



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
April 2017

Previous meeting
Sunday 19th March
Group Area Central

A terrific turnout (11) on a mild Autumn afternoon. Malcolm destroyed 100 baby cootamundra wattles. Alan and Gosta worked on taking verbascum and conyza heads off, and removing their roots. Linda re-attacked the blackberry which is close to the Reservoir path. She and Lena had cut-and-dabbed this plant five months ago, but there were quite a few re-emergent shoots. Verbascum rosettes were dabbed with glyphosate, and the seed heads carefully bagged and removed.

Jenny, Doug and Rohan roamed over the area, destroying wild sage, verbascum, African Love Grass, conyza etc, bagging seed heads.

Graham and Rob headed toward Sentry-box Hill, dealing with some briar roses on the way and bagging the rose hips. On arriving at the blackberry patch, it was very pleasing to note that Graham's earlier work had born fruit (or rather not) and there were just a few shoots that had re-emerged. These were dealt with together with some verbascum rosettes.

Arminel and Pat walked halfway around the reservoir, cutting and dabbing 33 small briar roses (*Rosa rubiginosa*) nearby. They also collected a bag of rubbish and removed the rosehips. There are still plenty of thriving briars and ripening hips on the second side.

It was good to meet our new ranger, Richard Barnsley.

Next Meeting
Sunday 23rd April
Lincoln Place

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm

Meet: Darrell Place

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

Task: plant identification, weeding

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

Not all members can make the working parties. Some do their weeding throughout the week, such as Roger who recently de-headed and bagged the huge patch of conyza which had sprung up in the sprayed blackberry patch above Guinness Place.

Rob Lundie

Wasps

We are currently experiencing a very dangerous European Wasp season in the ACT. The wasps are prolific along creeks, rivers and other water bodies. They are entering the breeding season and will not hesitate to attack if a nest is disturbed. If stung, apply a cold pack to reduce the swelling. Stings to the face or neck or multiple stings may lead to severe swelling or an allergic reaction. If this occurs and the person has difficulty breathing call an ambulance "000". If in doubt, seek immediate medical advice. For identification, advice and nest reporting, contact The European Wasp Hotline 6258 5551.

Anniversary seat

Our new Ranger, Richard Barnsley, and I will meet soon to discuss the exact placement of the 25th Anniversary seat. Once we agree, then I believe it will soon be installed.

Linda Spinaze

Butterflies

Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Australian Capital Territory by Suzi Bond with Steve Holliday and John Stein 229 pages. RRP \$30

The size of the ACT (0.03% of Australia's land area) belies its biological significance; the 87 butterfly species recorded here so far represent 20% of the Australian total, and for temperate Australia the proportion would be much higher. Each of those 87 species is treated comprehensively in a two-page spread. As one would expect in a modern field guide, for each species we are offered information on behaviour (including how it flies), a description targeted to its salient characters, similar species, local distribution, preferred habitat and food plants and life cycle details, all served up cleared and succinctly. The facing page offers typically 5-10 photos, of the butterfly from top and bottom, male and female if appropriate, eggs, larva and pupa where possible, plus a map with not only record locations but 'inferred habitat' – i.e. an analysis of known requirements of the species against habitat types, nuanced into 'core', 'intermediate' and 'marginal'.

Alan Ford

Blackberries

I recently ran into the blackberry sprayers as I walked on the Ridge early one morning. They were planning to attack the blackberries on the eastern side of Mt Arawang, as well as any infestations along the Ridge. I pointed out to them that it will be very hard to avoid collateral damage to our native raspberry in many areas since it inter-twines with the blackberry.

Linda Spinaze

Happy Easter

Green Army

Liz Collier and her team of 5 young helpers finalised the removal of woody weeds on the western and southern sides of One-tree Hill, near Chauvel Circle. We de-hipped most of the briars, but ran out of time to remove all of the bright red berries. One of the team asked me which is preferable - removing all the targetted bushes, or removing the hips from fewer bushes. I'm not sure which is best, but if we remove the plant, we have at least prevented the formation of next years' berries!

We have another Green Team booked for Tuesday 9th May. This will be the Aboriginal Team which was mentioned in the Canberra Times recently. I plan to work above Guinness Place, on verbascum, fleabane and remnant woody weeds.



The Green Army

Photo by Linda Spinaze

While we were on the hill, I noticed the *Acacia melanoxylon* was in full flower. This is very early. It usually flowers in late winter/spring. I have since noticed several more on the Ridge, so the recent hot weather, then cold rains, must have tricked them!



Acacia Melanoxylon

Photo by Linda Spinaze

Linda Spinaze