



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter October
2010

Previous Sunday meeting September 19th

We turned out in force to enjoy the spring afternoon at GAN/Group Area North.

Hypochaeris radicata and various *Trifolium* species had been taking advantage of the wet spring weather so we reduced their numbers while noting that previously blitzed *Chondrilla juncea* thickets are gone.

We took a close look at the grand old *Eucalyptus nortonii* (Tree No.404, or No. 2/283 of our own tree survey, at the track junction up from Chauvel Circle). It is slated for removal during drainage works. Its girth (4.67m) and height (15.6m) make it one of the largest trees we have measured on the Ridge to date. Two Maned Wood Ducks have been observed perching on its branches. ☼

Future programme

Next meeting, Sunday October 17th

AGM

at Kathner Street Nature Trail, followed by weeding and plant ID

- 1.30-4 pm
- meet at the end of Kathner Street
- bring hat, gloves, hacker, drink, snack, raincoat if it is wet.

All office positions are open for nomination. Please discuss your interest with the president:

Arminel phone 6231 7392, email ryan@pcug.org.au ☼

Vegetation monitoring training workshops

The *Vegetation Monitoring Manual, A Step-by-Step Guide to Monitoring Native Vegetation in the ACT* (Sarah Sharp and Lori Gould, 2010) has been developed to provide a consistent approach to monitoring and surveying vegetation, habitat and environmental condition.

Workshops will be held in October and November. email Sarah on sarahsharp@grapevine.net.au for details. ☼

Family Poaceae

The 11 families featured in the family recognition web site <http://www.csu.edu.au/herbarium/> (developed by Geoff Burrows, Senior Lecturer at Charles Sturt University) cover about 50% of the native plant species of Australia, with Poaceae, Fabaceae, Asteraceae, Lamiaceae and Brassicaceae covering a large percentage of the introduced species as well.

Poaceae (the grasses) is the 4th largest family world wide with 668 genera and 10 025 species. On Cooleman Ridge it is the largest family with 45 genera. Of the 76 species recorded more than half (39) are exotic.

Characteristics as listed by Geoff Burrows follow:

1) Plants herbaceous. 2) Stems circular in cross section. 3) Leaves with open sheath (wrapped around the stem) and a ligule at the junction of the leaf sheath and blade. 4) Flowers are small and do not possess colourful bracts, sepals or petals. 5) At the base of each spikelet is a pair of glumes. 6) Distal to the glumes are one to several florets, each floret is composed of a lemma and a palea (between the lemma and palea will be the male and/or female reproductive organs, if present). ☼

Cactus

Opuntia stricta Prickly Pear is escaping from a garden in Lincoln Close – recently five plants weighing a total of 24 kg were removed from the adjacent slope of Mt Arawang. ☼

Waterwatch

Martin Lind, Waterwatch Coordinator of the Southern ACT Catchment Group, has instructed Erika and Arminel in water quality monitoring at the Kathner St dam.

Martin has given them a monitoring kit and will return for a follow-up session on Friday 22 October. ☼

