



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
March 2022

Previous Meeting
Sunday 20 February 2022
Lincoln Place for Mt Arawang

Summer continued its pleasant weather as 10 of us (Linda Spinaze, Chris Oates, Natasha Oates, Rohan Thomas, Paul Shiels, Helen Govey, Rob Lundie, Alex Newman, Doug Tinney and Ingrid Rehle-Williams) tramped up to the top of Mt Arawang only to be met with a sea of *Verbascum* in the area we had cleared not so long ago. However, disappointment quickly turned to determination as we set about cutting off and bagging the still-viable seed heads from the mostly dead plants. We then cut off the stalks low to the ground and dabbed them with glyphosate where necessary. A few hours later we carted 18 bags back down the track, satisfied with a solid morning's work.



Rohan Natasha Paul Chris Ingrid Doug Helen with some of the bags of *Verbascum* *Phot: Rob Lundie*

Meanwhile, Alan had been working away at Darrell Pl attacking *St Johns Wort*.

Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie lundier@inet.net.au

Next Meeting
Sunday 20 March 2022
Chauvel Circle

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm **NB NEW TIME**

Meet: Chauvel Circle.

Bring: hat, gloves, digger, water to drink.

Task: weeding.

Contact: Linda Spinaze 6288 6916

April meeting: Sun 10, Old Dam.

Butterflies on the Ridge

Have you been enjoying all the butterflies on the Ridge this season? Well, there are brown ones and white ones and little ones, but what are they? Just so we can identify a butterfly from a moth – butterflies close their wings up over their backs, displaying some beautiful patterns on their undersides, whereas most moths either leave their wings flat or fold them so only the upper side shows.

This year the only white butterflies I've seen are the ubiquitous Cabbage White Butterfly, which is sometimes incorrectly called the Cabbage Moth. Two seasons ago there were other white butterflies as well that had black all along the edge of their wings. These were Caper White butterflies.

Now, what are all these brown/orange butterflies that have been so prolific this year? Before Christmas there were a lot of them at the top of the Ridge. The orange/brown ones are male Common Browns, which like to 'hilltop' to show off.

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Photo: Canberra Nature Map

The females are actually different from the males. They have more black on their wings, and also gather together at a lower level, often closer to vegetation. This season has given us a wonderful look at these beautiful butterflies. However, their time on the Ridge has almost come to an end.

The brown butterflies we see now are Meadow Argus. They are common for most of the year. Unusually, they like to perch on a path with their wings open to show off their colourings to attract a mate. The pattern on their underwings is more a camouflage than a display. Both male and female look similar.



Meadow Argus Photo: Canb. Nature Map

Also, while you are looking down at where you are walking you have probably noticed the little Common Grass-blues, which hardly ever stop moving!



Common Grass-blue Photo: Wendy Hahn

There is another common little butterfly called a Chequered Copper which is dark brown with orange spots on its forewings.



Chequered Copper Photo: Wendy Hahn

If you see a colourful moth flying low to the ground during the day, it is the Pasture Day Moth. I haven't seen any yet this year, but they were abundant last year. They pupate in the ground from the black caterpillars that wander across the tracks, and the moths emerge around this time of year.

If you are interested in learning more about butterflies and moths Canberra Nature Map is a great resource.

Wendy Hahn



Australasian Grebes on Old Dam Photo: Allan Hahn

Cattle update

On a recent walk around Narrabundah Hill I came across the Angus cows that earlier this year were on the Ridge. The farmer indicated that all but two were pregnant, the others having aborted either naturally or because they had been disturbed. The bull, having done his duty, had been sent to another herd.

Rob Lundie