



16 MAR 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 25th.FEBRUARY 1981.PRESENT:28,Apologies 7, as per the attendance book.

President Robin opened the meeting by extending a welcome to all present,particularly our Guest Speaker,Mr.David Raff.and his wife Jill and other visitors.including Mrs.Temple-Watts a member of both the Chinchilla and Toowoomba Nats.Clubs.

Motion: The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed,taken a read,moved by Mrs."illie Marsden,seconded by Mr.Don Lightfoot  
Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:INWARD:1. N.P.A.News,journal of National Parks Assoc. of Qld.

2. Newsletter of Richmond Valley Naturalists Club.

3. From Qld.National Park &amp; Wildlife Service,a summary of the the findings of the discussion groups at the National Parks workshop held at Girraween Dec.13th. 1980.

4. From the Australian Conservation council,a questionnaire to enable the club to be included in the Green Pages a directory of non-Government conservation and enviromental group.

OUTWARD:1. Letter to Radio Station 4 Q.S. re date and venue for the Christmas Party.

MOTION: Moved by Martin Davies,seconded by David Pfrunder that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed.  
Carried.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

November Balance Cr.....	\$248.16
Cheque on which bank stopped payment	\$5.00
(lost by Education Dept. for Centre...Total	\$253.16
Receipts Nov. Subs.....	\$12.00
Rent Collection.....	\$ 4.00
December Subs.....	\$10.00
	<u>\$26.00</u>

Total.. \$279.16

Payments:

Nov.26th 1980.Education Centre(to replace cancelled cheque

\$5.00

Nov.C.W.A. Rent.....

\$7.50.

Dec.11th 80 Magazine Postage.....

\$4.50.

\$17.00.Feb. Cr. Balance..... \$262.16.

Accounts passed for payment. Room Rent..\$6.00.

Mag. Postage.....\$4.42.

Moved Dot Archer seconded May Prentice that the treasurers report be received and the accounts passed for payment.

GENERAL BUSINESS: A. Reports on National Park Workshop at Girraween were given by three of the four club members who attended.Tom Archers group was mainly concerned with fire management, ean Harslett's with general park management,and Ray Marsden's with control of feral animals.

B.Paul Grimshaw has been transfered to the Brisbane region & is unavailable as guest speaker for March meeting. Miss Desley Mc.Donagh kindly offered to present slides taken in

GENERAL BUSINEES. Cont. Jordan, Israel and Egypt, by her on a recent trip.. This offer was greatly accepted.

OUTING REPORT Report on Feb. outing was given by Robin Mc.Coske (see full report page 4)

NEXT OUTING Mrs Dore Mc.Cosker reported on pre-outing & plans she has prepared for March 22nd. Venue Texas-Limevale area, & a most interesting day is assured, including a visit to a marble quarry, Alan Cunninghams Crossing etc. An invitation has been extended to the Historical Soc. members. Scheduled departure Weeroona Park 8.30 am... 'Warroo' 9.30.

NEXT MEETING: C.W.A. Rooms, DESLEY Mc.DONAGH is Guest Speaker. Meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Guest Speaker Mr. David Raff, cattle breeder of Karara. In 1980 David was a recipient of a Nuffield Fellowship which saw him in Britain and the Continent for six months. He spoke about agriculture in Britain in a most interesting & entertaining manner.

DORE Mc.COSKER'S OUTING NOTES. for 22nd. MARCH TEXAS AREA.

Nats. and Historians will meet either at Weeroona Park at 8.30 am. or at the junction Stanthorpe Inglewood road at the 'WARROO' corner at 9.30am.

Under the guidance of Dore and fellow member Laurie and Joy Jeffrey of Texas we will visit some historical sites and some grand old river gums, relics of former days... We will have to measure the girths. At Limevale, the Red Bank is an intriguing bank of coloured (mud or ochre) where cameras will be clicking. Don't wear your best clothes to wander through the old marble mine and be prepared for heat.

A visit to the Texas Museum with some of their members is planned and if time permits a visit to the place where Alan Cunningham, famous botanist and explorer crossed the Dumares River, on his way to discover the Darling Downs in 1827, will conclude the outing. Latter only if time permits.

