



The Granite Belt Naturalist



Mail Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, Stanthorpe Qld. 4380
stanthorpefieldnats@gmail.com

Web site <https://mysd.com.au/fieldnats/>

Please send contributions to the magazine to margaretcarnell76@gmail.com

AIMS OF THE CLUB

1. To study all branches of Natural History
2. Preservation of the Flora and Fauna of Queensland
3. Encouragement of a spirit of protection towards native birds, animals and plants
4. To assist where possible in scientific research
5. To publish a monthly newsletter



The Pyramids, Girraween National Park

Meetings: 4th Wednesday of each month at
Uniting Church, Small Hall, 113 High Street
Stanthorpe at 7.30pm

Outings: The Sunday following the 4th Wednesday
of each month

Subs: Single \$20.00, Family \$30.00 per annum, July
to June

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2022/2023

President	Leon McCosker	46811737
Vice-presidents	Holly Patti	
	Robyn Murray	0488515311
Secretary	John Salini	0400805236
Treasurer	Lynette Haselgrove	0409006063
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	0427835268
Publicity Officer	Theresa Clifford	0413008602
Librarian	Rob McCosker	46835371

Stanthorpe Field Naturalists is a group member of
Granite Borders Landcare.



Management Committee: President, Vice-
Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer

**SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS
ON NATS OUTINGS**

1. Flat, well-formed track, no steps, 5km or less. Clearly signposted. Suitable for wheelchairs with assistance.
2. Formed track. May have gentle hills and some steps. Clearly signposted. No experience required
3. Formed track, some obstacles, 20km or less. May have short steep hills and many steps. Some experience recommended.
4. Rough Track. May be long and very steep with few directional signs. For experienced bushwalkers.
5. Unformed track. Likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. For very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills.

Coming Up

Wednesday 23rd August: *Frog Hotels* with Holly Lister

Sunday 27th August: *Mt Marlay and Sentimental Rocks* with Lesley Saunders

**Deadline for next newsletter
14th September 2023**

If you have not paid your subs for 2023/24 you may do so by direct deposit to: **Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. BSB 064-431 Acc. 00902063**
Family \$30.00, Single \$20.00

Attached is Lesley's pre-outing report for Sunday 27th August as discussed. We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00 am, drive to Mt Marlay for morning tea.

Pre-outing report for the Mt Marley and Sentimental Rocks SFNC walk- Sunday 27th August

Leader: Lesley Saunders,

Mount Marlay

It was a blustery "fresh" afternoon when I set off from home to walk to Mt Marlay. My feet had been feeling like a block of ice all morning but when I reached the base of the hill, they were tingly warm. I don't remember much about the plod to the top as I was busy remembering the training, I had done all those years ago. Carrying a backpack of 12kg in preparation for an arduous trek along the Kokoda Track.

I remembered plodding up and down to Alice St and the welcoming cuppa provided by a friend who lived nearby as I wearily made my way home after my herculean efforts.

Still, I made it to the top without stopping and my recovery time was surprisingly quick. The area was neat and clean with a few car visitors (who stayed in their cars). I had a peek through the binoculars provided by the Council and smiled at the cheeky magpies searching for a free meal.

I then plodded along the well cared for concrete pathway around the top of the area, noting that some weed eradication had been conducted. The views were enjoyable over the town, and I stopped many times and enjoyed the quiet and protection provided by the tree cover.

The pathway to Alice St was clearly marked as were the mountain bike tracks. The trip downward was again well maintained, though lots of decomposed gravel lay on top of the stone steps and I wished I had brought my walking pole "just in case". I'm no longer the mountain goat I used to be, and feared a misstep that would stop my next walk in Sikkim (N. India) in October, happily no fall occurred as I journeyed downward.

Some changes have occurred, the pathway is shared for a short time by bike riders, the area is clearly marked with warning signs. The old water tank's graffiti has been covered over with a charming mural

in a “naive” style, perhaps painted by locals as there was no signature that I could find. Perhaps I was awed by the many “snowbushes” out in flower. Alas I am no botanist so perhaps they were another species altogether.

I kept my eye open for a native clematis that I know is up there, alas I didn’t see it or it is not being in flower kept its glory hidden.

