



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
July 2024

Previous Meeting

Sunday 16 June 2024

Lincoln Place

Ten of us gathered at the end of Lincoln Place on a crisp sunny afternoon which was just perfect for a winter weeding. Chris Oates showed us where the new bridge and track will start. Then he went over the saddle to deal with a large *pyracanthus* and some briar roses. Paul Shiels, Leanne Shepherd, Hamish McGlynn and Rob Lundie spread out to tackle *verbasicum* mainly to the left of the track. Apart from the weeds, a piece of tin roof capping was also retrieved. Meanwhile, Helen Govey took very welcome newcomers Richard Kathage and his daughter, Matilda, and Penny Goodwin and her daughter, Keavey off to the right, also to mop up *verbasicum*. Canvassing the bush on a back track, Rob encountered some bird-watchers one of whom commented how well the Ridge was looking. Compliments always welcome.

Rob Lundie

Catching Kathner Critters

As part of the WaterWatch program, the two dams on Cooleman Ridge (and many other water bodies in the ACT) are regularly assessed for the diversity and numbers of their invertebrate life. This assessment provides an indication (in conjunction with our monthly water testing) of the water quality and the

Next Meeting

Sunday 21 July 2024

Mt Arawang

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

August meeting: Sun 18 Chauvel Circle

dams' biological richness. In May it was Kathner Dam's turn to be assessed, and CRPCG's Robyn Gow and Peter Lindenmayer supported the Southern ACT Catchment Group's WaterWatch Coordinator Martin Lind in conducting the survey. The May survey found that eight different types of water invertebrates were present, including lots of water boatmen, backswimmers, and ostracods (aka "seed shrimp", about the size and shape of black sesame seeds), a few beetles, worms (some of which were fly larvae), limpets and mites. We were pleased to also see a small number of tiny yabbies, indicating that previous illegal yabby netting at the dam hadn't entirely depleted the population. Overall, Martin assessed the water life quality as "Fair". For example, the presence of a number of beetles indicated that pollution levels were low (compared to many urban dams). However, Martin attributed the absence of mayfly, caddis fly and damsel fly larvae, and only a single caddis fly larva in the sample, to the

lack of fringing vegetation around the dam. If we wished to improve the range and number of invertebrates (which would in turn attract other animals) Martin suggested putting more logs in the water, planting fringing vegetation, and providing shade by planting trees on the northern and western sides of the dam.



Martin takes a sample Photo: Peter Lindenmayer

Peter Lindenmayer

Mt Arawang Track Realignments

A realignment of the track that runs from above Lincoln Place over the bridge and on up to Mt Arawang is currently underway. There will be a new bridge across the drain about 20 meters east of the current one and a better contoured track up the hill, with the current steps removed and the area replanted possibly with the Group's help. Repair and re-spacing of the steps will improve drainage.



Track site supervisor, Andy carries up one of more than 200 steps Photo: Rob Lundie

Once this track is finished, the south track on Mt Arawang starting from above Kambah will also be realigned. The track will turn right off the current track where the steep plastic inserts begin. It will then follow the eastern contours around the mountain in a long but fairly easy climb, with some steps, before rejoining the current track where it flattens out near the summit.

Parks and Conservation Service (Parks) advise that an alternative route around the (arguably) more scenic western side had been considered, but that area is steep and exposed, the work would have had a considerable impact on native plants and it would have also involved the removal or disturbance of loose rocks that provide a habitat for the pink-tailed worm lizard. Parks believe that the chosen route is more sustainable and involves far less environmental damage, running through some areas currently infested with weeds – fescue and blackberry. They see no threat to fauna. Following the contours facilitates drainage and enhances longevity. The route includes rock ledges for views to the east as well as a large flat rocky area near the top that has good views west and a possible spot for a seat. The route is also designed, through the spacing of curves, to discourage walkers taking off-track short cuts.

Chris Oates

Locals who care for the Ridge

The CRPCG is aware that some locals enjoy weeding on the Ridge. We love to see evidence of their endeavours. Some dig out the verbascum, others remove the African Love Grass, and some chop down the wild roses. And there may be others who just pull-up the occasional offending plant. As custodians of Cooleman Ridge, we would love to have an indication of your endeavours because this knowledge will help us to understand what is growing/not growing on the Ridge, and to also understand what weeding methods work/don't work. So, if you spend time in a special area or weed as you walk, could you please send an email to Linda Spinaze Linda@xamax.com.au so that we know that you have a special interest in that patch. This knowledge will greatly help us in managing the weeds on the Ridge.

Linda Spinaze