



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

**Newsletter
August 2022**

***Previous Meeting
Sunday 17 July 2022
Lincoln Place***

A cloudy winter's afternoon that threatened, but did not produce, rain, greeted four of us (Chris Oates, Paul Sheils, Doug Tinney and Rob Lundie) for the monthly weeding. We tackled *Verbascum*, fleabane and St John's Wort on the saddle above Lincoln Place. Several years ago we had cleaned up this area so it was a bit disappointing to see the weeds back again thanks to the rain and warm conditions over the past year. Although we took off some seed heads, most attention was devoted to the sprouting *Verbascum* rosettes. We noticed that branches had been spread across the slope and wondered if this had been done to discourage animals from grazing there. If so, it didn't appear to be working. This method had been used at the Old Dam when it was empty but beginning to refill and the grasses were re-emerging. During the afternoon, it was encouraging to be visited by our ranger, Jim, who also got stuck into the weeding. He will usually be on duty on the Ridge every second Sunday, so we should keep an eye out for him. He said he would be happy to arrange for the on-site collection of any bagged weeds.

Rob Lundie

Inquiry into Environmental Volunteerism in the A.C.T. (update)

As reported previously, the ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on

***Next Meeting
Sunday 21 August 2022
Chauvel Circle***

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm.

Meet: Chauvel Circle.

Bring: hat, gloves, water to drink.

Task: weeding.

Contact: Rob Lundie 0418291735

Sep meeting: Sun 18, The Old Dam.

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity is inquiring into environmental volunteerism in the ACT.

The Committee comprises MLAs: Dr Marisa Paterson, (Labor, Chair), Jo Clay (Greens, Deputy Chair) and Leanne Castley (Liberal). Along with around 30 other park care and conservation organisations and groups, the Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group made a submission to the inquiry describing its experiences in environmental volunteerism and putting forward some ideas to improve and support it.

Subsequently, three members of the Group (Helen Govey, Chris Oates and Paul Sheils) attended a public hearing of the inquiry on 19 July, along with representatives of the Red Hill Regenerators and the Hawker Land Care Group. It was one of a number of public hearings held by the Committee. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the Committee's questions focused on relations between volunteer groups and ACT agencies. There was a strong consensus in responses from the witnesses that emphasised:

- the need for better day to day channels of communication between volunteer groups and ACT agencies.
- difficulties with bureaucratic red tape for volunteer organisations with limited personnel resources.
- the need for all parties to better understand each other's views and interests and to work toward common objectives.

Specific points our Group representatives were able to make included:

- the need to target users of parks and nature areas as a potential source of volunteers.
- the ranger turnover and the need for rangers to work more closely with groups to help maintain continuity.
- the need for closer involvement of groups in operations involving third party contractors.

On a more practical issue, there was firm agreement among witnesses on the contribution that whipper-snippers and other appropriate power tools could make to improving volunteer effectiveness.

Chris Oates

Bicentennial National Trail and the Wombat

On 26 July signs went up warning:
**LARGE HOLE IN THE TRACK AHEAD
 PROCEED WITH CAUTION**

The hole in the fire trail is a collapsed wombat burrow. Repairs will be conducted once the soil dries out enough to bring machinery into the reserve without causing further damage.

On 4 August the Ridge received 88 mms of rain (the wettest 4 August in at least 36 years). So, it may be quite some time before the track can be repaired. But will the wombat begin reconstructing its burrow before then? In the meantime, please heed the signs as more rain is forecast and further collapses in the track are likely.

Rob Lundie

Whose Poo?

On the Ridge have you ever wondered which animal left behind which scat? Below is a guide to two that you may have come across.

Wombats



Wombat scats are around two centimetres wide and high, brown in colour and form almost a perfect cube. They are usually deposited in groups of four to eight. They can be confused with Eastern grey kangaroos who have scats of a similar size and colour but are slightly more rounded. Wombat scats are usually left on rocks, steps and other exposed places. This is apparently because they like to use the rocks to wipe their bums.

Kangaroos and wallabies



A good place to look for kangaroo scat is a wide grassy area, particularly if you've seen the roos there recently. Kangaroos have small, round, black poos and usually leave several in the same place. They are very similar to wallaby poos, but larger. Wallaby scats are also pointier and sometimes have fibres sticking out. They can be confused with other macropods. Looking inside a kangaroo poo, the black outer covering conceals a dry, yellowy grassy matrix inside. This is because marsupials have to get a lot of moisture out of their diet and so have dry, grassy poo.

Source: [What scat is that?](#) by Heather Catchpole. ABC Science, 26 September 2007.

Rob Lundie