

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB

P.O. BOX 154
STANTHORPE, Q., 4380.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1979-1980

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	ROBIN MC COSKER
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COMMITTEE	DON LIGHTFOOT
	DESLEY MC DONAGH
	LYLE THOMPSON
	JOHN O'DONNELL
	FRANK WILKINSON

MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at C.W.A. ROOMS at 8 P.M.
OUTINGS - Each SUNDAY PRECEDING the FOURTH WEDNESDAY of the Month.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

SINGLE - \$4.00

FAMILY - \$6.00

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.

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MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, September 26th, 1979.

Present 23 Apologies 6.

The President extended a welcome to all members and visitors present.

Apologies - as entered in attendance book.

Moved by Mr. T. Archer and seconded by Mrs. J. Stevenson that the apologies be accepted. Carried.

Minutes of General Meeting held Wed., August 22nd, 1979., "taken as read" in Newsletter. Moved by Mr. M. Davies and seconded by Mr. R. McCosker that the Minutes "taken as read" in the newsletter be confirmed. Carried.

INWARD CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter from National Parks and Wildlife Service in answer to our request for more information re our submission for Sundown/Girraween National Park areas.

Newsletters from: Toowoomba Field Naturalists' Club; Richmond Valley Naturalists Club (2); National Parks Association of Queensland; Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club; University of Q'ld. Speleological Society.

Press Statements from Minister for Culture, National Parks and Wildlife Services.

Outward Correspondence:

1. Club submission to National Parks and Wildlife Service re Girraween/Sundown National Parks management plan.
2. Reply to request by Olivia Ostini to supply a list of places of Photographic interest in the Granite Belt for school project. Supplied her with some suggestions.
3. Letter to Radio Station 4QS re advertising our outing and meeting.
4. A letter to Dr. Tony Ewart, Dept. of Geology, University of Q'ld. inviting him to be guest speaker at either our February or March meetings.

Moved by Mr. D. Pfrunder and seconded by Miss D. McDonagh that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted. Carried.

<u>Treasurer's Report</u> - Bank Balance, Aug.22/79	97.66
Receipts	<u>27.60</u>
	\$125.26
Less Payments	<u>12.21</u>
Bank Balance Sept. 26/79	<u>\$113.05</u>

Accounts - Rent for Sept. Meeting \$5.00; and Postage for Sept. Magazine \$6.61.

Moved by Mrs. D. Archer and seconded by Mr. J. O'Donnell that the Treasurer's report be adopted and accounts be passed for payment. Carried.

OUTING REPORT - September Outing:- Mr. R. McCosker reported 17 attended the Outing to Wattle Ridge and the walk along Ramsey Creek on September 23rd.

MINUTES CONTINUED:-

October Outings :

1. Half day wilddflower outing to Mr. Brian McDonagh's area - Wyberba
DATE - Sunday, October 14th.

DEPARTURE TIME - 1 P.M. from Weeroona Park.

LEADER - Mr. Brian McDonagh.

2. Monthly Outing - Sunday, October 21st.

LOCATION - Rivertree Area

DEPARTURE TIME - 8 A.M. from Amosfield Gate.

LEADERS - Mr. Lyle Thompson and Mr. Ray Morris.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 24th October, C.W.A. Rooms 8 P.M.

After Meeting Program - Guest Speaker - Mr. Brian McDonagh
Subject - 2nd of a series on Conservation.

GENERAL BUSINESS:-

Campaign for Prevention of Skin Cancer: Mrs. F. Wilkinson outlined the campaign she was involved in for the prevention of Skin Cancer. Expressed the hope the campaign may gain some publicity through the Club and hoped members would set an example, since they were actively involved in Outdoor Activities.

Threat of removal of trees along road in by-pass area south of Stanthorpe -

Mr. Tom Dunn drew the attention of the club to this possible removal of trees. Moved by Mr. B. McDonagh and seconded by Mrs. M. Marsden that the Executive take all necessary action to save trees in by-pass area.
Carried.