There was whiskey grass, kangaroo grass, wallaby grass, spear grass, and *lomandra*. Remember I’m no botanist! Alas I heard nor saw any birds on the trail which took me about an hour from the base of Mt. Marley to Alice St and back. I then plodded home thanking my friend who recently passed over, for his kindness, fellowship, and welcome cuppa as I spied his empty chair on the front porch.

Sentimental Rocks

Visited Sentimental Rocks last week on a dry and sunny afternoon. The paths had recently been upgraded by council workers. There was evidence of whipper snipper clearance of grasses from pathways and the chopping down of invasive privet saplings.

There was a lot of trails leading nowhere in particular and bush bashing was required to reach central track once again. Lots of loose decomposed caused some footloose and fancy- free steps which added some excitement to the day.

The area is not a large one for walks, but some delightful views were experienced and the walk with a very sedate bitumen walk along College Rd where I parked my car.

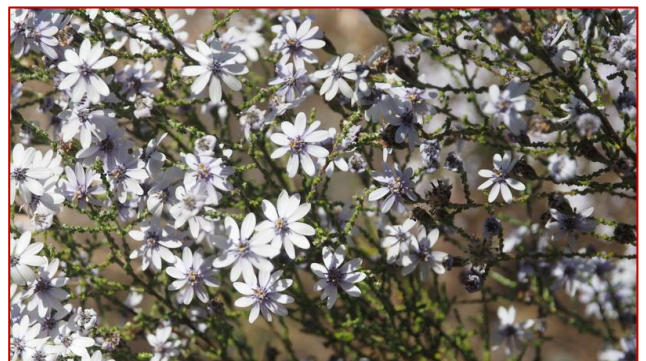
Outing Report for 30th July to the Stone House



Nats assembled at Stone House – H Patti

The outing attracted 13 members on a glorious warm early spring day. After a brief stop at the Driver Reviver Park at Wallangarra, we drove along Mt Norman Road to the Day Use Area for morning tea then drove back to the Stone House entrance, with very limited parking space. On the walk up to the Stone House we passed a variety of Acacias with the Wallangarra wattle putting on the best display. There was also a great display of purple Showy mirbelia creating a contrast and a lot of interest for us.

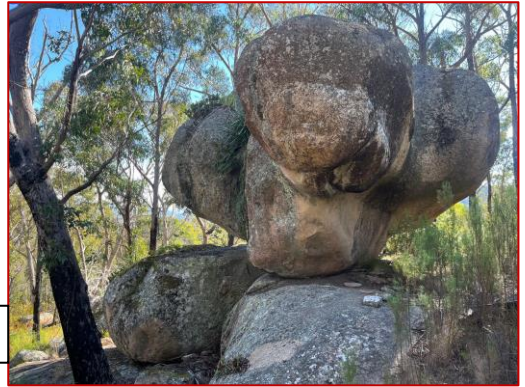
We had a look around the remains of the Stone House then continued along the track for some distance before heading off to walk up the ridge to the south to view an extensive area of Blue mountain daisies. Some of these were about 1m tall, very showy in full bloom and perhaps a little past their prime as they were quite pale blue. It was very pleasing to see as there will be plenty of seeds produced to propagate future plants.



Blue Mountain Daisy – R McCosker

We returned to the Stone House and walked up the track behind it to a small dam for lunch, hoping to see some bird life but without much luck. We then returned down the track towards the cars for some distance then headed off to the north to walk up a ridge with some interesting boulders and a view across Fletcher’s valley and the highway to the

south west. One isolated granite tor was very impressive and several people asked how I knew about it – I had seen it on Google Earth! We returned to the cars back on Mt Norman Road and after some discussion about the construction of the Stone Gateway with its' fifty year old log on top still in good order, we returned to the Day Use Area for a cuppa before heading home.



Interesting Granite Tor – H Patti

Plant list

Prickly Moses *Acacia ulicifolia*, Wallangarra wattle *A. adunca*, Veiny wattle *A. venulosa*, Red leaf wattle *A. rubida*, New England banksia *Banksia spinulosa* var. *neoanglica*, Snowbush *Leucopogon melaleuroides*, Stanthorpe pea *Pultenaea hartmannii*, Showy mirbelia *Mirbelia speciosa* subsp. *speciosa*, Urn heath *Melichrus urceolatus*, Australian indigo *Indigofera australis*, False sarsaparilla vine *Hardenbergia violacea*, Blue mountain daisy *Olearia ramosissima*.



Mirbelia Attraction – R McCosker

Rob McCosker.

