

## Friends of Mt Majura (FoMM) February 2011 newsletter

- Collecting seeds of Clustered Everlasting - Thursday 10 February
- Working Bee - Sunday 20 February
- Meeting to discuss FoMM 2011 plans - Sunday 27 February
- Of a new pea and other recently found plant species
- Goodbye Murray and Sally

Dear Friends

What a nice calm day after a hot and stormy week. I nearly finished cleaning my flooded garage which was a great opportunity to separate from unnecessary things. So, here is my late update of FoMM events and news from the mountain.

The FoMM planning meeting will be on Sunday 27 February. Thank you Liese for doodle a date and thanks everyone who registered. If you want to come along and you haven't registered yet please RSVP by Monday 21 February to [admin@majura.org](mailto:admin@majura.org). An agenda will be circulated in the week before the meeting. You can also send suggestions for 2011 via email to the above address.

At our public working bee on Sunday, 20 February we will tackle regrowth of woody weeds along the drain line that runs through the southern part of the paddock. We will work from the fire trail uphill of the transmission line easement down to the backyards of Rivett Street. There are native Raspberries growing further uphill east of the power line easement which should not be confound with the Blackberry growing in the ditch downhill of the reservoir. The most common weeds are Hawthorn, Nettle Tree, Briar Rose and there are some Japanese Honeysuckle and Privet in the ditch. Experienced weeders are particularly encouraged to come and help less experienced volunteers along; there will be introduction on weeds and method of control.

If you have one hour at lunch time this Thursday, 10 February join me for a visit of a beautiful site at Mt Majura's north-west slope. There are vast stands of Clustered Everlastings and we will collect seeds which will be used for the Majura paddock and the old sheep camp restoration projects.

On your next walk on Mt Majura include a visit to the Majura paddock. Although work in progress the paddock is looking fantastic thanks to the dedication of volunteers. The festive-season-working-crew managed to collect about 130 bags of weeds since December and indigenous grass and forbs are growing from natural regeneration as well as from seeds collected and spread last year. Some of the tree seedlings are taller than me (162 cm) and some shrub seedlings are flowering. Noel identified a no-pull site close to the fence next to the old feed lot. Currently it looks shocking however we are interested in how the site will change over time when we employ control methods that do not disturb the soil.

In December I reported the find of a new pea species on Mt Majura, which turned out to be the uncommon Large Tick-trefoil *Desmodium brachypodum*. The plants sprouted from tubers and we placed wire guards to protect them from grazing. They developed fruits which are bead-like pods with distinct gaps between the seeds. During the collection of grass seeds we found a couple of species that are not on our flora list. One species, the Spear Grass *Austrostipa setacea* is not known to the ACT and the Southern Tablelands. It was most likely introduced in conjunction with maintenance work at the power line easement in 2004. The other species are a Wallaby Grass, *Austroanthonia eriantha* and the Common Bog Sedge *Schoenus apogon*, both of which occur in the ACT. A week ago I discovered the Native Flax *Linum marginale* growing amongst Poa Tussock and Vanilla Lily on the south slope close to the bridge where the Casuarina trail crosses the cascades. I thank Michael Doherty and Isobel Crawford for the identification of the species.

Murray Aston, the ranger dedicated and committed to Mt Majura, Mt Ainslie and the Watson Woodland has moved to Tidbinbilla. Murray was our rabbit man. As a brand new ranger he was entrusted with the implementation of the Mt Majura / Mt Ainslie / Watson Woodland rabbit control program. And Sally McIntosh, the ACT Community Program Officer has left Parks and Conservation to work in the Department

for Environment. Sally was the longest serving ACT ParkCare coordinator (two years) since FoMM started in 2003. I wish Murray and Sally well in their new positions.

A number of rangers have left the north district. As far as I remember, of the 3 or 4 current rangers, only one ranger who works part-time was there two or three years ago. Little has changed since the 2004 Community Forum on a *Shared Vision for the Future Management of Canberra Nature Park* identified staff turn-around and limited ranger resources as the key obstacle to jointly with volunteers protect and enhance the conservation values of our nature reserves.

Well, to look at the bright side: things can only get better ...

I hope you can make it to one of our activities.

Take care

Waltraud

6247 7515 (evenings after 8.30pm best)

**Collecting seeds of Clustered Everlasting - Thursday 10 February**

**When:** Thursday 10 February, 12.00 noon – 1.00 pm

**Where:** Meet at Antill Street park entrance opposite Carotel or contact me for a lift.

**Bring:** Sun protection, good shoes and a pair of scissors

**Working Bee - Sunday 20 February**

**When:** Sunday 20 February 9.00am to 1.00pm

**Where:** Meet at the Hackett reservoir off Rivett French Streets

**Bring and Wear:** Sun protection, body covering garden clothes, sturdy shoes

**FoMM meeting to plan 2011 activities – Sunday 27 February**

**When:** Sunday, 27 February 10.00 -11.30 am

**Where:** 9 Selwyn Street, Hackett

**What:** Plans and actions for 2011

**Please RSVP** by Monday 21 February to [admin@majura.org](mailto:admin@majura.org)

**Everyone welcome**