Meeting closed - 9.10 p.m.

After Meeting Programme - Guest Speaker Miss Desley McDonagh presented an interesting programme with a showing of slides of places and peoples of Near Eastern Countries.

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I would like to express our thanks to Desley for sharing her experiences on her trips to Singapore and surrounding islands. The slides gave us a very good picture of life in these areas and wetted the appetite to travel there of those who haven't visited these places yet. Thanks again Desley. (Dot A.)

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TE - had a phone call from our friend Laurie Jeffries in Texas expressing interest in not organising an outing in that area for this year but will do so early next year. He mentioned having two birds (feathered ones of course) seen outside his window eating insects - one he has identified as a Striped Honey Eater

Laurie continues:- the other he is not sure of but thinks it could be an Orange Chat. (Dot.A.)

Report on the Outing to Wattle Ridge, Girraween National Park by our Leader Robin McCosker.

A very pleasant day in the bush was had by the 17 members who attended our last outing. We drove to Mrs. Dore McCosker's property at Wyberba where we paused for smoko then set off into the hills at about 10.30a.m. The late departure seemed to set the pace for the day - rather leisurely - and so we were fortunate to have in our company well known Brisbane naturalist David Hockings and his wife - there were frequent stops to inspect and discuss the varied flora. There had been little rain since our last outing in this area, however there were a large variety of plants in full bloom to remind us of the meaning of the aboriginal word "Girraween" - 'A place of flowers'.

Although access to the top of the ridge is possible and much quicker from a northern approach, we took a more roundabout route from the South-east which afforded some interesting views of the prominent features of the National Park - the Pyramids, Sliprocks, Castle Rock, Minx, Turtle Rock and Mt. Norman. Unfortunately these could not be seen to their best advantage because of the thickening smoke haze.

Near the top of the ridge we inspected the Lyre Bird's nest, built on a platform of rock almost 2 metres above the ground, and beneath an enormous rock overhang opening to the north. The structure of this nest has remained intact for over 20 years to my knowledge, which proves what an ideal nesting site the original owner had chosen. There were no signs that the nest was in current use, however the many recent scratchings in the thick leaf mulch showed that Lyre Birds are still quite active in the area.

We walked on to the western fall of the ridge from where the old Wallangarra-Wyberba road could be seen, and then from the top we had views to Lyra and Ballandean. We then returned to the part of the ridge which we had named "Wattle Ridge" many years ago, because of the almost impenetrable strip of acacia adunca which stood there and could be seen from our house when in bloom. Those wattles are now almost non-existent, all that remains are the decaying trunks and branches criss-crossing the ground beneath a canopy of eucalypts and leptospermums. Perhaps the wattles were killed in a bush fire or perhaps they were no longer required by nature in her process of continual change to the environment. It is interesting to speculate.

Well, speculation aside for the time being - we were all getting quite peckish (famished) as lunch was some distance away in the cars. After lunch we drove around to the place where we left our cars on the previous outing and followed the track to the waterfalls in Ramsay Creek. On this occasion there was no flow of water in the stream (except by artificial means) but it was interesting to see the different range of blooms on show.

I am sure that all those in attendance enjoyed the outing, and like myself, are looking forward to another in this fascinating area.

(Many thanks Robin for this report and also a beaut outing - Dot.A.)

October, 1979.

OVERSEAS NEWS - from BRIBIE ISLAND

by our dear Birdo Friend Zaidee Newman.

During the past few years I have corresponded regularly with a young Indian lawyer and he has hardly been able to avoid the knowledge that I am extremely interested in bird-life particularly and more generally in all aspects of natural history and conservation. From time to time he sends me cuttings called "Spot the Bird" from a Madras newspaper "The Hindu". The writer not only loves his birds but he writes so vividly of country scenes that it is obvious that India even with her huge population, still recognises the need and makes provision for the preservation of the ecology.