We will have lunch near the cars. There will not be a lot of walking, anywhere, but I hope a lot of interest for everyone no matter what their tastes.

Bird life was plentiful on my pre-outing trip so bring your binocs. The Grey Boxes were in flower to the joy of honey loving birds, and I hope to find again some of the interesting plants.

The club hopes there will be a good roll up for this outing Dore has put a good deal of effort into the planning of it which is a good start for its success, and many will enjoy meeting up with the Jeffrey family again.

PLEASE NOTE THE EARLIER TIME OF DEPARTURE FOR THIS TRIP Weeroona Park 8.30 am or if you prefer 9.30. at the Warroo Road corner.

DORE MCCOSKER.

DAVID RAFF'S PROGRAMME Cont (SEE PAGE 2)

Canada, N.Z. and Britain & is known as the Nuffield Farming Trust now. It was interesting to go to areas, that because of climate could be so ordered, eg. plant same day each year. He claimed the Nat. Farmers Union, 350 staff & capital of \$17,00000. as the most powerful political body in Britain, suggested we get behind ours. & that we have a 'Lucky Country'. Jean.H.



MARCH 1981.

REPORT ON THE OUTING TO DR. DARK'S PROPERTY by Mr. ROBIN Mc.COSKER.

The first outing for 1981 on Sunday 22nd. February was to one of the sub-tropical gorges on Dr. Dark's property at Willson's Downfall.

The morning was quite hot and steamy as we left Stanthorpe and when we parked our cars in the clearing at the top of the gorge, there were impressive thunderheads towering above. Tom's suggestion to have a cuppa was a good one, as we spent the next fifteen minutes in the cars waiting for the shower of rain to pass. Fortunately the sun broke through again and we bravely set off down the track, thinking about how much the leeches would be enjoying our company, and enjoying us!, especially if it started to rain again. Luckily the rain held off, unluckily we didn't disappoint all the leeches!!

The outing was to be led by Mr. Frank Wilkinson, but as he was not available we had to follow our noses. We walked down the track and were soon engulfed in the jungle-like vegetation, with orchids and staghorns and various creepers hanging from the tall trees, above the lush undergrowth. A repeated comment was regarding such vegetation so close to Stanthorpe. After a brief sojourn on the wrong track we walked to the top of a cleared ridge then down to an interesting granite outcrop with spectacular views across the gorge to Mount Lindsay on the far north-eastern horizon. On the way back to the cars for lunch, five members of the party were fortunate to meet and make friends with a carpet snake which they estimated was over three metres long. They said they tried to persuade him to come and join us for lunch, but he declined the invitation as he had just eaten; the evidence, a couple of feathers, were all that remained.

The storm brewing in the west rumbled a good deal closer, as we finished lunch, and we headed for home as the rain started falling, thus ending any thoughts of an attempt to see Boonoo-Boonoo Falls on the same day.

A previous Nats. outing to this area was led by Frank Wilkinson, just one month short of ten years ago. That outing attracted 45 members, and although there were only 13 members in our party I am sure we enjoyed the outing just as much.

ROBIN Mc.COSKER.

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MOUNT CORDEAUX OUTING...CUNNINGHAM'S GAP.. NOVEMBER 1980.BY Mr. COLIN HOCKINGS LEADER.

Despite reports of heavy rain and flooded creeks, sixteen people attended the outing, including five members of the Queensland Naturalists Club from Brisbane.

On arriving we wondered where the heavy rain had been falling for it appeared not to be in evidence at the Gap.

The ascent was made at a very leisurely pace, giving members plenty of time to observe the rain forest around them.

MOUNT CORDEAUX OUTING ..CUNNINGHAM'S GAP .. NOVEMBER 1980  
by COLIN HOCKINGS. Continued

Brilliantly coloured Golden Whistlers were numerous and their curiosity gave members plenty of opportunity to observe their actions and habits. Pairs of Rufous Fantails also caught our attention with their displays on the moss and lichen covered logs beside the track. We were fortunate enough to find a Rufous Fantails nest with its characteristic wine-glass shape. Many Scrub Wrens darted through the undergrowth as we passed along the track.

