



16 FEB 1981



THE
**GRANITE BELT
NATURALIST**



Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club



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

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

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1980 - 1981

PRESIDENT	Robin McCosker
VICE PRESIDENTS	Colin Hockings John O'Donnell
SECRETARY	Graham Greenup
TREASURER	Dot Archer
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Jean Harslett
NEWSLETTER SUB-COMMITTEE	Janet Hockings Ian Jackson
PUBLICITY OFFICER	Joan Stevenson
LIBRARIAN	Millie Marsden
FLORA OFFICER	Dore McCosker
FAUNA OFFICER	Brian McDonagh
GEOLOGY OFFICER	Maurice Passmore
YOUTH OFFICER	Ruth Greenup
BUSHWALKING OFFICER	Ray Marsden
<u>COMMITTEE</u>	Frank Wilkinson Lyle Thompson David Pfrunder Tom Archer Desley McDonagh Jean Harslett

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.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 26th. NOVEMBER 1980.PRESENT 39, Apologies 5 as per attendance book, best since 28.2.79.VENUE. The meeting was held at the Civic Centre Exhibition Room owing to another booking at the C.W.A. Rooms.MINUTES AND MOTION. The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed, taken as read, moved by Miss Desley Mc. Donagh and seconded by Colin Hockings..... Carried.CORRESPONDENCE:-

- INWARD:-
1. Five Press Statements from the Minister for Culture National Parks and Recreation.
 2. Letter from National Parks and Wildlife Service regarding the forthcoming planning workshop to be held at Girraween. The date for this has been changed from 29th. November to 13th. December.
 3. The N.P.A. Journal of National Parks Association of Qld.
 4. Letter from the Office of the Prime Minister with assurances that drilling on the Great Barrier Reef will continue to be prohibited.
- OUTWARD:-
1. Letter to National Parks and Wildlife Service, confirming our interest in participating at the Girraween Planning Workshop.
 2. Letter to Mr. Guy of Yangan thanking him for allowing us access to his property for the October outing and also thanking him for his talk on the history of the Quarry and the surrounds.
 3. Letter to Radio Station 4.Q.S. requesting broadcast of outing and meeting times.
 4. Letter to the Prime Minister urging that the Federal Government give full protection to the Great Barrier Reef..

MOTION:- Moved by Mr. Lyle Thompson and seconded by Mrs. Mc. Donald that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted.... Carried.BUSINESS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE:- It now appears that we will be able to have more than one delegate at the Girraween Planning Workshop. A letter from the director of N.P and W.S. is expected shortly and will confirm or rebut this. Thus Jean Harslett, Tom Archer, Ray Marsden and John O'Donnell should be able to attend.FINANCIAL REPORT:-

26.11.1980 Credit Balance.....	\$210.08
Receipts. Oct. 22nd 1980 subs.....	\$30.00
Oct. 22nd. 1980 rent collection....	\$6.55
Nov. 13th. 1980 subs.....	\$4.00
Nov. 23rd. 1980 subs.....	\$9.00

Total

\$49.55
\$259.63.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT Cont.

Total.. \$259.63

Payments:

Oct. Room rent.....\$6.00
 222.10.80.....\$ 5.47.
 \$11.47

November credit balance\$248.16.

Accounts to be passed for payment..Room rent $\frac{1}{2}$ of Civic Centre
 \$7.50.

Magazine Postage when amount known.

MOTION:-Moved by treasurer Mrs.D.Archer,seconded by Mrs M.Mars-
 -den that the treasurers report be adopted ..Carried.

GENERAL BUSINESS:-

In the absence of president Robin, the meeting was chaired very smoothly by vice -president,John O'Donnell, who extended a welcome to members and numerous visitors and in particular the Guest Speaker Mr.Roy Wheeler.

On behalf of the C.W.A. Mrs.Marsden apologised for the double booking of the C.W.A. Rooms necessitating our change of venue. Mrs.Marsden's action was so prompt and well organized that, indeed, no inconvenience was occasioned by the club in any way. Thank you Millie.

Jean Harslett pointed out that the rent of the Civic Centre exhibition area room was \$15 and the C.W.A. was agreeing to pay the extra on our usual rent. However ,since the mix-up was not really the fault of the C.W.A. that the least we could do was to pay half. Moved Jean Harslett and seconded Dot Archer that the Club pay \$7.50 towards the rent... Carried.

