



# COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter September  
2017

## *Work party 20 August 2017.*

Unlike the previous few days, the weather for our work party was relatively warm, and there was no icy wind. So, working on the Ridge was very pleasant indeed. A few of our members were away on holidays, so it was fabulous to have nine enthusiastic members meeting at Darrell Place - Arminel, Alan, Malcolm, Rohan, Brigitte, Chris, Lena, Gosta and Linda. We noted that the Verbascum is much less evident in this area, and generally the area has fewer weeds due to many years of persistent effort.

This time we targeted the remnant Verbascum in the immediate area, the African Love Grass nearer to the Cut-drain Path, the wild sage, some tiny blackberry seedlings, small Cootamundra wattles, and Phalaris. There is quite a lot of St John's Wort (SJW), and already seeded, so a few of us dug up the plants, but it's a never-ending job. The SJW is quite close to a lovely patch of Cryptandra, flowering beautifully at the moment. We are concerned that the SJW will over-run this patch. If anyone knows the best way to reduce this persistent weed, we would be more than happy to hear from you.

*Linda*

## *Brown Treecreeper Sighting?*

White-throated Treecreepers are familiar birds from our bushwalking years. The Brown one is rarer. Pat reports seeing this bird on a morning walk on Tuesday 22 August. It was in the scrub beside the ridge trail between Arawang saddle and summit. Any confirmation? Please tell us!

## **Next Meeting** **Sunday 17 September** **Lincoln Place, Chapman**

**Time:** 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm

**Meet:** Green Footbridge over cut-off drain  
Lincoln Place

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

**Task:** plant identification, weeding

**Contact:** Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

## *Waterwatcher snaps Wallaroo from Old Dam Fire Trail*



Pat Ryan had his camera and telephoto lens at hand on Friday 25 August as he went to and from the Old Dam to collect monthly samples and data. This large shaggy chap (with what we presume to be one of his retinue of petite females) kept a wary eye on Pat as he walked.

### *Waterwatchers check out fish*

Volunteering allows us some pretty special privileges. The Murray Darling Basin Native Fish Forum was held at the Canberra Convention Centre over 23 and 24 August, and we were there. So were some amazing scientists, passionate citizens, and devoted administrators. There were excellent presentations and first-rate organisation - not to mention fun and food. Abstracts of all papers were provided in the lightest form possible - on a memory stick!

If you wonder why we would be interested in such a forum, it's because all the run-off from our Ridge ends up in the Murrumbidgee. We want to know what's happening all the way down to the Coorong, and all the way up the other rivers and tributaries of the Murray and Darling. In other words, we may act locally but we look to the far horizons!

Three factoids about native fish may whet your appetite for more information:-

1. Our two small dams on Cooleman Ridge are a minute part of an intricate net of white-feller obstacles to waterway connectivity (dams, weirs, road crossings etc) which NSW Fisheries has now mapped.
2. It is now possible to determine where a fish was spawned and what journeys it took up and down the rivers, creeks and wetlands of the Basin. The stats were staggering!
3. Small fish, eggs and larvae are sucked out of the waterways in vast numbers to die in irrigation channels and on farmland, because there is no mesh at the intake pipes. In other countries (eg USA) this is standard equipment.

The reports presented are likely to be crucial to protecting endangered species and prioritising remediation.

*Arminel & Pat*

<p><i>CRPCG Annual General Meeting</i> Sunday 15 October 1.30 pm Kathner Street</p>
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### *Business with our Rangers*

Linda met with our Ranger, Richard Barnsley, on 26 August to progress a number of matters. She hopes to have more to report soon about the dense eucalyptus regeneration near Kathner St dam, as well as blackberry mapping, and our Nature Trail leaflet.

### *Reflections*

Our eldest son and his family were visiting us from England last month. Among other things we shared with them, was our large scrapbook commemorating the fires of 2003, with many memorable photos, stories and articles included. This prompted me later to go back to the book published by Ginninderra Press, 'How did the fire know we lived here?' I found myself up late one night re-reading the whole book! It brought back many vivid memories of that time, but it also made me aware, once again, of what a precious resource we have in our Cooleman Ridge. We have watched over the last 14 years as it has slowly recovered from the destruction that overwhelmed it and the people who lived nearby. Now when we set out on workparties or on a casual walk in this new spring, we are conscious of how resilient the natural world can be: trees have recovered, there are hillsides of vigorous native grasses, and soon we will see our beloved Bulbine Lilies and flowering heaths put on their yearly display.

Makes the monthly workparties all worth while doesn't it, as we do our bit to help in the ongoing recovery of the area.

*Jenny Horsfield*

### *Cooleman Ridge on ABC TV*

On Tuesday 29 August, our Ridge was the location for the daily Viewer's Photo which follows the 7 pm Canberra news bulletin. A lovely shot, showing the photographer's dog enjoying the sunshine.