



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
June 2024

Previous Meeting

Sunday 19 May 2024

Darrell Place

Thankfully the icy wind of the day before had abated for our weeding party on Sunday. It was a crisp, sunny afternoon for eleven of us: Linda Spinaze, Alan Ford, Paul Sheils, Jenny Shapcott, Rob Lundie, Jen Walton, Rohan Thomas, Chris Oates, welcome newcomer Leanne Shepherd, Bethany Dunne and her daughter, Lina as we walked up from Darrell Place then along the Ridge and across what is known as 'Kangaroo Valley'.

We started to prune the large pyracanthus plants, in order to cut-n-paint once we had reduced the growth to a manageable level. In doing so we discovered that many of them had already been 'frilled' (a weeding method which involves downward angled cuts through the bark around the circumference of the trunk, allowing poison to be directly painted onto the cambian layer.). Presumably this was carried out by the recent team under the Parks and Conservation Service's Environmental Stewardship Program. So we desisted in our attempts to control the large bushes, and instead pulled out or poisoned the small seedlings clustered under their canopies.

We were pleased to see that our weeding visits over the past few years has made a significant impact on the briar roses and cotoneasters, with *verbascum* also sparsely spread.

Next Meeting

Sunday 16 June 2024

Lincoln Place

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm.

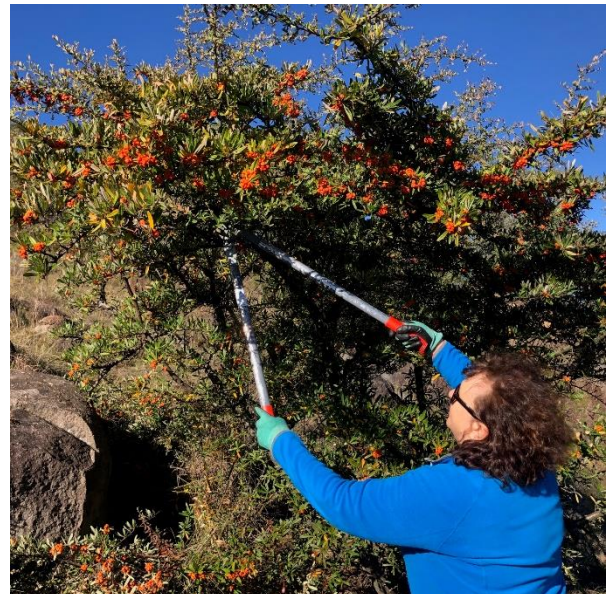
Meet: Lincoln Place.

Bring: hat, gloves, water to drink.

Task: weeding – attacking woody weeds

Contact: Linda Spinaze 62886916

July meeting: Sun 21 Mt Arawang



Newcomer Leanne Shepherd tackles a pyracanthus
Photo: Rob Lundie

We also noticed that there were quite a few of the small native shrub, *Indigofera adesmiifolia*. This attractive bush was at one stage thought to be rare, but there are at least

two sites on Cooleman Ridge where they are flourishing. They will show their modest flowers in mid-spring, but in the meantime, their neat foliage is very attractive.



Indigofera adesmiifolia Photo: Canberra Nature Map

After the weeding, we discussed the idea of having 'roving' groups which, under our supervision, would come and help us tackle the weeds, probably the woody ones, in a particular part of the Ridge. Mt Arawang during Spring was suggested with Chris to investigate its suitability as to the proliferation of weeds in a confined area. It was felt important that members of the roving group be able to see the results of their efforts in an obvious way. Linda will send in the application for such a group.

Linda Spinaze and Rob Lundie

Trail bikes on the Ridge

As you may already be aware, we have been receiving reports of a group of two trail bikes regularly riding in Cooleman Ridge over recent weekends. They have been riding on the eastern side and along the top of the ridgeline and usually visit around 12 pm to 2pm. Parks staff have been trying to maintain a higher presence in Canberra's nature reserves in the hope of deterring them. The riders have been displaying some concerning behaviour, so please do not approach them or try to confront them or overtly record them. The AFP have been notified. If you do see

them, please report them to Ben.Harvey@act.gov.au, particularly if you have identifying information, e.g. registration number, description, address, etc. But do not put yourself in harm's way. It is not your responsibility to solve this problem.

Rob Lundie

Dianella or Pale Flax Lily

Last November I located a number of Pale Flax Lily (*Dianella sp. aff. longifolia* (*Benambra*)) plants on the western slopes of the Ridge. This plant is on the ACT Rare Plant List. It can be identified as different to the more common Dianella that many may be familiar with as the flowers are very pale purple and the anthers are completely yellow with no black on them. If you come across any on your walks please record your sighting on the NatureMapr website or app. <https://canberra.naturemapr.org/>



Pale Flax Lily or *Dianella longifolia* (*Benambra*)
Photo: Bethany Dunne

Bethany Dunne

Bits and pieces

We recently had an email from our founder, Bess Sledge. She is still living at home and doing well at 96. She enjoys receiving the Newsletter and was really pleased to have news of Malcolm. Bess would be pleased to hear of my friend's reaction when he visited recently. He had lived in Canberra in the mid 1970s but knew nothing of the Ridge. As we walked up from Darrell Place to where the Brindabellas come into view, he exclaimed, wide-eyed: 'Wow! This is amazing! I'm completely gobsmacked. I never knew this existed.' I just smiled.

Rob Lundie