It's Wattle Season



Acacia baileyana

Early in August Kris and I went on a Photo Shoot with the Camera Club and we were amazed at the number of wattles (*acacias*) we saw on Granite Belt Drive between The Summit and Dalveen.

It started with *Acacia baileyana* (Cootamundra Wattle) at The Summit where there were numerous plants. As well as the wattles there was *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Leucopogon melaleuroides* and *Helichrysum albicans albicans* along with a number of weeds such as honeysuckle.

Further along we stopped to photograph *Acacia falciformis* (Mountain Hickory), *Acacia fimbriata* (Fringed Wattle), *Acacia floribunda* (White Sally Wattle), *Acacia venulose* (Veiny Wattle), and one large tree of what I think was *Acacia filicafolia* (Fern-leafed Wattle). It certainly had a ferny leaf but was too high to see closely.

As we drove closer to Dalveen we saw a few plants of *Acacia podalyriifolia* (Queensland Silver Wattle) with its grey foliage and stems. There was a lot of *Acacia fimbriata* in the area and one thriving tree of *Acacia adunca* (Wallangarra Wattle) which seems to have a long flowering period. As well as the wild flowers there were *Callistemons*, *Grevilleas* and *Banksias* that had obviously been planted.

Margaret Carnell



Acacia filicifolia



Acacia floribunda



Acacia venulosa above and left



Acacia fimbriata



Above: Acacia falciformis
Right: Acacia podalyriifolia



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club Inc.
Held at Uniting Church Hall on 26th July 2023**

Meeting Opened: 1940h

Attendance: Rob & Trish McCosker, Leon and Kerrie McCosker, Peter and Lynette Haselgrove, Holly Patti, Teresa Clifford, Robyn Murray, John Salini, Margaret and Kris Carnell,

Apologies: Lesley Saunders, Lockwood Wilson, Lyn Collins, Graham Rayner, Andrew Pengelly,

Minutes of the Previous AGM; Moved Kris Carnell, seconded Rob McCosker, carried.

Business Arising: None

President's Report: Leon presented his report highlighting meeting presentations and outings in the past year.

Financial Report:

Election of Office Bearers: Leon McCosker vacated the Chair and Peter Haselgrove conducted the election of office bearers.

President: Kris Carnell nominated Leon McCosker, Teresa Clifford seconded.....Leon asked for help and accepted nomination.

Vice-Presidents:

One; Robyn Murray nominated by Peter Haselgrove, seconded by Lynette Haselgrove, accepted.

Two Kris Carnell nominated Holly Patti, seconded by Rob McCosker, Accepted.

Secretary: Lynette Haselgrove nominated John Salini, seconded Leon McCosker, accepted.

Treasurer: Margaret nominated Lynette, seconded by Kerry, accepted

Motion from Margaret Carnell to nominate Lynette Haselgrove as Treasurer; motion carried and Lynette was elected as Treasurer and that Leon was elected as President.

In addition, The Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club account with Commonwealth Bank is to remain a two to sign account. However, the treasurer, Lynette Haselgrove, and the president, Leon McCosker are to have access to online banking. The treasurer is to have access to and be able to change the Login password.

Newsletter Editor: Peter Haselgrove nominated Margaret Carnell, seconded Leon McCosker, accepted.

Publicity Facebook Manager: John Salini nominated Teresa Clifford, seconded Peter Haselgrove, accepted.

Librarian: Peter Haselgrove nominated Rob McCosker, seconded Trish McCosker, accepted.

Business from AGM: Kris Carnell spoke of Rob McCosker's long term membership with the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club and moved a motion that Rob and Trish McCosker be nominated for Life Membership. Seconded Leon McCosker. Unanimous, carried.

Related to AGM:

Leon spoke about the outings following the meeting or return to Outing on Sunday before the Fourth Wednesday meeting.

Suggested that the meetings come forward to Third Wednesday of the month and outing on following Sunday.

Motion to change meeting from fourth to third Wednesday of the month from September 2023.

Discussion ensued, vote was all in favour of the motion, passed.

Meeting Closed: 2000h

AGM Surprise

The Club AGM held on 26th July 2023 held a surprise for Trish and I.

