



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter May

2010

Previous Sunday meeting April 18th

With Canberra at its superb best, the working temperature was just right and the view was there to be admired during pauses.

Good rain this year has encouraged a lot of regrowth so our task was to make the final section of the Kathner Street Nature Trail easier to find and to follow, emphasising the start and finish. Doug took to the verges with a whipper snipper while others improved the surface of the actual foot track by chopping out grass tussocks and relocating problem stones. Arminel prowled for evidence of erosion in the gully and took remedial steps. Local native grass seed provided by Sally was scattered on bare patches of ground.

Vehicles go to great lengths to bypass the steep eroded pitch of the Yellow Brick Road up from Kathner Street, causing even more erosion in the process. CNP positioned 4 huge boulders to discourage the practice. Now there are deep wheel ruts even further to the side.

New member Ingrid threw herself into the project and will be most welcome back in spring. Home grown, home dried and home baked afternoon tea down by the road allowed for relaxed intermingling. ✨

Future programme

Next meeting, Sunday May 16th

- GAN/Chauvel for clearing exotic growth. Plant ID
- 1.30 to 4.00 pm
- meet at the Kathner St entrance, or at GAN/Chauvel bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack ✨

Wayfarers

It was an ordinary Friday morning till it started *sounding* curiously different... Worth looking up, in fact.

Grab the camera and dash over Fencepost Hill to alert Jenny and Linda.

We chatted to a couple returning to their property in Gympie, Queensland, after 9 months on the Bicentenary Equestrian Trail down through NSW, ACT and Victoria. Maybe another 3 months will find them home again.

"Why are you doing it?" Jenny asked.

"Why are you Landcarers?" was the response. ✨

Ajay and the ants (cont)

Arminel's account began in the April newsletter.

"We looked at four ant nests –

1. Meat Ants.

These are generalist daytime scavengers, collecting any kind of meat or insect or scraps. Their gravelly, water-repellent nests have a lifespan of more than 10-15 years and may have several thousands of ants in them. Workers are all of one size. On the foraging highways leading out from their nest, we saw the overnight shelters thoughtfully provided for laden stragglers who fail to get home before nightfall. Meat Ants prefer the bush to the backyard, because there's a good range of food supplies available."

More next month

Ajay Narendra is part of the research team studying navigation strategies in Jack Jumpers (*Myrmecia croslandi*) in Hackett. ✨

20th

Soon we'll be meeting Sally to discuss our 20th birthday. The year will be 2011, and the month April.

Make a note of it now and plan your overseas trips with it in mind.

We will be welcoming a very special guest of honour. ✨



What's around

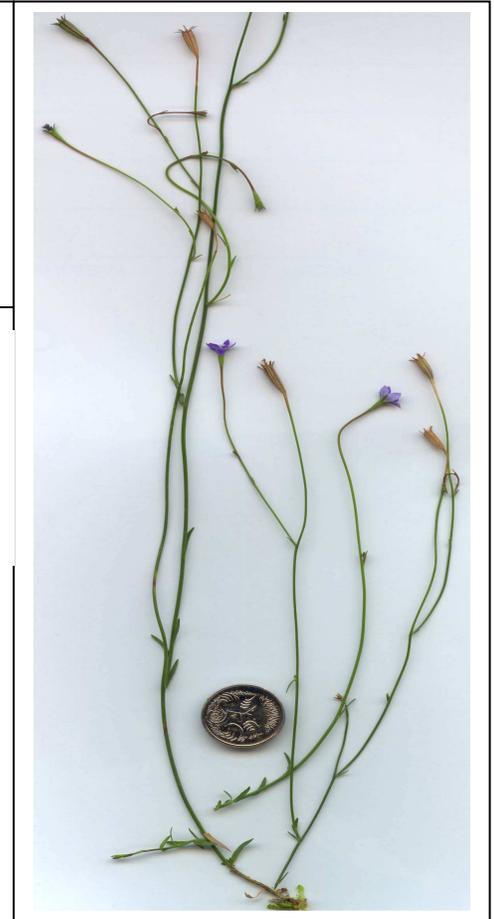
Family: CAMPANULACEAE *campanula* L. bell-shaped part



Wahlenbergia gracilis
Sprawling Bluebell
Perennial tufted herb, 5-80
cm high
Named for Swedish botanist
and professor of medicine
Göran Wahlenberg (1780-
1851)
gracilis L: slender

What a wonderful season it is for
Native Bluebells!

Wahlenbergia communis
Tufted Bluebell
Perennial tufted native herb
to 75 cm high
Named for Swedish botanist
and professor of medicine
Göran Wahlenberg (1780-
1851)
communis: gregarious



Conservation Council: Member Forum on Canberra Nature Park 15/4/10

With John Hibberd as MC, there were talks by Maxine Cooper, Sarah Sharp and Steve Welch. Below are a few relevant points rather than a full report from the meeting.

- Maxine mentioned a tree survey; I doubt that our survey is known to them; we have sent her a short description of it to check whether it can be incorporated. (As of 5th May: no response.)
- Sarah described the assessment of a number of sites to study the effects of grazing by cattle and kangaroo, looking at soil features and measuring the following attributes: stability, nutrients and infiltration. She studies what proportions of the reserves are highly functional, functional or dysfunctional.
- To my question about studies of current grazing activity in Canberra Nature Park, Sarah was non-committal.
- Steve Welch announced the African Lovegrass workshop 22nd May at Namadgi Visitor Centre. RSVP Steve: 6296 6400, or info@sactag.org.au
- Steve advised against having a "My Reserve" website similar to the "My School" website with league tables and classification of reserves. (cont)

- The management plan new edition never happened because of inadequate resources.
- Valuation of Parkcare activities has been attempted. At \$15/hour the efforts are worth \$70,000 per year. However, there are other values which cannot be measured in dollars.
- Parkcare should be considered an integral part of Canberra Nature Park.
- Pressures on reserves are mainly from urban development.
- Maxine says that we should not have 33 management plans for all reserves but one overarching plan and then individual operational plans for 2-3 years.
- There is a group made up of various recreational users of reserves; this is run at Stromlo depot by Odele and meets every 3 month.

Gösta Lyngå, 17/4/10 ☼

Lower Molonglo Corridor – Walk and Talk

16th May, morning: PCL ranger-guided walk, where an entirely new urban development is planned upstream.

Bookings essential. Contact Molonglo Catchment Coordinator, Andy Westcott coordinator@molonglocatchment.com.au 6299 2119. ☼