



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARKCARE GROUP

Newsletter May 2002

Previous Sunday meeting April 21st.

We again met by Mt Arawang under the *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*. Three teams took to the slope following the routine that we have previously found so satisfactory - one of each pair cutting while the other stood by to dab with herbicide. Our target was again woody weeds though George was so pleased to be back he took some extra swipes at unwary *Verbascum*. We all finished the day along the gully not far from the Namatjira Drive entrance, surprised that progress had been so rapid. Next month we'll pick up where we left off in December, scouring the western slope - just imagine the progress we would make with one more team! Malcolm concentrated on tidying away out-grown sleeves and stakes, and we will need to think of storing these for reuse.

Score: 154 woody weeds - *Rosa*, *Pyracantha*, *Cotoneaster*, *Crataegus* (hawthorn) and fruit trees - cut and dabbed.

Minutes of the meeting following the activity are available. ☺

Coming Sunday meeting 19th May

- 1.30 - 4 pm
- park at the Kambah Pony Club's parking area beyond the far end of Hake Street
- go right (east) to the park entrance leading up to the big *Eucalyptus bridgesiana* where we will meet
- target: woody weeds on SW slopes of Mt Arawang
- bring hat, gloves, drink, snack, loppers or secateurs. Spray will be available
- a brief general meeting will follow when we will discuss the proposal by a keen prospective member to create a web page for us
- please note that children must not be close to where spray is being used but there is plenty for non-sprayers to do. ☺

Annual April Affair

Anzac evening was lovely, in spite of the clouds which restricted our view of Jupiter to brief glimpses. The moon was near full and a good object for binoculars. We saw the laser beam soaring up from Mt Stromlo. But all this was after a burst of weeding which saw us roll back *Verbascum* and *Murrubium*. ☺

April log

300402 large rock cairn found on Coleman Trig. ☺

Dieback

..... research has shown that there is no simple explanation, but that a set of inter-related or cumulative factors may apply. These have been summarised by Hogg (1983b)

1. Repeated defoliation by insects over many years
2. Acute drought stress
3. Ringbarking by grazing stock
4. Mistletoe infestation
5. Fire
6. Changes in soil properties as a result of rural activities
7. Alteration to the physical environment surrounding trees, particularly forest cover
8. Old age

(taken from *The Conservation of Remnant Woodland and Native Grassland in the ACT*, National Parks Association of the ACT, 1991.) . ☺

Rock displacement update ☺

Anne I'Ons writes:

The rock rollers are reptile hunters, they have systematically ransacked Taylor for the last five or so years, also smashing plantings: the rangers are aware, but they never catch them (neither do we!). The bastards work at night I'm convinced, and we have found their crow-bars etc. I hate to think about how much we have lost, especially our legless lizards! We are having constant problems with gates and wire cutting, and the rangers had a major problem on Rob Roy last week (this email was dated 10 April 2002) with the same thing, vehicles and trail bikes causing a lot of damage.

Vigilance is the price of freedom for reptiles too. Report any suspicious activity as soon as you get to a phone - CNP Southside Ranger can be reached on 6207 2087. ☺

Help!

Coleman Trig really needs a caretaker. It gets lots of visitors so could be quite a showcase for our group. If litter is left there people are pretty relaxed about dropping more. What is truly alarming is the spread of *Euphorbia depauperata* - Spurge. Bess has sprayed it in the past and doesn't think it has any effect. So it looks like a manual removal job - unless Doug can whistle up a biological

control. Volunteers for this prestigious spot can be assured of the group's help in getting off to a flying start. ☼

What's around

Family: ASTERACEAE

The daisy family

The drawings are Nancy Burbidge's, from the invaluable *Flora of the ACT* by Burbidge and Gray



Cirsium vulgare

Spear Thistle

Biennial weed - native to Europe, western Asia and North Africa.



Onopordum acanthium

Scotch Thistle

Biennial weed - native to Europe, Asia and North Africa
acanthium - from Greek acantha meaning thorn.

What's the difference? and does it matter?

Well, someone might ask you.

Or, different control methods might be called for.

It's easier if you've got one of each for comparison, but if not....

Cirsium vulgare

Stems: cobwebby with discontinuous spiny wings.

Leaves: upper surface dark green and bristly, lower surface woolly. ☼

Activity figures for April

A few members reported their hours to Janice, the tally is given below and includes 8 people.

Total hours weeding for April = 41.5

Total hours on newsletter = 10

We know that additionally a lot of planting of grasses and weeding occurred on Mt Arawang.

Contact Janice with your hours at the end of each month (evenings excepting Tuesdays on 6288 3953 or e-mail at janice.paull@aph.gov.au) Could you please let Janice know what weeds you are removing when you provide the statistics. This level of detail is forwarded to Ann Connolly. ☼

Onopordum acanthium

Stems: Woolly with continuous spiny wings.

Leaves: lower surface more densely woolly than upper surface. ☼

Survey

Please respond to the accompanying survey. We will take this as an indication that you wish to continue receiving the newsletter. ☼

Witchcraft anybody?

There is a large, carefully constructed rock cairn on Coleman Trig that we had not observed before late April. Bess tells me that Coleman Trig is an important point on the Black Magic people's triangle. Can anyone help us figure out when it was built? - had you noticed it before the Equinox, for instance? ☼

Members

Pat joined Mike on his patch one glorious Friday morning - we hope to see a lot more of you, Pat. ☼