play a part in the conservation of Cooleman Ridge.