

SOUTHERN NEWS
31/08/2012



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1. Black Mountain Wildflower Ramble

Saturday 13 October 2012: 9.30 am sharp to 12 noon (or later)
Belconnen Way entry, just before Caswell Drive turnoff (look for the balloons).
Celebrate the diversity of spring wildflowers in the 41st annual
Burbidge/Chippendale walk with Peter Ormay, Laurie Adams, Isobel Crawford and
Jean Geue. Following the tradition set by Nancy and George, this will be a social
occasion with a morning tea break (BYO), relatively easy grades and good
company. It will be sponsored by NPA, U3A, ANPS, ANBG Friends and Field Nats.
Who knows what spring will bring this year in this very special reserve. It's
always fascinating to see how diversity and abundance differ. And there's been
strange flowering this year.
All welcome. Bring your friends especially those who are new to plant
identification. BYO morning tea, hat, sunblock, water and stout shoes. Contact
Jean on 6251-1601 or RSVP friendsofblackmountain@gmail.com so we know
numbers.

2. Volunteers required for 'Green Savvy Sunday'

Martin has arranged for the SACTCG to have a stall at the Old Bus Depot Markets
'Green Savvy Sunday' on Sept 16th. Molonglo Catchment Group will provide a
table and chairs and at least one extra body on the day.
Martin has two members from our group who have offered to assist but would
dearly love to have more hands on deck if only for a short period to allow them to
take a break. Please let Martin know if you can lend a hand. It will be greatly
appreciated. Contact Martin on 6296 6400 or waterwatch@sactcg.org.au

3. Catchment Group meeting

Our next General meeting is scheduled for 25 September at SACTCG Office,
4.30pm.
The Annual General Meeting is set for 30 October at Tuggeranong Homestead
from about 4.30.

4. It's official: Indian mynas harm native bird populations

New research confirms that the Indian or common myna has an adverse effect on native and other bird species by competing with them for food, nesting sites and territories.

The research by the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre and the Australian National University, using Canberra as a case study – shows Indian mynas have an adverse impact on populations of sulphur-crested cockatoo, crimson rosella, laughing kookaburra, superb fairy-wren, striated pardalote, willy wagtail, grey fantail, magpie-lark, silvereye and common blackbird. The survey results show the abundance of sulphur-crested cockatoo in Canberra prior to establishment of Indian mynas increased each year. However, after Indian mynas established a population in the city, the growth in sulphur-crested cockatoo abundance decreased. Similarly, crimson rosella abundance increased throughout the survey period but declined after Indian mynas established a foothold in Canberra; kookaburra populations also suffered.

'Indian mynas affect native and other birds in three ways,' explained project researcher Kate Grarock. 'They compete for food. They compete for cavity-nesting sites, so reducing the breeding success of other species. They compete for territories.' The Indian myna has been shown to actively defend up to three hectares, feed within an area of up to two kilometres from a communal roost, and build and defend multiple nests as a deterrent to other cavity-nesting species. Previous attempts to investigate the impact of Indian mynas have relied on short-term data (from one to three years) with limited success. The Canberra study used long-term data gathered over 29 years by the Canberra Ornithologists Group. Ms Grarock's analysis of the data began in 2007, following consultation between the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group (CIMAG), the Invasive Animals CRC and the ANU's Fenner School of Environment and Society.

The Indian Myna was first brought to Australia in 1862 to control insects in market gardens in the city of Melbourne. The species quickly established in Melbourne and that population became a source population for other introductions in eastern Australia. The species was deliberately introduced to Canberra between 1968 and 1971, when 110 birds from Sydney were released in the suburb of Forrest. By 2006, a mid-range estimate of the population in the ACT was 93,000. Humane trapping programs have since removed more than 42,000 Indian mynas.

CIMAG also supports [MynaScan](#), a citizen science initiative allowing members of the community to map myna sightings, and damage and control activities associated with mynas in their area.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has ranked the Indian myna among the world's top 100 most invasive plants and animals. They thrive in and around human-modified environments, reaching high densities of more than 200 birds per square kilometre in towns.

Mark Schipp

Chief Veterinary Officer (Australia)

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

5. ACT landcare book 'A Labour of Love'

The editorial team is hoping to get a draft PDF of text and photos out to the contributors for their consideration and approval (plus a 'Transfer of Agreement and Photographers approval) on the 7th of September. We are asking for this to be approved and returned by Friday 21 September.

6. Friends of Grasslands

The FOG website www.fog.org.au is now well established and attracting over 2,000 visits per month.

