



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter November
2018

Previous meeting Sunday 21 October – Darrell Place GAC

There were six of us at Group Area Central in bright sunshine - Arminel, Malcolm, Rohan, Alan and two very welcome visitors, Blaine and Karl.

Malcolm went on a survey (see article elsewhere in this newsletter).

Conditions were ideal for weeding as there had been a little recent rain. The Bulbine Lilies were flowering and so were the clumps of feral Grevillea. These we are watching warily.

The remaining five of us ranged over the hillside and worked mainly on our familiar foes Wild Sage **Salvia verbeneca*, Phalaris **P. aquatica*, African Love Grass (ALG) **Eragrostis curvula*, and Flatweed **Hypochaeris radicata*. The ALG is spreading. Alan removed some feral plum (**Prunus sp.*) seedlings and we uprooted a few new Cootmundra wattles *Acacia baileyana*.

One delightful sight was the *Convolvulus C. angustissimus* around - a pleasant pink-flowered surprise among the weeds.

Kathner Street Chough Nursery

Our colony of choughs is again raising nestlings in the large eucalypt south of the dam. This has been a successful breeding site for them for some years now. Their mud nest, reused each year, is easily visible.

Eastern Long-necked Turtles

Also breeding this season, these shell-backs have been reported by several observers.

Next Meeting
Sunday 18 November
Above Lincoln Place

Time: 8.30 - 10.30 am (Daylight Saving Time)

Meet: Lincoln Place

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

Tasks: plant identification, weeding

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **Sunday 18 November**

Time:- 10.30 am Daylight Saving Time

Place :- Lincoln Place

Purpose: - to receive the reports of the previous year and conduct elections for all committee positions.

Nominations and Apologies to The Secretary, Coleman Ridge Park Care Group Inc, at lundier@inet.net.au.

Beware! Snakes about

Walkers and workers are reminded to keep their eyes peeled for our many slithering residents. Being solar-powered, they're emerging to bask in the warming sun. Then they're ready to get busy hunting. Please treat them with respect - they belong here and are important to the ecosystem.

What's around – Malcolm's notes & photos

In the **area burned by prescription** early this year there were quite a few species flowering. Noticeably prominent in its flowering, compared with 'unburnt' areas, was the weed Paterson's Curse (*Echium plantagineum*) – below.



Also prominent on the western edge was the introduced pasture grass, Wild Oats (*Avena sativa*), with its whitish-green flowers waving in the wind – above left.

The most obvious native species flowering was the local bluebell, *Wahlenbergia* - above right.

Golf balls on the Ridge

Our October work party was held in the reserve above and to the left of the upper end of Darrell Place. It is wonderful there when the abundant *Bulbine* lilies are in flower. In October this year, there were some *Bulbine* flowering stalks but relatively few compared with other years it seemed – perhaps as a result of the dry conditions we have had since early March.

Working there on this occasion we stumbled across two golf balls. It seemed reasonable to think that they were there because someone had lost them while practising nearby.

However, it is a very rocky place and an unlikely choice of location for golf practice. A more likely answer to the question of their presence was that they were carried there by large birds.

The Australian Raven (*Corvus coronoides*) is a prime suspect for this as photos of individuals with a golf ball in their beaks are easily found (see: *Birds of Australia* at <https://www.mdahlem.net/birds/23/ausraven.php>).

Further evidence is that: “*Golfers often*

scratch their heads as golf balls disappear right under their noses, stolen by ravens.

They collect the balls thinking they are eggs and then drop them from a roof, hoping to smash them open to eat” (see: *Backyard Buddies* at

<http://www.backyardbuddies.org.au/backyard-buddies/crows-and-ravens>).

What seems likely in this case, though, is that the balls – mistaken as eggs - were carried to our work-site by these large birds to drop them on the rocks from above and so break them open and enjoy the contents.

But where would the golf balls have originated? In this case the nearest golf course is several kilometres away at Murrumbidgee Country Club. Ironically, yet perhaps appropriately, one of the golf balls, a yellow one, had a message printed on its surface, namely: “Stolen from Murrumbidgee Country Club”! Does this indicate that the golf ball was carried all that way by birds hoping to get a treat on arrival?

Malcolm Gill