

Friends of Mt Majura (FoMM) March 2010 newsletter

News from the Mountain: Ants, first description of species on Mt Majura, deed to mitigate impact on nature reserve, submission Canberra Nature Park

Woody Weeds Working Bee – Sunday 21 March

Banksia Street wetland planting day – Sunday 14 March

Native plant sale – Saturday 20 March

Dear Friends

More than 45 participants joined Ajay Narendra for a two hour educational ramble on ants on Sunday, the 28 February. Due to the overwhelming response – there were more than 200 enquiries - Ajay kindly agreed to guide a second walk on the 21 March. If you have registered for the 21 March walk but can't make it please deregister to give others on the long waiting list the chance to come along. Please phone 6247 7515 or email admin@majura.org to deregister or if you have queries.

At the ant walk we discovered a patch of Lobe-seed Daisy (*Brachyscome dentata*), an uncommon daisy with yellow centred white flower heads, that has been not described for Mount Majura. It will be added to our flora list along with other species that were found since we published a preliminary list on our website.

Some of you will recall that FoMM has lodged a [submission](#) to object to a proposed residential development at the northwest corner of Mount Majura. The proposed development covers an area known as Australia Heritage Village and some adjacent undeveloped land and abuts Mt Majura nature reserve to the west and the north-west.

On the 8th February the Planning Authority informed FoMM that the proposal has been approved without any condition in regard to safeguarding the conservation values of Mt Majura nature reserve. Following the approval, the North Canberra Community Council announced that it will seek a revision of the decision at the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal and several community groups, including FoMM and the Conservation Council considered joining the appeal. Ten days ago the developer approached the objecting parties and proposed to redirect resources, that would have been used for the appeal, to mitigate the potential impacts the development will have on environmental values. Following legal advice that indicated our appeal would be most likely unsuccessful, the community groups entered negotiations with the developer. The outcome, which was achieved in a very tight time frame, is a legally binding deed that provides, amongst other things, for a pet containment policy and 24hours cat curfew, a community engagement program, a dog and bike proofed fence with designated access point and a walking track connecting to the existing track in the reserve, rehabilitation work and weed control in the reserve adjacent to the project site, the immediate start of rabbit control on the project site, interpretative signs and the money to carry out the work and programs outlined in the deed.

I think the deed is a positive outcome for the environment and the people living close to nature reserve given that the Assembly, the Government and the Planning Authority have rezoned land managed for Tourism and Leisure as well as public land containing endangered ecological community into residential development, have totally ignored community concern and approved the development proposal unconditionally, and have not adequately resourced land management to deal with the effect the development will have on the nature park. The deed will be published on our website.

The Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment invited submissions into the investigation of Canberra Nature Park (closing date: 26 February 2010). FoMM, the Mt Ainslie Weeders and the Watson Woodland Working Group have lodged a joint [submission](#) which you can find on our website along with the terms of references of the investigation.

Woody weeds working bee - Sunday 21 March

On our monthly working bee in March we will return to the north-west slope of Mt Majura to tackle regrowth of Sweet Briar, Hawthorn and assorted woody weeds. I would be grateful if experienced weeders and those who have a chemical certification would come along.

When: Sunday 21 March 9.00am - 1.00pm

Where: nature park entrance Antill Street opposite Carotel

Bring: sun protection, sturdy shoes, body covering garden clothing

All equipment and morning tea will be provided

For more information and a map of the venue: <http://majura.org/2010/02/23/woody-weeds-working-bee-4/>

Banksia Street wetland planting day - Sunday 14 March

The wetland adjacent to Banksia Street in O'Connor is ready for planting and volunteers are invited to help planting sedges, native grasses and broad leaf species.

When: Sunday 14 March, 9.00am – 12.00nn
Where: Banksia St next to the Tennis Club in O'Connor
Bring: Sun protection, gloves, trowels, buckets
What to expect: ideal planting weather

Native plant sale - Saturday 20 March

The Australian Native Plant Society will hold a sale of native plants

When: Saturday 20 March 2010, 8.30am

Where: [Australian National Botanical Gardens](#)

What to bring: boxes for your plants

What to expect: long queues at 8.30am; so be early

There will be thousands of plants including local natives that are suitable for every aspect of your garden. A list of species is available at the ANPS website at http://www.nativeplants-canberra.asn.au/sale_list.aspx

Warm regards
Waltraud