



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter April 2004

Previous Sunday meeting, March 21st

Meeting at the Namatjira Drive entrance, we paused to inspect the plantings just below the fire trail, dating from Park Care's 10th birthday. Although they had been savaged by the fire there was some regeneration of the saplings as well as a pleasing stand of Kangaroo Grass. This is an area that can be tidied up "in passing". Because of the relentless dryness, any planting was postponed.

We then walked south to the beginning of the Arawang Summit Track and crossed the bridge to a fairly level peninsula of promising grassland. The remainder of the afternoon was spent in clearing away the exotic grasses and scattered woody weeds. Blackberry patches had their positions recorded and were later reported to Steve. A survey revealed 47 plant species of which 30 are native. There is a marvelous sheet of rock for the holding of meetings, and after Doug's briefing we piled our litter into the ditch.

We propose returning to this spot every few months, and it will be fascinating to follow its progress.

Doug was well provided with a wheelbarrow full of surprises from which he extracted loppers and herbicide. He and Tina made short work of briars bordering the track as we returned to the entrance watched by circling wedgetail eagles. ☼

Next Sunday meeting, April 18th

We look for a central area for group care and commence weeding.

- 1.30 - 4 pm
- meet at the Darrell Place entrance
- bring hat, gloves, weeder, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet ☼

March log

March two sightings of a tortoise in Kathner St dam
260304 tripod removed from Kathner St dam .☼

Library

A reminder that Janice houses the library and archives. ☼

Damian

Southern ACT Catchment Group Coordinator, Damian, has moved on. His group has been very supportive, even funding the replacement of the Flora of NSW and the GPS lost in the fires. These are held by Gösta and myself and are available to our members at any time. Our Group was happy to be able to contribute to a farewell present to Damian and wish him all the best in his new assignment. We will miss his refreshing vitality and commitment. ☼

Future programme

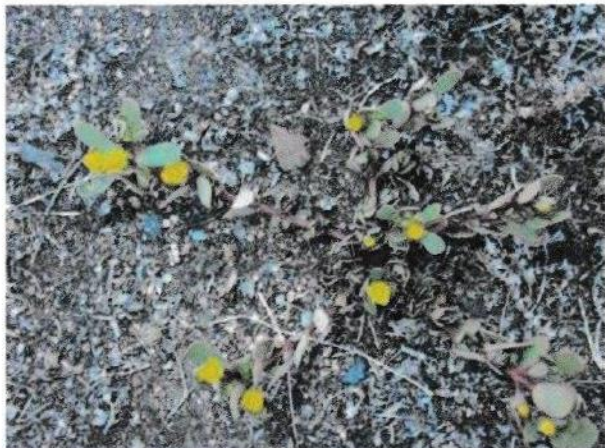
Provisionally the year looks like this:

- April 18th – weeding, Central area
- May 16th above Chauvel Circle, weeding
- June 20th – Arawang, weeding
- July 18th – Central, weeding
- August 15th – Chauvel Circle, weeding
- September 19th – tree survey, Naarilla's area
- October 17th – theme walk
- November 21st – to be decided
- December 19th – Waterwatch old dam. ☼

Tripod

The water level in the Kathner Street dam continues to fall exposing more and more of the tripod used for several years to anchor a floating platform for the ducks. Many ducklings survived during the time it provided refuge but as the volume of water shrank the platform came to pose a danger to adventurous children. Now Gösta has removed the tripod to the Park entrance. Steve has asked the Athllon Depot Senior Field Officer, Dennis Gray, to remove it at the next opportunity. He has also asked Dennis to look at the possibilities of putting a large dead tree in the dam to replace the floating platform. ☼

What's around



PORTULACACEAE

Portulaca oleracea – Pigweed

Prostrate to decumbent native annual or perennial

Grows as a weed in disturbed areas

L. portare to carry, *lac* milk

Katie introduces herself

I have recently taken over from Damian Wall in the Southern ACT Catchment Group Coordinator position. I come from a mostly rural Landcare background as the Yass Area Network of Landcare Groups Coordinator for several years, as well as prior experience in catchment management in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment. I look forward to meeting all of you and working with you in the near future. Please don't hesitate to call me if I can be of any assistance.

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Rabbits again

A new Vertebrate Pest officer has been appointed and Jenny will be discussing the Ridge population with him when they meet. ☼

Jenny again

Jenny has contacted Chapman Primary School and had an interested response from the Year 2-3 teacher who would like her class to be involved in looking after/planting the eucalypt seedlings we potted from the Kathner St dam wall last year. Jenny will go to visit the class after Easter and talk about the project. ☼



CHENOPODIACEAE

Einadia nutans

Climbing Saltbush

Prostrate or twining native perennial herb

nutans nodding. ☼

Flora of Australia

The Canberra Times recently reported on the launch of the *Flora of Australia* on line. When we checked it out it was not accessible. It will be a fantastic resource: meanwhile we'll keep trying, and keep you posted.

Our own web site is as follows:

<http://members.iinet.net.au/~kpelling/> ☼

Tortoises

Malcolm spotted a tortoise perched on the late tripod in the Kathner St dam. A few days later Gösta recorded several murky images of it. Since then – nothing.

But is it a local species, or an import?

Anna tells us the local Eastern Snakenecked Tortoise recoils its head by folding it to one side.

The encroaching ferral animal retracts its head straight back, and also has pink colouring in the ear region.

First catch your tortoise. ☼

Delivery

If you are currently getting a paper copy of the newsletter but can in fact receive it by email, please let me know so that we can cut down on printing costs. ☼

Prograze

Read about the Conservation Prograze course in *Scribbly Gum*. Steve considers it particularly relevant to our Group. Ring Steve Welch on 6207 2193 for details. ☼