CHRISTMAS PARTY. The venue for and the date of the Christmas Party was discussed. President Robin had offered the use of his home at Severnlea,an offer for which the club is most grateful. It was considered that the most suitable date would be Dec.13th. following the Girraween Workshop.

The meeting closed at 8.39.pm . Vice President Mr.John O'Donnell then capably introduced our rather special Guest Speaker, the well known Victorian bird observer Mr.Roy Wheeler.

REPORT ON PROGRAMME:- by Jean Harslett.

Mr.Roy Wheeler opened his programme by speaking briefly of his 68 years of bird watching,and 500 birds wiser of personal observing of Australian Species. He also spoke on this trip of the 80 good cocks he had met. The number is now increased as he was hosted for several days while in the district by Janet and Colin Hockings. Nancy Aiken and Loranthee Greenup also provided,I'm sure, more good scones for morning teas. Mrs.Loranthee Greenup was interested to meet Mr.Wheeler,after years of correspondence and providing bird observations for him over many years.

Mr. Wheeler is one of Australia's well known bird observers. He has the honour of being the first Australian to have been award -ed the M.B.E. directly for work on conservation and Nature Study. Bird watching for 68 years and 500 species wiser,which he has pers -onally observed. He has 16 years of service to the International

Mr. Roy Wheeler's Programme by Jean Harslett Cont.

COUNCIL for BIRD PRESERVATION, in which Prince Philip has taken a very active interest.

He has been associated as writer or editor with 16 publications or books, Sec. of Bird Observers Club of Vic., Vice-President of the Gould League of Victoria and Life member of 3 ornithological assoc.

Following the passing of his wife Vera, Mr Wheeler decided to travel around Australia, with the objective of observing in one year, and surpassing the figure of 490 sightings by Mr. Arnold Mc. Gill of Sydney. He joined any trips in the year done by other bird observers and commenced by joining the trip by the Bird Observers Club to the remote Kimberly areas in W.A. in June 1979. A trip across the Nullabor in Sept. by R.A.O.U. 1979. Mr. Wheeler's address titled "Chasing a Record" was well illustrated by some outstanding photographs collected from some of the best known bird photographers of Australia and depicted many rare and most unusual species.

He began in Canberra with number one observation a "Galah", this recorded on New Years Day. The route progressed through Victoria, South Australia and N.S.W. many bird observers called upon, many stays with them and plenty of Human interest along with other comments supported all the way by those top photographs of birds. Queensland was visited next by March, the list went from 249, to 340 during April and May in Southern Qld. including Green Mountains and visits west to the Malcolm Wilsons and Camerons who helped the list along considerably by their local knowledge. Back to Melbourne thence to Kimberleys. Then Adelaide, Alice Springs Darwin, Mt Isa Cairns various reef islands. The 500 tally was created by the viewing of the common noddy. At Binalong N.S.W. a Supberb Parrot seen on 31st. Dec. brought the list to the tally to 501.

Mr. Wheeler stayed in 80 homes and saw 35 species not previously listed by him. Two new records of birds to Aust. namely the Green Sandpiper from Northern Europe and Asia and the Brown-headed Gull from the HongKong, both migrants.

Mr. Wheeler was asked during question time, "How many miles?" His reply was a part ownership in Australian airlines!!! Though many slides shown Mr. Wheeler held the attention of everyone throughout and indeed we really were on our toes to get to that 500 figure, and were excited when it was reached. The vote of thanks for such a memorable programme was given by Jean Harslett and carried enthusiastically. A number of visitors interested in bird watching throughout the district, joined us for the night and it was splendid to have them with us, to enjoy this unusual programme and to see such wonderful pictures of species we may never have the chance or stamina to carry out.

I would also like to record in these notes that Mrs Loranthe Greenup was present and met Mr. Wheeler in person for the first time, after corresponding with him and sending him bird observations for 30 years. Both were delighted with this meeting. Some one asked how many years of observing and recording to earn a kiss from the guest of honour? The answer in this case thirty years !!!!

The report on the outing to Mount Cordeaux led by Mr. Colin Hockings will appear in the next bulletin.

