



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
December 2016

Previous meeting

Sunday 20th November
Group Area Central: Darrell Place

A small and enthusiastic group attacked the weeds on a sunny Sunday morning. Rohan went off to manage all the variety of weeds around the Group Area Central (GAC) rock, while Lena and Linda cut-and-dabbed the blackberry patch which was wriggling its way through the grass and verbasicum. Doug said that this patch had been dealt with quite often over the years, but it still retained some vigour! We also made time to inspect the lovely spot south of GAC where bulbines, xerochrysum and (until recently) stackhousia were flowering. We also noticed with pleasure that the St John's Wort had a lot of beetles on them, which we gather are the specific beetles for ecological control. Graham and Rob worked near the Sentrybox, attacking (and being attacked by) the huge blackberry outcrop which had been sprayed last Autumn, but still has active shoots.

Linda Spinaze

Annual General Meeting

After a couple of hours weeding, eight of the Group gathered at the end of Darrell Place for the AGM. The Group's office-bearers for 2017 who were elected unopposed are:

President: Linda Spinaze
Vice President: Doug Tinney
Treasurer: Rohan Thomas
Secretary: Rob Lundie
Committee: Lena Fleming, Alan Ford, Jenny Horsfield and Arminel Ryan

Next Meeting

Sunday 18th December
Lincoln Place

Time: 8.30 am – 11 am

Meet: End of Lincoln Place

Bring: hat, gloves, secateurs, doover-dab, hacker, drink, raincoat if it is wet

Task: plant identification, weeding

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

The minutes were sent out last month but are available from Rob if you want a copy. Some of the issues discussed were: The **Brochure for the Nature Trail** is close to a final draft but the brochure for the Chapman School still needs to be rewritten and printed. The future and value of our Group's involvement with the **SACTG** was discussed. The meeting decided to add another weeding area to the ones already managed by the Group. The area above **Lincoln Place** was the chosen site and will be where we will meet for this month's weeding party. Linda mentioned that there were many **geographical features** on the Ridge that did not have specific, agreed-upon names and that this could cause confusion for people using and working on the Ridge. It was agreed to ask people to nominate features on the Ridge for which it would be useful to have an identifiable name. Send your feature and a suggested name if you have one to Linda@xamax.com.au. **Paterson's Curse** has begun to sprout again but it is felt that it is under control and does not require the Group's specific attention.

Stalwart steps down

Gosta Lynga, founding member of the Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group and long-time member of the Group's committee chose to relinquish his position at last month's AGM. Gosta will still attend his patch on Fence Post Hill and join our monthly sessions when not trekking in Nepal, langlaufing in Sweden or simply being in Sydney with his family. The committee is grateful for all the work Gosta has put in over the years, particularly the effort in making the Nature Trail at the north end of the Ridge a reality.

Doug Tinney

Parkcare and Landcare Christmas Party

All volunteers are invited to join with rangers and other staff to help celebrate another year of a successful partnership. There'll be a trivia quiz so bring thinking caps. I look forward to seeing you there.

When: Tuesday 20 December

Time: 5.30 pm to 8.00 pm

Where: Jerrabomberra Wetlands Offices 2

Dairy Flat Road Kingston

RSVP: by 14 December, as food and drink are provided, to Philip Selmes:

communityprograms@act.gov.au

Philip Selmes

ParkCare and Volunteer Coordinator

Woody Weeds and Small Woodland Birds

Graham and Linda met with the rangers (Liam and Kristy) to discuss the dilemma of leaving some woody weeds for shelter and nesting of small woodland birds. Apparently the carers of Red Hill have enthusiastically reduced the exotic low-shrub layer over the past few years, and they now notice that there are fewer small birds. Of course, this may be due to other reasons (like more currawongs!) but nevertheless, we need to make sure that there is enough cover to encourage these small birds to nest on Cooleman Ridge, without compromising our weeding program which aims to cut the number of woody weeds, and reduce their seeding potential. A decision was made that each park-carer would assess the situation before cutting/spraying woody weeds. If there is appropriate nearby

shelter from native vegetation, then the woody weeds of any size can be cut. If the woody weeds are less than 1.5m tall, then they are probably not big enough for bird shelter, and so they can also be cut even if there is no nearby native shrubby vegetation. And everyone should inspect the plant before chopping to make sure there is no nest. Some nests can look like a clump of grass stuck in the fork, so care is necessary. Kristy and Liam will review Cooleman's vegetation cover, and plan some appropriate management that will provide alternative "bird-shelter-islands" of native vegetation.

Linda Spinaze

Vegwatch Patch Monitoring

Arminal and Linda met with Sarah Sharp (the Vegwatch monitoring guru) in November, and together monitored the Vegwatch patch near Group Area South. There has been some changes in the method of monitoring, and Sarah was able to guide us in the right direction. While we were there we admired the huge number of bulbine lilies which were finishing, and the xerochrysum which were just starting to flower. In December, Arminal and Linda met again, this time to monitor the other Vegwatch patch, on Arawang, near GAS. It was hard to find the survey markers in the thick grass and native raspberry. There seemed to be some changes in the vegetation, presumably due to the low-intensity burn which occurred last autumn.

Linda Spinaze

CVA Team

Linda met with a keen CVA team in late November. There were 5 team members, and Linda made 6, and all keen to attack the briar roses and other woody weeds on the western side of Sentrybox Hill. It was a beautiful day, not hot and not cold and not windy. Apart from the small but prolific briar roses, there were a couple of small, low blackberry bushes that would have been difficult for the professional sprayers to reach, and so they were dispatched to blackberry heaven by cut-and-dab.

Linda Spinaze

Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year