I would like to quote from one of the recent articles as it fascinates me to note that awareness of and concern for, nature is truly international. It must in some small way contribute to worldwide goodwill when a problem confronting England should concern an Asian country and that from there the news item should be brought to the attention of an Australian. These countries under very heavy population pressures set us a good example.

Now I quote. "The Robin - *Erithacus rubecula* - is Britain's national bird and there too, though originally a woodland nester it has invaded gardens and hedgerows. The English hedgerows were originally planted to separate fields and pastures and to mark property lines but today they are considered important to wildlife too. Five years ago it was estimated that there were upward of 600,000 miles of hedgerows in the whole of Britain, with an average width of two yards. This mileage represents nearly half a million acres of habitat for birds, small mammals, insects and wildflowers. An astonishingly large area, very much greater than all their national natural reserves put together we are told. It saddens many in that land that barbed wires, electric fences and netting is replacing the hedgerows threatening the "Englishness" or the English landscape. A battle is on to save what is left." end of quote.

(Many thanks Zaidee, good to hear from you again. Dot. A.)

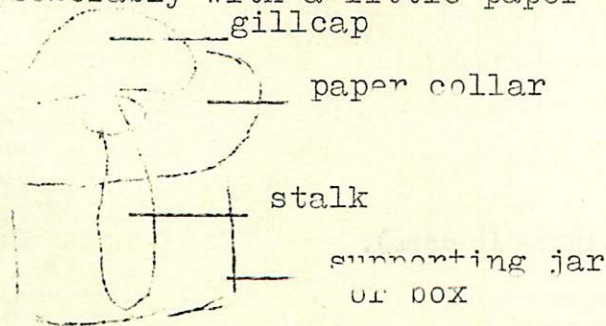
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Letter received by Dore McCosker from the Department of Primary Industries re a toadstool specimen -

The Toadstool specimen you brought to the laboratory for identification last May has proved to be unidentifiable at our Indooroopilly Herbarium. If it reappears we could try again - preferably with 3 or 4 fruiting bodies. When collected these should be allowed to dry out preferably with a little paper "collar" beneath the gill cap to obtain

a spore print. Do not put the specimens in plastic bags as they soon breakdown from bacteria etc.

When specimens are dry - remove spore prints put in an envelope and pack the toadstools separately in small paper bags.



PLEASE NOTE

SUNDAY, October 14th - an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ day outing to Brian McDonagh's property - wildflower outing -

Meet at Weeroona Park at 1 p.m. -

OUR REGULAR MONTHLY OUTING - Sunday, October 21st - to RIVERTREE AREA

Meeting at Amosfield Gates - at 8 A.M.

Just a few things of interest Jean Harslett passed on to me about Rivertree.

Some old timers told her that it was originally called Rivers Three - Maryland River, Boonoooonoo River and Bookookoorara River - but this was not easy to say so it was later called Rivertree.

Others said that these rivers on the map all joined liked the branches of a huge tree going into the Clarence River and that was how it got its name "Rivertree".

The Rivertree Mines

A heap of stones, or a broken shaft
A tunnel that's had a fall,
Those are the signs of Rivertree Mines,
Where they never mine at all.
While old Tooloom is full of holes,
Where the miners gave it best,
Save some poor looneys, who lost their souls
In search of a gander's nest.
Where the ranges rise up to the skies,
From the rocky river bed,
And O'er the hills that wild geese fly,
On the western watershed.
But the time has come when things will hum,
And the river run with wine,
For the great big kings who do those things,
Have floated their great combine.
And the happy dream of Johnson's team,
Coming loaded down with gold,
The pay at last is coming to pass,
For Rivertree Mines are sold.
They will drink champagne, and shout again,
On that great purple day,
Motor cars will glide down the mountain side,
And the wild geese swan's eggs lay.
If you want to know if this is so,
There's one who'll tell you true,
In forty days the mines will blaze,
With a bright electric blue.
Meantime I fear that Anthony's beer,
Will be all that we can stand."

(we believe there is more).