



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter March
2005

Previous Sunday meeting, February 20th

It was a great day for dusting off and comparing wet weather gear. Thunder rolled and rain set in soon after one o'clock so some people came to make sure the event was cancelled and then quickly returned home. A few stayed on to help Doug stake out the Fuel Assessment plots for GAS as the likelihood of ignition steadily diminished. Doug looked Drizabone, while Jenny and Rob sported the ultimate bushwalking equipment nicely topped by black umbrellas. Meg Doepel had phoned Doug about the time of the thunder roll to say she was unwilling to subject the reptiles she proposed bringing to the cold and wet, particularly the carpet snake that was shedding skin and thus especially vulnerable. It was decided to reschedule to April: so don't miss this new opportunity! ☼

Future programme

Provisionally 2005 looks like this, rotating through the three Group Areas (GA) when there is no special programme:

March 20th GAN/Chauvel - weeding, plant ID
April 17th Reptile Walk with Meg Doepel
May 15th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
June 19th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
July 17th Lichen Walk - Jack Elix
Aug 21st GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
Sep 18th Brendan Lepski Plant Walk
Oct 16th ? AGM
Nov 20th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID
Dec 18th GA weeding, fuel assessment, plant ID ☼

Next Sunday meeting, March 20th

- GAN/Chauvel - weeding, plant ID
- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at Kathner St, or GAN/Chauvel
- bring hat, gloves, weeder, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet ☼

February log

180205 *Eucalyptus rossii* and *E. macrorhyncha* in bud.
250205 **Hypericum perforatum*, flowering by track, Fp.
Hill dug out and bagged. Previously dug 070105.
Echidna continues to visit burrow through the month ☼

Evening Picnic

Thursday 3rd, with a hot day losing it's punch by 5.30 and a lovely evening unfolding:

Gösta was there in good time to fix arrows to the fence showing the way to our traditional Picnic Corner. Doug and I converged by the Olympic Site and cut'n dabbled our way up through the Verbascum. It reared above the Wild Oats which proved to be diluted with thick swathes of Panic Grass. People came along following the arrows and joined in the mayhem, stacking the fallen into a satisfying pile augmented by Horehound.

I checked off 42 plant species of which 26 were native. The last pre-fire count (150200) was 47 species of which 26 were native. There was quite a variation in the species recorded on these two occasions.

While it was still bright we gathered our things together and watched the birds as we enjoyed our picnic.

*Anna's list: Black-shouldered Kite - apparently nomadic and irruptive in response to abundance of house mice
Magpie*

Eastern Rosella

Black Faced Cuckoo-Shrike

Quail

Yellow tailed Black Cockatoo

Yellow Crested Cockatoo

Galah

Possibly swifts and a willy wag tail.

We listened to mouse-like rustling in the dry grass,

particularly interesting in view of Anna's comment above.

On one previous picnic we concentrated on removing Horehound, on another thistles. Both species are still evident but less dominant. Although the area looked scruffy at first glance, there has been a marked increase in the abundance of native plants.

As the stars lit up we walked back to the cars and set up John's swanky telescope in the reserve for good viewing. Saturn's rings and the Orion Nebula stood out well, and then it clouded over to remind us it was bedtime. ☼

Notice board

Good news: We have had a notice board made courtesy of Weston Creek Rotary Club who have given us a donation for this purpose. Our ranger Graham Heanes will arrange for it to be erected along the nature trail at the Fence Post Hill enclosure facing the Olympic Site. It is lockable, with space for six A4 sheets. Have a stickybeak soon!. ☼

What's around

Family: ASTERACEAE



Vittadinia cuneata – Fuzzweed
Native woody annual or perennial herb, 10-40 cm
Carlo Vittadina 1800-65 Italian author on fungi,
cuneatus L: wedgeshaped ☼

Spray kits

Angela has prepared two chemical kits at Athllon Drive, containing: copy of information manual including labels, MSDS and permits; 1 litre glyphosate, 1 litre surfactant, 1 litre chemical dye, 200 gram Brush-off; 1 gm measure for Brush-off, mixing jug, chemical gloves, protective eye wear; either a 15 ltr knapsack or 5 ltr pressure spray; a supply of Chemical Use Record sheets and Dispatch Forms.

Chemical kits can only be issued to volunteers who either completed Bill Woodruff's training course in November, or have provided Angela with details of other training such as Chemcert qualifications. If you wish to borrow a kit please contact the rangers at Athllon. The dispatch form needs to be completed by the volunteer. The chemical use record needs to be completed and returned with the kit. If in doubt about spraying, ie where, when, weather etc, please ask the rangers.

Further training sessions are proposed. ☼

Help on the way.

Work for the Dole crews will be on the Ridge for two days in early April. They have their own enthusiastic team leader, and equipment. We hope to have members working along side them to show them the point of it all.

Details:

Wednesday 6th April, 8am to 4pm. Doug will be with the team above Lincoln Close, cutting and dabbing woody weeds.

Thursday 7th April, 8am to 4pm. Jenny will be with the team clearing up at the Chapman School site, above Redgrave Pl. ☼

Family: CHENOPODIACEAE



Chenopodium pumilio – Small Crumbweed
Native prostrate to decumbent aromatic annual
or short-lived perennial herb
chen Gr: goose + *pod* foot rf. leaf shape,
pumilio L: a dwarf ☼

Chapman School

Several teachers are keen to involve their classes in the school's area, close to their trail which is being revived. An up-dated pamphlet is in production, and a parents' group is being formed. ☼

Activity

Eucalypt saplings have been cut and dabbed up from Pelham Close - presumably Tasmanian Blue Gums?

Piles of dirt have been dumped in the Park by a sub contractor for a house being constructed in Monkman St. We referred the matter to Angela who reports: *Andrew Halley (Senior Ranger) has investigated and found out who's responsible He has spoken to them and they are required to remove and rehabilitate the site.* ☼

Native Cherry

Exocarpos cupressiformis, with other hemiparasitic shrubs, trees and herbs, belongs to the family Santalaceae. It is related to the mistletoes but has an underground connection to other species allowing it to take on more than one host at a time. It responds to fire by root suckering.

The "cherry" is actually the fruit stalk, red and edible, while the fruit is green and insignificant. Birds take the red stalk and inadvertently carry the seed away with it.

People who came on the Recovery Walk heard Malcolm telling us about this interesting plant. ☼

Web site

Our web site URL is:

<http://coolemanridge.inventivedingo.com> ☼