

Swamp Rat (Goodie):

The Australian Swamp Rat (*Rattus lutreolus*) is a species of rat native to the area around Melbourne. They are native to the area and carry no dangerous diseases. They grow to 20cm (minus tail). Their diet consists of roots and leaves of sedges, grasses, fungi, invertebrates and seeds. Swamp rats prefer vegetation dominated by sedges (Cyperaceae), in which they form paths, nesting in logs or vegetation. The Swamp rat's tail is much shorter than that of the introduced Black rat. A Swamp rat has a tail that is equivalent to the length of its body, whereas the introduced Black rat has a longer tail that is 1.5 to 2 times the length of its body.



Stop Press:

One of our Committee Members, Rosemary Birney has resigned. Many thanks to Rosemary for all the hard work you have done for FOLKLAW over the years. On behalf of FOLKLAW and the Committee we wish you well.



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NEWSLETTER *Summer 2008*

Editor: Karin Cooper

Over the summer the weather has been too hot and dry to do much in the Koala Reserve so we will have to wait for cooler weather and rain to do any more planting.

We have been collecting and propagating seeds - this year we have tried to collect from different types of plants than the previous year. We currently have seeds for Running Postman, Kangaroo Grass, Prickly Moses, Hedge Wattle, Common Flat Pea, Poas and Indigo.

For those that have forgotten to renew their subscriptions this year we enclose a membership renewal form. We need your support!

If you have any suggestions or want give us a hand by collecting seeds, propagating plants, assisting us with our newsletters, we would love to hear from you!

We have enclosed some 'goodies' and 'baddies' you may have seen around Somers recently.

Capeweed (Baddie):

Arctotheca calendula is a plant commonly known as cape weed, cape dandelion, or cape marigold because it originates from the Cape Province in South Africa. It is listed as a noxious weed in California and is an invasive weed in Australia as well.

The plant is a squat perennial or annual which grows in rosettes and sends out stolons and can spread across the ground quickly. The leaves are covered with white woolly hairs, especially on their undersides. The leaves are lobed or deeply toothed. Hairy stems bear daisy-like flowers with small yellow petals that sometimes have a green or purple tint surrounded by white or yellow ray petals extending further out from the flower centers. It is cultivated as an attractive ornamental groundcover but has invasive potential when introduced to a new area. The plant can reproduce vegetatively or via seed. Seed-bearing plants are most likely to become weedy, taking hold most easily in bare or sparse vegetated soil or disturbed areas.

Capeweed starts growing after autumn rains and will take over the pasture if not treated. Seeds can stay in the ground for up to thirteen years and will germinate when condition suit.



Trigger Plant (Goodie):

The genus *Stylidium* (also known as triggerplants or trigger plants) are a group of dicotyledonous plants that belong to the family Stylidiaceae. The genus name *Stylidium* is derived from the Greek *στυλος* or *stylos* (column or pillar), which refers to the distinctive reproductive structure that its flowers possess.^[1] Pollination is achieved through the use of the sensitive "trigger", which comprises the male and female reproductive organs fused into a floral column that snaps forward quickly in response to touch, harmlessly covering the insect in pollen. Most of the approximately 300 species are only found in Australia, making it the fifth largest genus in that country. Triggerplants are considered to be protocarnivorous or carnivorous because the glandular trichomes that cover the scape and flower can trap, kill, and digest small insects with protease enzymes produced by the plant.