Cat-birds, obviously named for their cat-like call, were heard by most members. However patience is required if you hope to catch a glimpse, any more than a fleeting one, of this Bowerbird relative. The patience of a few members was rewarded with a good view of a couple of birds with their green and paler spotted plumage. While waiting, Olive Hockings pointed out that their cat-like call is a mewed version of something which sounds a little like "Here I are!", and that is just what this tricky little chap seems to be avoiding view and challenging you, yet playing a humorous game with you.

One of the members found a brightly coloured beetle which aroused the interest of Jean Harslett. Further investigation at the Queensland Museum, showed the beetle to be very rare, justifying Jean's interest.

Another point of interest was a couple of Lyre-Bird feathers found in the leaf litter at the edge of the track. These would of course belonged to an 'Albert' Lyrebird before being moulted. Thus different from the Stanthorpe species. In the same vicinity Trap-door Spider's nests. It was of particular interest to notice that the trap-door itself had tiny vegetation actually growing on the 'door' making its difficult detection even more so than usual.

A lizard was one of the interesting finds of the day. It was the Angle Headed or Southern Forest Dragon (*Gonocephalus spinipes*) This beautifully marked lizard with its sharply ridged eyebrows and long toes, was sunning itself on a rock beside the track. Later a second specimen was found on the way back to the cars. It was amazing to note that the first chap found high up in the rain-forest was very beautifully marked with a lichen pattern and colour. The second specimen was quite low down near the road and in the dark brown leaf litter, and was also dark brown and plain coloured to match its particular surroundings. After a short period, when it moved out into a sunny area it became very perceptibly lighter in colour.

We had lunch at the "Mine" and speculated over it being natural or man-made. After lunch we proceeded to the 'Saddle' on the northern side of the mountains summit. We were too late by some weeks, to see the giant red lily flowers (*Doryanthes palmeri*) Probably the abnormally dry seasons have

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MOUNT CORDEAUX OUTING NOVEMBER... Cont.

caused them to flower early.

The lack of rain was causing signs of distress in the rain-forest beyond the saddle. Many plants were wilting badly. It was here that some members saw a Rose Robin.

On the return journey to the cars, a keen eyed member spotted a Rock-Wallaby perched on the mountain side. It sat there unconcerned, as the whole party had it pointed out to them.

After a welcome cup of tea, at the roadside park at the Gap, members departed in opposite directions, Brisbane and Stanthorpe all having thoroughly enjoyed the day.

Colin Hockings.

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A LESSER OBSERVED BUTTERFLY SEEN ON THE MOUNT CORDEAUX DAY.

Soon after starting the walk an exceptionally good look at/ø one of the larger butterflies in the "Browns" clan (Heteronmpha mirifica) was seen. The word mirific is an ancient word meaning "exciting wonder and astonishment" and it was no doubt used for this species because of its surprise colouration in the female which is so dark brown, the general effect is of black and cream. We had an astonishingly good look at this lady. The male which emerges some months earlier is super-ficially so like one of our commonest butterflies, that it is almost always overlooked. Neither are seen often, and then in Queensland only in the limited habitat of rainforest from Maroochydore to the Border Ranges. Thus such a splendid view was quite a thrill. The black and cream is most striking, but when it closes its wings the underside so matches the leaves of the rainforest floor, even the highly observant are unlikely to see it, unless it loses its nerve and moves. It has such strong belief in its own camouflage that it rarely commits this error.

Jean Harslett.

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REPORT ON THE GUEST SPEAKER, Mr. DAVID RAFF by Jean Harslett

Mr. David Raff of Karrara was our guest speaker for the Feb. meeting and provided a very thought stimulating talk to a well attended Nats meeting. His visit overseas was occasioned by the winning of a Nuffield Scholarship enabling him to study agriculture in higher fields overseas. For part of the study time and also for our evening he was accompanied by his wife. This was pleasing for Stanthorpe people as she is well remembered as part of the Bridle family who left 'Ballandean Station' 8 or 10 years ago. David explained that the Nuffield Scholarship originally allowed a study period in a variety of fields in Commonwealth Countries, but finance became low with rising costs. In mid 1970's former scholarship holders got together and established a fund to send 2 members from each of Austral

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