



COOLEMAN RIDGE PARK CARE GROUP

Newsletter
January 2024

Previous Meeting **Sunday 17 December 2023** **Mt Arawang**

Fortunately our targeted weeding morning was delightfully warm and not too hot for a good morning's work. Six of us (Rohan Thomas, Helen Govey, Natasha Newman, Paul Sheils, Jenny Horsfield and Linda Spinaze) met at Lincoln Pl and walked up the slope towards Mt Arawang. We turned off to the south from the main track to the summit, and spent our time in a valley that we named Goat Gully - not because of any four-legged goats, but Natasha's climb up the side of the valley needed the skill and nimbleness of a goat. A large pyracantha suffered as a result of her climb. The valley had been sprayed for blackberry within the last few years, so we dispatched (cut-n-dabbed) the re-growth that was small enough for us to handle, leaving the large patches for future contractors.

Verbascum rosettes and immature spear thistles were dabbed with glyphosate or dug out, while we admired the fabulous views across to the Brindabellas. We returned to Lincoln Pl to enjoy mint tea and Christmas treats with Rob Lundie and Chris Oates who were then able to join us.

Linda Spinaze

Pink-tailed worm-lizard: a rare sighting

I had heard about the pink-tailed worm-lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*) but had never seen

Next Meeting **Sunday 21 January 2024** **Mt Arawang**

Time: 8.30 am – 11.00 am.

Meet: Lincoln Place.

Bring: hat, gloves, water to drink.

Task: weeding – attacking woody weeds

Contact: Linda Spinaze 62886916

Feb. meeting: Sun 17 Above Chauvel Circle

one and was beginning to wonder if it was still on the Ridge. So, imagine my delight when a friend and I came across one in the middle of the Bicentennial Nature Trail mid-afternoon on Monday 11 December. I thought it was a small snake but I soon saw its pinkish tail and reckoned it was a pink-tailed worm-lizard. It was lying across a bare part of the track about 100 metres north of the Darrell Place entrance and the farm dam. It became agitated when I approached, wriggly very quickly towards me and following me around as I moved out of its way. It then lay across the track allowing us to take photos. As we moved on, so did the lizard towards large rocks lying in grass alongside the track. I posted the sighting with photos on the Canberra Nature Map where its identification was confirmed. Comments on our sighting confirmed its rarity with surprise at it being out in the open on a rather warm day and that Will Osborne observed: "In all my years of working with this species (30 years) I have only ever seen them active above ground

twice.” Pink-tailed worm-lizards are legless, grow to about 25 cm (nearly half being its tail) and have a blunt, rounded snout. It can be distinguished from a juvenile snake by small hind-limb flaps. It lives underground in ant burrows under rocks where it feeds on ant eggs and invertebrates. It is officially listed as vulnerable. Further information can be found [here](#).



Pink-tailed worm-lizard

Photo: Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie

Hazard reduction burn-off

It was described as a perfect day for a hazard reduction burn-off on Monday 18 December. The area covered was the Ridge from its spine down to the fire trail above Chapman and from above Monkman St along to above Freebody Pl at the start of the Wombat Track. It included the track up to the Coolleman Trig. Another burn-off was scheduled but was thwarted by the weather.



Hazard-reduction burn-off on the Ridge above Monkman St

Photo: Rob Lundie

Rob Lundie

New sign

Just before Christmas a sturdy new sign was erected at the end of Kathner St. It announces the northern end of the Coolleman Ridge Nature Reserve.



New sign being erected at Kathner St

Photo: Malcolm Gill

Rob Lundie

New Year's resolution?

Even if you don't make New Year's resolutions, you may be thinking about what you want to do this year. Why not volunteer with the Coolleman Ridge Park Care Group to help look after this beautiful part of the world? You don't have to commit to the monthly weeding parties as there are many other ways you can help. Just visit our [website](#) or contact me: lundier@iinet.net.au

Rob Lundie

Meanwhile ...

Azolla still covers the Old Dam which it has done for a year and shows no signs of abating. It is ringed by a native flowering plant, a variety of knotweed.

The tussle between the wombat and the Bicentennial Nature Trail continues, not aided by the wet weather which flooded the burrow recently.

Happy New Year