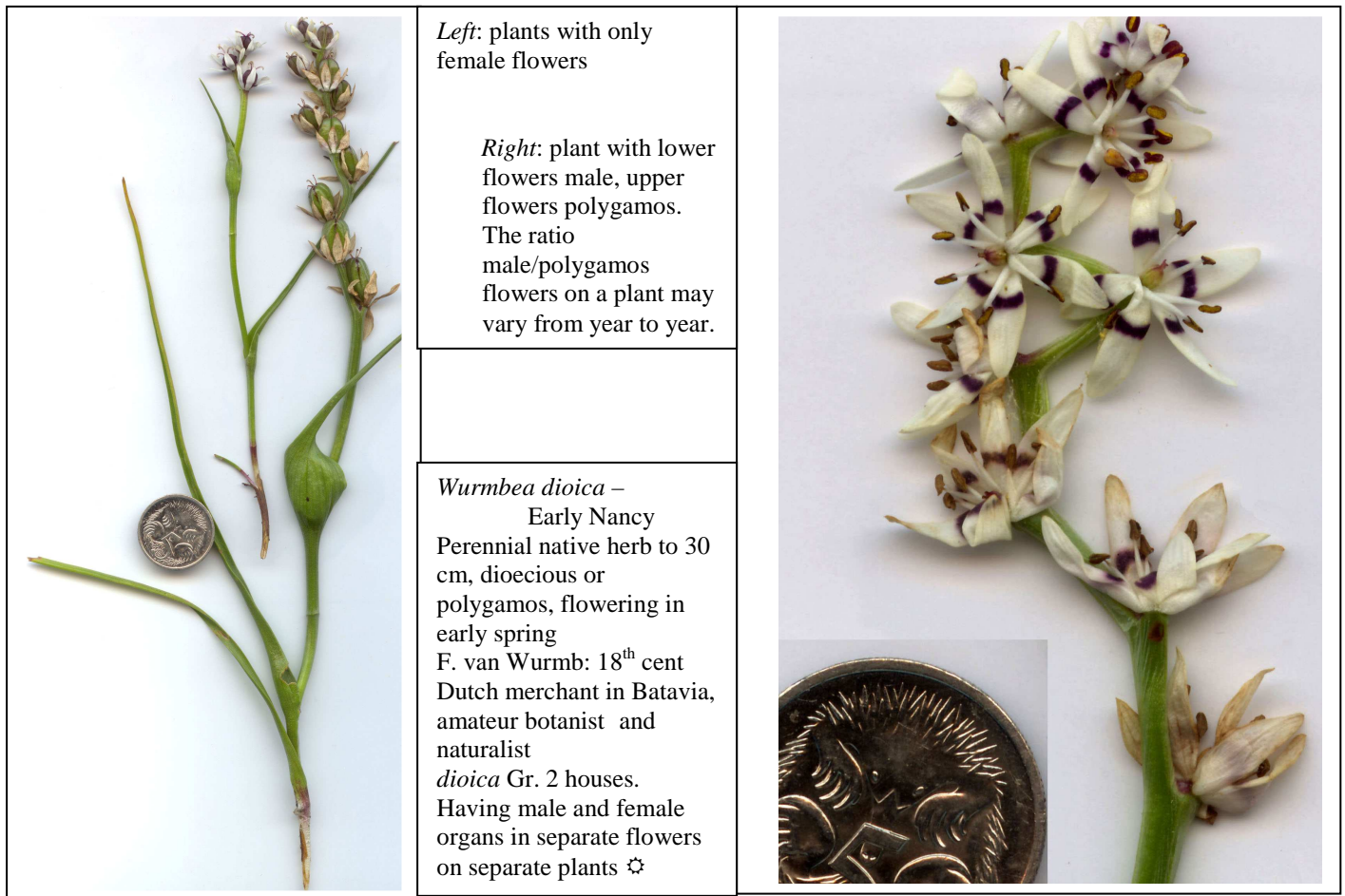
Conservation value

Note from Sally Macintosh in reply to Arminel's query:
Most of the reserves have a mix of high value areas i.e. remnant woodland or native grasslands etc as well as areas that are of low to no conservation value e.g.. phalaris patches. However due to the invasive nature of most weeds it would not be effective to class half a reserve as high value and the other half as low value.

Thus, all the nature reserves fall into the high conservation value category. ☼

What's around

Family: COLCHICACEAE: plants contain tropolonic alkaloids including colchicine, used to control acute attacks of gout



Brushcutters

Brushcutters are now approved and available for loan – Please note, only ACT Government issued brushcutters are approved for use in reserves. Brushcutters can be collected from Stromlo depot (500 Cotter Road Weston Creek).

All volunteers who will be using brushcutters will be required to read and sign off on the related risk assessment when collecting brushcutters.

Please provide notification of intention to borrow brushcutters one week prior to intended day of collection.

Sally McIntosh - Sally.McIntosh@act.gov.au ☼

World of Tidbinbilla book launch

You are invited to the launch of the book

"The World of Tidbinbilla: Where to go...What to do... How to find... and the People of Tidbinbilla"

on Saturday 9th October, at 11 am, at Floriade in the Corporate Marquee on the lawns of Stage 88.

Simon Corbell is to launch this user-friendly guide to the natural and cultural worlds of Tidbinbilla & Birrigai. ☼

Pauline Lyngå, 6288 7009, paulyn@iinet.net.au October 2010

Snakes by law

Snakes are protected by law (Nature Conservation Act1980) in all states and territories of Australia and may not be killed unless they threaten life. Offences under the Act carry severe penalties.

Snake species in the ACT

Eight species are known to inhabit the ACT. The Eastern Brown Snake is the most frequently seen in suburban gardens. The Red-Bellied Black Snake, the Tiger Snake and the Black-headed Snake are seen only occasionally.

In the ACT, the Eastern Brown Snake varies from brown to grey and can even be blackish, dark brown or orange. Young snakes may be entirely brown or may have a black patch on their head and a black band on their neck. Black bands across the body may or may not be present.

For more information: contact the Conservation and Land Management rangers for detailed advice about snakes.

Phone (02) 6207 2087 (Southside), (02) 6207 2113 (Northside) or Canberra Connect on 13 22 81

Visit the Environment ACT Website at www.environment.act.gov.au ☼

Web site URL: www.coolemanridge.org