



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter July

2008

Previous Sunday Meeting June 15th

When we worked here last (March) it was a scorching afternoon. Now, 3 months later, it was a beautiful afternoon and *Phalaris aquatica* clumps lifted easily from the moist soil. Our team scattered widely, some people going for obvious eyesores, others concentrating on *Acetosella vulgaris* and exotic grass tangles under a fire-damaged tree. Malcolm removed an outbreak of *Amaranthus sp.* extending along a drainage line and corroborated observations that this weed is becoming a conspicuous nuisance. ☼

Future programme

Saturday 12th July CVA team Kathner St 9 am

Next meeting, Sunday July 20th

- GAC/Darrell for clearing of exotic growth and plant ID
- meet at Darrell Place or GAC/Darrell
- 1.30 to 4 p.m.
- bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet ☼

CVA Team on Cooleman Ridge

Jenny sent in this report:

"On Wednesday 11 June a small team of CVA (Conservation Volunteers Australia) workers joined Doug and Jenny in the area enclosed by the Chapman Primary School trail. CVA labour for the day was paid for by funds made available by the Southern ACT Catchment group, of which CRPCG is a member. It was a cool and windy day but we soon warmed up chipping out verbascum and thistles and by tackling the more strenuous work of removing phalaris. It was a very productive day and the area to the south of the rocky knoll is now looking beautiful. Especially evident is the kangaroo grass which has colonised rapidly this year." ☼

Bird pictures

Tobias's Cooleman Ridge pictures can be viewed at <http://www.coolemanridge.org/fauna.html>. ☼

Sharps

July 4th Arminel found a bright yellow sharps disposal container on Fence Post Hill. She carefully picked it up with gloved hands and took it home to report it to

Sharps Hotline: phone 13 22 81. ☼

Census of the Vascular Plants of the ACT

Here is Part 3 – from Brendan Lepschi's detailed response to our worries. See our April and June newsletters for Parts 1 and 2.

"Plant nomenclature and taxonomy

Plant taxonomy and nomenclature is NOT set in stone, nor is there any compulsion for anyone, professional botanist or otherwise, to adopt a particular taxonomy or nomenclature. Concepts and names will vary from botanist to botanist and from state to state. It is not 'wrong' to refer to *Cheilanthes* as being a member of the Sinopteridaceae or Adiantaceae, it merely reflects differing approaches to classifying our flora. Strictly speaking there is no 'final authority' on botanical nomenclature, although the International Botanical Congress and its various committees do act as something akin to overall 'arbiters' for plant nomenclature. They are responsible for the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, which seeks to provide a framework for the application of botanical nomenclature – to quote from the Code: "Ultimately, however, plant nomenclature is not governed by a bureaucracy of committees, but in an open and democratic manner by the community of its users [i.e. botanists]..."

"Thus, botanists define groups of organisms (plants) based on their similarities and differences, and classify them in a taxonomic framework. A universally understood naming system (scientific nomenclature) is then used to apply names to these groupings for universal comprehension. This naming system is governed by a series of rules and recommendations (the Code), which evolves and changes according to need, but the overall aims and intent remains the same. Names may change as a result of nomenclatural rules and/or modification of taxonomic concepts. There are some aspects of nomenclature that are fairly black and white, while others are akin to law and are rather open to interpretation. Taxonomy, on the other hand, is not governed by any such rules, but is constantly evolving and subject to the weight of scientific opinion, like other scientific disciplines. The 'rules' as such, apply to the *names* of organisms, **not** the manner in which the organisms are classified. As taxonomists, we aim to provide a system of classification that best reflects the groupings and relationships that exist in nature. As our knowledge accumulates, we make adjustments to these groupings, and name changes are a natural flow-on from these changes."

Census now available at: <http://www.anbg.gov.au/cpbr/ACT-census/index.html> ☼

Brendan adds: "I would encourage people to contact me for any ACT Census matters"

Contact details:

Brendan Lepschi, Curator, Australian National Herbarium;
Brendan.Lepschi@csiro.au; (02) 6246 5167 ☼

A Wollemi Pine for Chapman Primary School

Jenny reports that she and Doug were guests at an assembly at Chapman Primary School on June 13.

"The whole school was present at a 'Sustainability Assembly' where the staff and pupils celebrated their progress as a 'Waterwatch' and 'Wastewatch' school. The assembly was very ably and confidently run by the students (with some guidance from teachers). A highlight of the event was a presentation on worm farming by a small group of boys who built and maintain the school's own worm farm.



