



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
September 2023

Previous Meeting ***Sunday 20 August 2023*** ***The Old Dam***

Probably the loveliest Winter's afternoon of the year for eight of us (Linda Spinaze, Paul Sheils, Rob Lundie, Jenny Shapcott, Christian Piironen, Hamish McGlynn, Bethany Dunne and her daughter, Lina). We inspected the plantings we had done over the past year and were pleased to be able to judge that most were thriving. This enabled tree guards to be removed and a tidy up around each little tree, shrub and grass.



Rob drags the tree guards away Photo: Linda Spinaze
An impressive effort by everyone especially by Christian and Hamish who had already done a morning's weeding on Oakey Hill, and by Linda who defied health instructions not only to supervise but to work as well. It was good to have Bethany's knowledge and experience as a former ranger and Lina has

Next Meeting ***Sunday 17 September 2023*** ***The Anniversary Seat***

Time: 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm.

Meet: Darrell Place.

Bring: hat, gloves, water to drink.

Task: weeding.

Contact: Rob Lundie 0418291735

October meeting: Sun 15, Darrell Place

very kindly offered to take on the role of Tree Sign Weed Controller. Thanks to ranger Nina for removing the tree guards so promptly.

Rob Lundie

Fire Trail Maintenance

Over a few weeks in August, Parks engaged Guyer Earthworks to repair the fire trails on the Ridge that had been damaged by storms over recent years. Head of the company, Mark Guyer and his son-in-law, Michael Nelson-Guyer explained the process. The areas to be repaired are outlined on a map of the Ridge. Then, section by section the trail is graded, watered and rolled in such a way as to minimize future soil erosion and track degradation. With a background in the Soil Conservation Service they are particularly experienced and conscious of this. The trails may look wider but as company director, Michele Guyer, later explained, unless advised to do so, we don't actually widen the roads. We are only "reclaiming" the

overgrown road. We need to reclaim the soil that has been washed into the drain and grassed over so as to recreate the crown of the trail and to control the water flow. This is done to maintain the integrity and life of the road. Less experienced operators could spend a fortune carting in materials to sheet the road, without mixing the soil and fixing the problem. And then there is the risk of bringing in contaminants such as weeds. She assured me the grass would regrow, pointing out that if you look closely at the roads that are yet to be done, you will find the edge of the original road. If this grass is left untouched it will eventually narrow the road and create a concentration of erosion down its centre with water not being able to access the drains. Certainly the fire trails are much smoother and safer which is a relief especially for bike riders. Care is taken not to damage trees close to the trail and the wombat hole near the Old Dam was not damaged. However, Michele is concerned that the burrow is in a position where it will fill with water prior to reaching the culvert. With the prospect of a very hot summer and damaging bushfire season, it is comforting to know that Guyer Earthworks' primary role is 'rapid response to wildfires'. They can be found on the frontline of most fires clearing fire trails. Hopefully we won't see them on the Ridge.



Grading the BNT Photo: Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie

Ridge Moments

“Look at the view. I can see everything!” the exclamation of a young girl as she came over the Ridge and down towards the Anniversary Seat late one afternoon.

A man was seen walking along the Ridge sporting ear buds and reading a book.

**CRPCG AGM Sun 10 Sep 2pm
78 Sidaway St Chapman.**

Boobook Owl rescued



Southern Boobook Owl
Photo: Bethany Dunne

On the Canberra Ornithologists Group Coleman Ridge Walk, we came across the Southern Boobook Owl sitting next to the fire trail at the Old Dam. Most likely concussed from flying into the gate, it was not moving at all. I gently placed it away from the fire trail. After a little while it perked up a bit and flew away into the longer grass. When I returned in the afternoon to check, it could not be located, so hopefully it had flown back into the trees!

Bethany Dunne

Coming up



Mitch (and Mike) fill the water tank at the Old Dam
The annual bush fire mitigation grazing program is likely to begin with the introduction of cattle at the end of Sept/early Oct. Signs will go up and select gates will be closed/locked. So could everyone please keep gates as they find them and their pets on lead.

[Community Forum](#) to protect Bluett's Block and the Western Edge Investigation Area on Tues 3 Oct 6 – 7.30 pm at the Food Coop, 3 Kingsley St, Canberra. All welcome.

Helen Govey