



# COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter September  
2006

## Previous Sunday Meeting, August 21<sup>st</sup>

David provided a brief description of the Grazing Trial (also referred to as *Fuel Reduction Trial*, and *Exotic Grass Reduction Trial*) which was conducted last spring (see October and November 2005 newsletters for more detail). Just 12 months ago we identified plant species in various sections of the fenced area so that we would have an idea of subsequent changes to plant populations following grazing. As we knew full well from experience, it is a poor time for identifying species, and too early for spring growth.

This time we did not look at the Phalaris zone above the bottom fence, nor at the Rocky Knoll. Instead each team listed the plants they found in each of the three enclosures – each enclosure having been subjected to herbicide applications and slashing while a third strip was untreated. Finally the ground just outside each enclosure fence was checked for any effect of grazing. No GPS measurements were taken.

It was a great help having Red Hillers Sandy and Ian with us for the afternoon. ☺

## Future programme

We will continue to rotate through the three Group Areas (GA) when there is no special programme, meeting as usual on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month at 1.30 p.m. ☺

## Next Sunday meeting, September 17<sup>th</sup>

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

My finger was on the *Send* button when Graham rang to say the route of the Nature Trail is being changed, so we will not be doing Track Work at the September meeting as was being announced.

Instead: GAC/Darrell. ☺

## August log

040806 Common Bearded Dragon Fence Post Hill  
110806 Straw-necked Ibis breeding pair Kathner St dam  
Red Wattlebirds Fence Post Hill  
160806 *Acacia baileyana* removed, Olympic Site  
210805 fox near Old Dam ☺

## Invitation Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September

to the opening of the new Namadgi Visitor Centre Display & Woodlands Photographic Exhibition. Naas Rd, Tharwa  
Time: 12 noon. Ring: 6207 2900 ☺

## Burn off

On 1<sup>st</sup> September the Friday group met 3 vehicles from the bush fire unit as they were leaving via the Kathner St gates. It seems they will be burning "at the top of the hill there, on the other side of the track, on the side away from the houses. Those living close by will be letter-boxed before the event."

Sounds as though it won't be Reet's area, but perhaps GAN. David (Lincoln) has been trying to get specific information from the rangers - from Kate Boyd he learned that there was to be a test firing on the hill as indicated to us, and eventually they wanted to burn NW from the grazing trial down to the boundary with the Equestrian Centre. ☺

## Chatter

Gösta dug up an *Acacia baileyana* sapling on the skyline of the Olympic Site, just 12 months after having removed one from about the same spot. There was no sign of any others.

Our last meeting at GAC/Darrell was in May, when Doug cleared a large patch of *Marrubium vulgare* – evidence of an old cattle camp. Now, he reports, it's covered in *Geranium solanderi*.

David, in consultation with the rangers, has led a planting on the two spurs above Lincoln Close. Fifty-odd trees belonging to local species were planted.

Reet, having cleared the *Verbascum thapsus* invading Bess's area, is now plugging away at them in the Olympic Site, making an astonishing impact.

John is doing the same sort of thing on Fence Post Hill, contenting himself with *Verbascum* and *Phalaris* to start with.

Anyone who stumbles my way on Fence Post Hill gets shown *Hovea linearis*, that harbinger of spring which is closely followed by *Lissanthe strigosa*.

Likewise, Gösta will show you his emerging *Eryngium ovinum*. This seems to have suffered a recent name change, from *E. rostratum*, though it's still given as such in the Flora of NSW reprinted 2002. The Australian National Herbarium suggests using *Australia's Virtual Herbarium* as the authority. Go to *ABRS Flora of Australia to Databases (search) to What's its Name*. Unfortunately you have to know the current name – put in 'Eryngium rostratum' and it won't find anything. 'Eryngium' brings up several species, and the camera links on *E. ovinum* show our plant. ☺

## Dogs

Over the coming months ACT Domestic Animal Service rangers will mount a blitz on dogs found off-lead in areas including Cooleman Ridge Nature Reserve. Owners whose dogs are found off-lead will receive a formal warning. Second-time offenders will be fined \$150. Unaccompanied dogs will be impounded. ☺

## Scorched earth

Pictures taken by Gösta on the morning of Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September after Monday's control burn.



Showing the track leading to the GAN style: between Reet's Area and where the CVA team joined us to cut and dab *Acacia baileyana* in August 2005. ☼



Group Area North (GAN) ☼

### **DRAFT: TOWARDS A MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR COOLEMAN RIDGE CANBERRA NATURE PARK (continued)**

#### **ECOLOGY**

Cooleman Ridge runs approximately 3.5 km northwest to southeast. It has a series of peaks above 700m elevation, the highest being Mt Arawang at 765m. The Ridge rises above the Canberra Plain, at about 600m, which, in turn is part of the Southern Tablelands Region of NSW and the ACT.

Lithologically the Ridge consists of an erosion-resistant igneous material, the Laidlaw volcanics (Abell 1991). The rocks have a fine-grained matrix in which large crystals are embedded; it is technically a rhyodacitic ignimbrite (Abell 1991). Ignimbrites are believed to have formed by the "eruption of dense clouds of incandescent volcanic glass in a semimolten or viscous state" (American Geological Institute 1976) condensing and fusing into solid rock at the earth's surface (after John Lindsay, personal communication to Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group). The soil derived from the rock is mostly a nutrient-poor coarse sandy clay which is quite erodible. As in many other hilly places in the region there are some attractive rocky outcrops on the Ridge.

The climate could be described as being like a Mediterranean climate in that winters are cool with soils moist while summers are warm with soils dry. The relative dryness of the summer is not so much due to lack of rainfall as to high evaporation. The average monthly rainfall at Canberra airport (Bureau of Meteorology 1988) has a peak of 69mm in October, a decreasing amount in each subsequent month (but with an out-of-sequence value of 51 mm in December) until it reaches a minimum in June of 37mm. From July onwards the average monthly rainfalls again increase until October. The yearly average is 625 mm. Abell (1991) mapped the average rainfall of the Ridge as between 700 and 750 mm per year. (to be continued).  
*Note: the whole draft can be read on our web site ☼*

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Web site URL: <http://coolemanridge.inventivedingo.com>

### **Burn-off update, Tuesday**

Monday's burn was carried out on the north-east side of the Ridge from Cooleman Trig, north past the Grazing Area, through GAN and to the edge of Reet's Area. More burning took place on Tuesday morning, further to the south.

Our Group was not advised of the events, let alone consulted. ☼

### **Danceplant**

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September: get together with friends to green up the Cotter and enjoy an evening of entertainment by local DJ's.

*Where:* Cotter bend on Cotter Road

*Time:* 1.30 to midnight

RSVP essential. Phone: 6296 6400

E-mail: [info@sactcg.org](mailto:info@sactcg.org) ☼

### **Natural Resource Management Plan**

The electronic searchable version of the ACT NRM Plan is now on the INCP website. The link below should get you to the INCP home page, on the list on the left of the page is a link to NRM Plan, etc.

<http://incp.environment.act.gov.au/>

from John Foster

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### **Tjanpi family go to Canberra**

Four Alice Springs-based fibre artists have just sent life-size grass (tjanpi) sculptures of two women and two children to Canberra to teach the nation about seed collecting in Central Australia.

They are to be centrepieces of the National Museum of Australia's new "Bush Harvest" exhibit opening in September, and reflect on the growing interest in Australian bush foods.

From: *Land Rights News*. ☼