"We presented the school principal, Anne Simpson, with a Wollemi Pine which Landcare Australia had made available as part of a nationwide gift to members of local landcare groups. The Wollemi Pine will be displayed in the school foyer, together with a framed text with the story of its discovery and botanical significance. Later in the year, we will help the students plant the pine in a suitable corner of the school grounds. Meanwhile, some of the student Water Monitors will take on the role of caring for this rare and beautiful plant. ✪

Scarlet Robin

On 3 consecutive Fridays in June a Scarlet Robin has come to the *Eucalyptus polyanthemus* I've been weeding under, round about mid day. His less colourful mate flitted among the nearby rocks. ✪

Park Values

The recently launched publication can be downloaded from <http://parksforum.org/docs/Doppio%20FINAL%20low-res.pdf>. The publication contains case study material from both urban and non urban parks in both Australia and New Zealand. ✪

CVA again

We are fortunate in winning the services of another CVA team (Saturday 12 July), and ask for members to support them as they support us.

Challenges will include mattocking out phalaris clumps cascading down the gully beside the new trail and through the enclosed revegetation area where the Friday group operates, as well as clearing exotic growth from the inner wall of the Kathner St dam. If you can't come at 9 am, an odd hour or so later in the day would be valuable.

Ring Jenny on 6231 4535 for details. ✪

DRAFT: TOWARDS A MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR COOLEMAN RIDGE CANBERRA NATURE PARK (cont) FIRE MANAGEMENT (cont)

Residents in areas considered more at risk than others should be offered the opportunity to take part in fire drills and on-the-spot instruction. Exposure to experimental, low intensity, fires would be useful. Explanation of the value of staying with a property, if prepared and able, rather than leave the house, would be essential. The consequences of choosing various garden layouts and house characteristics, various degrees of garden maintenance, various shrubberies and surface mulches, and the siting and nature of garden sheds and fences etc. during a fire, should be explained. Consideration should be given to the idea of volunteer fire wardens. The use of the fire hydrants found at the backs of a number of houses in Chapman should be considered.

Reducing the fuel load reduces the potential fire intensity and makes suppression less difficult and more likely to succeed. There are a number of ways this can be done including grazing by exotic herbivores. Heavy grazing will reduce the fuel load but the ecological and social consequences may be undesirable (see above). It is arguable whether or not the effects of heavy grazing on parts of the Ridge would have a major effect on fire control in a big event because the rate of spread of the fire front would be little affected, fire control efforts would be concentrated near the houses or at farm boundaries (where there are bare-earth tracks) and the fuel-reduced area would be small relative to the size of the Ridge.

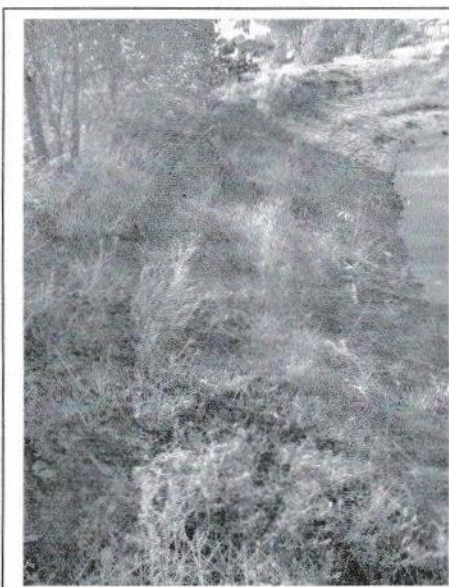
Note: the whole draft, submitted in 1998, can be read on our web site. ✪

New ACT Geological Map

A talk at the July meeting of the ACT Branch of the Australian Geological Society: Doug Finlayson and Kevin McCue will be giving a presentation on the new ACT Geological Map and Guidebook.

Tues 15 July at 5:30pm, (pre-meeting drinks at 5:00pm).

David Brown Lecture Theatre, in the Research School of Earth Sciences, Building 47, at the ANU



Vegetation rings on Kathner St dam wall looking towards Kathner St.

- 1: (Lowest ring): dead eucalypt seedlings
- 2: *Senecio quadridentatus*
- 3: *Cyperus eragrostis*
- 4: *Epilobium sp.*
- 5: (Top): mixed vegetation