With the circulated suggestion that the club consider holding less activities such as every two months instead of monthly, a few days before the meeting I decided to look through the Constitution in case there was a problem. I could find no problem, as it is a matter for the Management Committee to decide, but I did find the first original Club Constitution, a typed edition, which had been circulated to members for approval and a subsequent printed version with the names of the then initial President, T. Chapman and Secretary R. McCosker. The printed version was supplied by the Adult Education Centre, Toowoomba and stated "The above Constitution and Rules were adopted at a General Meeting of the Club, held on Wednesday, 25th February, 1970."

So it was a real surprise to us when Kris stood at the AGM to propose Life Membership.

My sincere thanks to you Kris, for proposing, and to the meeting for approving Life Membership for Trish and I at the last AGM. We have enjoyed over 50 years with the Club and hope to enjoy many more. Thank you.

Rob McCosker

Some bird activities at "Shortlands"

Grey crowned babblers – We have enjoyed the antics of these sociable fellows for many years, watching their numbers grow to a maximum of eleven until about a year ago when a group split off and went to the neighbouring property leaving us with just four. This group industriously built several dormitory nests in various trees and shrubs close to the house and finally raised one extra chick in a nest built in a Crepe Myrtle shrub. We noted that after the chick had fledged the group moved to a different nest for some time to roost, but still occasionally returned to the Crepe Myrtle. The next construction was in a Juniper next to our shed, which is beside the back door of our house, and gave us lots of pleasure watching them going to and fro with bits of building material. We encouraged them with lots of white dog hair groomed from my sister's Samoyed, and dropped in clumps near the tree. The nest is only 2.5 m above the ground making it very easy to watch them collecting beaks full of hair and taking turns to install the lining in the nest, along with moss, the usual material. While we were away in Townsville for a week we think the female matriarch must have started incubating eggs, as there are only four birds active during the day now and they usually go to a different nest to roost, although they still sometimes all pile into the Juniper tree nest. Hopefully there will soon be some new arrivals.

Double-barred Finches – With the end of the 2019 drought we have seen some Blue-faced Honeyeaters move in around our house for the first time with a subsequent reduction in the number of Noisy Miners and an increase in smaller birds such as Double-barred Finches. We watched the Finches build a nest in a climbing rose growing over a garden arch, and they would whirr away above our head every time we walked beneath their nest. Some chicks fledged although one was found dead on the ground beneath the nest with no obvious sign of damage. The next nest we found was in a small trellis I had put in a large pot on the front verandah, under the roof overhang, to grow a Clematis. The plant had grown and flowered well and died back in winter, as they do, and we hadn't got around to removing the dead leaves when one night just on dusk we were sitting in the lounge watching the changing colours of the setting sun and noticed movement in the leaves. It was so dark that it was hard to distinguish the small birds from silhouetted leaves but they kept coming in, in ones and twos, and we have counted up to nine birds returning to the nest to roost night after night. One warmer night we sat at the table on the verandah less than 2.5m from the nest, which is only 1.5m above the floor, and watched them coming in to roost.

Spottings



Thank you Holly Patti for these photos of
Hardenbergia violacea and *Olearia ramosissima*
taken on the outing to the Stone House (above)
Below: *Leionema rotundifolium*, *Acacia pruinosa*,
Acacia nerifolia at Whiskey Gully
Bottom: Praying Mantis cocoon, *Glycine clandestina*,
Hovea graniticola at Red Bridge by K & M Carnell



Month	Date	Meeting Speaker	Date	Outing and Organizer/s
	4th Wed.		Sunday After meeting	
September	28	Platypus Holly Lister	Oct 1	Platypus outing Holly Lister
October	25	Social History through the farm tip Chris Moon	Saturday 28	Mallee Ridge Rob McCosker
November	22	Gibraltar Range Kris Carnell	26	Mole River Arsenic Mine Leon McCosker
Breakup December 10 th John Salini's property Emu Swamp Road Glen Aplin				
	3rd Wed		Sunday After meeting	
February	21	Gunter Maywald	25	Driving Outing
March	20	Swift Parrots and Regent Honeyeaters Holly Lister	24	Morgans Gully Rob McCosker
April	17	David Wilson	21	Basket Swamp Kris and Margaret Carnell
May	15	John Salini	19	Astronomical Viewing John Salini
June	19	John Bowyer	23	Texas Museum Robyn Murray
July	17	Podcast AGM	21	Broadwater State Forest Holly Lister
August	21	Gliders Holly Lister	25 + -	Spotlighting night Holly Lister