However an extract from a letter from Mr. Geoff Monteith (Curator of Entomology at the Queensland Museum) may be of interest about a very colourful and photographed "longicorn" beetle. This particular beetle was so colourful that I was really taken by it having only seen this sort of colouration in exotic species. I have on several occasions seen the most comprehensive collection of this family which is housed in Sydney and was the collection of the late Mr. Keith Mc.Keown, an Australian authority on the group. The extract from Mr. Monteith's letter is fairly enthusiastic and reads thus,

"Despite its bright colouration, it is apparently a Prionine." (a family of which the other representatives are brown) "I've seen it once or twice before in collections, always very old specimens. We had a couple in the University Collection, collected for student collections and labelled "South Johnstone". I remember I once took them to Sydney with a bunch of other un-named longicorns to check them in the bib Mc.Keown Collection in the Australian Museum-without finding it there. They were such un-Australian looking things that I always had a Gnawing suspicion that a few mis-labelled exotics had found their way into the student collection. However this very fresh specimen from you scotches that belief !

Your specimen, Jean is so much larger than any previously seen. Did you notice its really remarkable mandibles ?. I have never seen them in other species..Yours is a male so perhaps its large size and specially modified mandibles are characteristic of the sex."

That completes Geoff's remarks ,however it is interesting to note that the only two known specimens came from South Johnstone and this from a scrub area in the other extremity of Queensland. which suggests the possibility of a very long range. It was certainly the most colourful longicorn beetle I have ever seen and was in its pristine beauty of being newly emerged.

Jean Harslett

REPORT on the NATIONAL PARK WORKSHOP.

A tremendously successful workshop and planning committee seminar was held at Girraween on Dec.13th.1980, which was attended by Jean Harslett, Tom Archer, Ray Marsden and John O'Donnell from our club and we represented the club and scouts. Our Club had prepared a submission some months previously, which gave members the chances of being aware of all the exciting things happening in National Parks in our region.

The Seminar chaired by our local member Mr. Peter McKechnie was opened by the Minister for National Parks Hon. Gibbs. who at the time held this portfolio. Mr. Gibbs has been a splendid representative for National Parks, much good work was done during his term, and we know he will be a splendid member in his new portfolio and wish him well. We will miss him in his old one. The National Park and Wildlife Service deserve praise for the manner in which this seminar was conducted. With many people gathered with quite diverse opinions, they conducted with great dignity, and the dispensing of much knowledge, to everyone which in turn created a much better

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL PARKS WORKSHOP Cont:

understanding all around and better goodwill. Mr. Bob Spears and Mr. Trevor Vollbon from the Brisbane office and planning committee and their efforts should be highly commended, our local and better known staff provided cups of tea and other facilities for the seminars smooth working.

Jean Harslett.

CHRISTMAS PARTY A small number of members attended the Christmas Party which was held at Robin and Trish Mc.Coskers home. Some came on after the National Park Seminar, others were unable to come because of pressure of other social activities. Good fellowship was enjoyed, and during the evening Dot Archer played the right music at the piano for the festive season and in her usual way could play any request or favourite. Thank you to Robin and Trish for supplying the venue.

NEXT OUTING

DATE SUNDAY 22nd. FEBRUARY 1981.

LEADER Mr. FRANK WILKINSON.

DEPARTURE WEEROONA PARK

TIME 9 am.

PLACE Probably Dr. Darks Property along the eastern edge of the plateau near Willson's Downfall. At the time of going to press Frank was still away but should there be any change, it will be notified through the Border Post.

NEXT PROGRAMME.

DATE Wednesday 25th February 1981.

PLACE Q.C.W.A. Rooms.

TIME 8pm.

SPEAKER Mr. David Raff of Karrara.

Mr. David Raff won a Nuffield Scholarship to study Agriculture overseas, and has some very interesting things to tell us. The title of his lecture is "Agriculture and the Environment". The subject is very pertinent to us all and without doubt will be interesting. Mr. and Mrs. Marsden had the opportunity of hearing him and were so impressed that they endeavoured and succeeded in getting him for our club as a speaker. Mr. Raff is coming a long way to do this for us, at a busy time thus we hope members take full advantage of the opportunity and come along and bring any interested friends. Agriculture does have a tremendous impact on the environment and the subject is important to us all. Overseas there is strong thought given to this problem, thus it will be of special interest to learn something of this.

UNUSUAL NESTING SIGHTS.

Mr. Graham Greenup reported that a small roll of insulated wire hung up on the outside of the shed wall had proved an irresistible place for a pair of Blue Wrens to nest. The yellow colouring of the insulation wire may have given the feeling of golden grass.

Jean Harslett was shown a nest by Miss Helen Butler of a pair of King Parrots which had nested on a perfectly flat piece of ground in the middle of nowhere. The shining white eggs were like little headlights, when the nest was left. However despite this they did not fall to predators, but eggs dried out in severe heat of an unusually hot period.