7. Tuggeranong Community Council 2012 ACT Election Forum

The Forum will be held at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre at 137 Reed Street Greenway on Wednesday 12 September 2012 commencing at 7.00pm. All ACT Election candidates for the seat of Brindabella are being invited to participate. The Forum will be run along the lines of the ABC's Q&A program and will be chaired by Canberra ABC Radio personality, Genevieve Jacobs. She will introduce each candidate before opening the Forum to questions from the floor. If you wish to join the Forum audience please contact the Tuggeranong Arts Centre on 6293 1443 to reserve your seating.

8. UMCCC Biennial Forum and Field Trip 23 and 24 October 2012

UMCCC will be hosting our biennial forum on 23 and 24 October 2012. This year's theme is *Connectivity Conservation and Corridors: Connecting Environment, People and Production*.

Our field trip on 23 October encompasses two sites that are being developed or are already using connectivity conservation corridors to enhance biodiversity. Participants will visit a property and a nature reserve.

The forum day on 24 October will bring together a range of relevant presenters, and will be an interactive day for participants. Our headline speaker is Robyn Williams of ABC Radio's *The Science Show*.

9. TCC elects new President

Calwell businessman and local identity, Nick Tsoulias, has taken over the reins of the Tuggeranong Community Council (TCC). Mr Tsoulias was elected unopposed last night as TCC President at the Council's Annual General Meeting. He replaces Darryl Johnston who retired from the position after a three-year term.

Mr Tsoulias, said he was proud to take on the job and looked forward to working with a new Council executive. He said the Council will continue to play an active role in the community and work with other groups and organisations in the best interests of all Valley residents. Mr Tsoulias said *'My focus will be on better public transport links, quality planning and development, improved services and facilities and a better environment. I thank Darryl Johnston for his work over the last three years during which time he built the Council into a powerful voice for Valley residents'*.

10.Spring Wildflowers Walk

The Friends of Farrer Ridge are hosting their annual Spring Wildflowers Walk on Sunday 23rd September, and would love to see you there. Meet at top of Muresk street, Farrer 10 am – 12 noon. Bring cameras, binoculars, hat, & wear walking shoes. More information: Phil Selmes, P&C Stromlo depot: 6205 7384

11.Mobile QuikSpray Unit

The SACTCG Mobile QuikSpray Unit is available to assist landholders and managers across the ACT or in the Googong or Upper Murrumbidgee catchments (within 50 km south of the ACT border) to undertake weed control. It is booking out fast for next Spring so **consider booking now** if you need it. To find out more or book the spray unit contact Steve Welch or Martin Lind on 6296 6400.

12. ACT Weeds Forum Report released

Earlier this year, a weeds forum was convened by the ACT Natural Resources Management Council in partnership with the ACT Government and the Australian Government's, Caring for our Country program. The forum brought together ACT, NSW and Australian Government representatives, alongside land managers, volunteers, rural landholders and local Councils in the region to discuss how to stay ahead of the game and explore all options for managing weeds as our climate warms. Resulting from the forum is a report titled, *ACT Weeds Forum*. The report explores the best way to reduce weed infestations and stop incursions of new weeds into the territory <http://actlandcare.org.au/node/868>.

13. Radio Landcare

For an interesting update on local landcare listen to Radio Landcare: **2XX FM** 98.3 Tuesdays 9 - 10am and **QBN FM** 96.7 Sundays 8 - 9am Southern ACT Catchment Group has a regular spot on 2XX every third Tuesday of the month. Contact Steve or Martin if you have a desire to be involved.

14. African Lovegrass posters and pamphlets

A reminder that the SACTCG posters and pamphlets on in any quantity from our office at Kambah. Contact Steve on 6296 6400 Also check out the latest 'placestories' added to the African Lovegrass section on our website <http://sactcg.org.au/node/348>

15. Seed Harvester available

Bush Heritage Australia supported by The Southern ACT Catchment Group has available a Mobile Grass Seed Harvester to assist environment groups, landholders and managers across the ACT and surrounding regions to harvest native grass seed. This rotating brush style harvester is registered and is fitted with electric brakes. Bush Heritage through Southern ACT Catchment Group Inc. offers to lend this harvester on the understanding that the:

- Harvester is to be returned in the same condition as it was lent, empty and clean;
- Maximum lending period is 5 days;
- The borrower must use a vehicle with towing capacity >730kg, preferably a 4x4, to tow and operate the Harvester;
- The Harvester can be delivered or picked up from Scottsdale (on the Monaro Highway), with instructions on its use given at handover.

A donation of \$50 for per day of lending is requested to be made to the Southern ACT Catchment Group to assist with administration and maintenance. If delivery and pick-up is required a donation based on 85 cents per kilometre is also requested. If any surplus funds are generated they will be used to purchase seed to give to Bush Heritage Australia to assist in Scottsdale regeneration work. To find out more or book the Mobile Grass Seed Harvester email: info@sactcg.org.au or phone 6296 6400.

