

Feature walk: Cooleman Ridge Nature Trail

Name of activity: Cooleman Ridge Nature Trail

Length: 2.7 km

Approximate time: 60-90 minutes return

Grade: Easy with some steps and uneven, rocky sections.

The Walk:

Access is at the end of Kathner Street, Chapman.

Entering through the big gate, pick up a self-guide brochure from the box and continue westward through another open gate. The brochure tells you of the trees, the views and other features of interest at 16 marked points along the walk. The notice board has current information about the nature park. Following the western side of Cooleman Ridge, with splendid views of the Bullen and the Brindabella Ranges, climb to the top of Cooleman Trig (745 m) and return along the eastern side with views of the Canberra suburbs.

This walking track was originally established in 1995 by the Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group in collaboration with Parks, Conservation and Lands staff, destroyed by the 2003 bushfire and re-established with an ACT Environment grant in 2007.

Services: The closest public toilets are Stirling District Playing Fields, Teasdale Close.

What will I discover?

The Ridge is pleasantly wooded with a number of different mature eucalypt trees. It was once part of a large grazing property carrying first sheep and then cattle until the early 1990s. The Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group is endeavouring to reverse the degradation caused by this enterprise - you can see areas where hand weeding has aided the regeneration of native plants.

Look out for the blue flowers of Australian indigo false sarsaparilla and Narrawa burr, the yellow flowers of the yellow buttons and paper daisies, the pinks of native geranium and Australian bindweed. Sharp eyes may spot a choughs' nest, galahs in nesting hollows, and pardalotes nesting in dirt banks. If you are lucky the wedge-tailed eagle or the Australian kestrel will be hovering over the hills. The two dams are often visited by water birds and in the second dam eastern snake-necked tortoises can sometimes be seen.

Make sure you turn left after point 16 and follow the small track down towards Kathner Street: admire the native grasses—kangaroo and wallaby grass amongst many others. This is fine habitat for the threatened pink-tailed worm lizard.

www.tams.act.gov.au

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What will I learn?

You will discover Canberra's diverse and beautiful woodlands, you will see magnificent views and you will find out lots about the native flora and fauna.

What do I need to take?

A drink and a snack, binoculars and bird field guide if you have access to one. Ensure you wear sturdy, comfortable shoes.

Other walks/activities links

For further information on Coleman Ridge go to: <http://www.coolemanridge.org.au>

For Further information on Canberra's native bird life go to:

<http://canberrabirds.org.au/>

How to get there?

The start is at the end of Kathner Street, Chapman but you can also enter the walk above Monkman Street. Enjoy your walk.

Plants to look out for:

Figure 1: Cheilanthes Austrotenuifolia



Figure 3: Hovea Heterophylla



Figure 2: Hibbertia Obtusifolia



Figure 4: Wahlenbergia