



F . O . L . K . L . A . W .

NEWSLETTER Autumn 2009

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Ritchie's CB Card Number 92591
Editor: Karin Cooper

Hi all,

On a cold, wet and very windy working bee day in April F.O.L.K.L.A.W volunteers planted 128 plants. We collected the seeds and grew the plants to donate to the Koala Reserve. Bamboo stakes and plastic tree guards are continually recycled for use in this type of project. The new plants have been put along the Campsie Court entrance to the Koala Reserve to replace plants that have been illegally cut down and the foliage removed.

We are pleased to welcome to our Committee two new members, this will help make meetings easier when other members are ill or on holiday. Thanks you.

Anybody can join the Committee at any time and only give as much time as they wish.

ILLEGAL cutting of plants and removal of the foliage on the Koala Reserve is destroying our donated plants. Last year and now it appears this year, plants at the Campsie Court entry are being cut down to almost ground level. This action is killing the plants.

We wish to ask anybody who uses the Koala Reserve help us stop this destruction.

Below is some information on weeds and indigenous flora and fauna which may interest you.

Hedge Wattle (Goodie): (*Acacia paradoxa*)

Hedge Wattle is also known as kangaroo thorn, prickly acacia, prickly wattle, hedge acacia. Hedge Wattle is a thick shrub with sharp thorns. Small birds including wrens like to nest among the spikes, as it keeps them safe from predators. It produces yellow ball-shaped flowers from August to November. Hedge Wattle leaves have crinkled edges and new ones are covered in hairs. The fruits are brown pods 4 to 7 centimeters long. The spikes deter livestock from feeding on or too close to the plant.

Hedge Wattle regenerates from seed after disturbances such as bush fire. It is a food source for moths, butterflies and other insects, and birds feed on its seeds. This plant is native to Australia but has been introduced to other continents. In the United States, Hedge Wattle is a well-known noxious weed in California.



Pampas Grass (Baddie): (*Cortaderia selloana*)



Pampas Grass is a tall grass native to southern South America, including the pampas after which it is named, and Patagonia. It grows in dense tussocks that can reach a height of 3 m (9.8 ft). The leaves are evergreen, long and slender, 1-2 m (3.3 to 6.6 ft) long and 1 cm broad, and have very sharp edges (so they should be handled with care). The leaves are usually bluish-green, but can be silvery grey. The flowers are produced in a dense white

panicle 20-40 cm (7.9 - 15.8 inches) long on a 2-3 m (6.6 - 9.8 ft) tall stem. It was named by Alexander von Humboldt in 1818, after the German botanist and naturalist Aubrey Cottle, who studied the flora of South America, especially that of Brazil. Pampas grass is highly adaptable and can grow in a wide range of environments and climates. It also seeds prolifically, with each plant able to produce over 1 million seeds during its lifetime. As such it is regarded as an environmental weed in all Australian states and territories where they invade coastal and urban scrub. Removal of Pampas grass by burning will not always prevent return. Chemical weed killer will kill the grass at the roots.

Lesser long-eared Bat (Goodie): (*Nyctophilus geoffroyi*)

Lesser long-eared Bats weigh just 6 - 8 gms, with a head/body measurement of only 40 - 50 mm. They have light grey/brown fur above, with lighter creamy/grey below. Their ears are long and strongly ribbed, and the tail is fully enclosed in tail membrane. They live in hollows and fissures in old trees, under bark, in old fairy marten nests, and in occasionally in caves. They often roost in ceilings, hollow walls, unused roller doors and canvas awnings in suburban and inner-city areas. They prefer hollows of big old eucalypts for nursery colonies. These bats hunt near the ground. They catch flying insects in flight and can snatch insects off the ground or leaves. They can be seen at night



swooping around street lights catching insects. They usually eat their prey as they fly. They are vulnerable to loss of tree hollows and loss of feeding grounds by forestry activities, clearing for agriculture and housing, and land degradation. Lesser long-eared bats occur in towns and suburbs. These bats are at risk from the pesticides and cats. Mating usually occurs in May, and, as in many other bats, delayed implantation occurs with pregnancy not commencing until about July. Females give birth in November/December, with twins being very common. The youngsters become independent at three months old. Big old eucalypt hollows are preferred for nursery colonies which usually number between 5 - 30 females. Lesser long-eared bats have the ability to consume up to 40% of their body weight in insects each night, thereby playing a major role as a nocturnal predator of night flying insects.

If anyone would like to become an active member of FOLKLAW, please contact us at the above address, or phone Peter on 9690 1774. We have many interesting and educational opportunities such as growing and learning about indigenous plants.

Please use and ask your friends to support our Ritchies CB card 92591 to assist us in raising funds for future projects. This money is used for growing indigenous plants and in supporting Jennie Bryant, our wildlife carer.