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

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

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1981 - 1982

PRESIDENT	John O'Donnell
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Robin McCosker Frank Wilkinson
SECRETARY	Joan Stevenson
TREASURER	Dot Archer
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YOUTH OFFICER	Errol Walker
BUSHWALKING OFFICER	Ray Marsden
<u>COMMITTEE</u>	Colin Hockings David Pfrunder Tom Archer Ailsa Wilkinson Lyle Thompson Jean Harslett

MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at C.W.A. ROOMS at 8p.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 NEWSPAPER.

THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB..... MINUTES OF
THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26th.1981.

ATTENDANCE:- Present 25..... Apologies 10.

The President welcomed members and visitors to the meeting.

MINUTES:- That the minutes be taken as read was moved by Mr.Graham Greenup and seconded by Mr.T.Archer and carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:- INWARD:-

- 1.A letter was received from Mrs.J.Davies.
- 2.N.P.A. Magazine Vol.51 No.5 (August)
3. Down Under Vol.20 No.2 (July).
4. Pamphlets and printed material on Rain Forests from the Australian Conservation Foundation.

OUTWARD:-

1. Letter written to Mrs.Jean Davies.
- 2.Letter written to Mrs Lyle Thompson.
3. Letter to Mr.and Mrs Colin Hockings.
4. Letter to Mrs.Joan Ferris, thanking her for auditing the books
5. Two letters to 4QS. re outings and the meeting.
6. Letter to Brookvale Park re flowers for the Heritage Festival.

MOTION:- It was moved by Mrs.Dore Mc.Cosker and seconded by Mr.E.Walker that the inward correspondence be received and the outward be endorsed..... Carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:-

JULY 1st. 1981. Credit Balance\$56.31.

July receipts..Subscriptions \$26.00
Room Rental Monies \$16.65.

August Subscriptions \$32.00
Stanthorpe Camera
Club for $\frac{1}{2}$ Year
rental at P.O. Box \$ 8.00

Total \$82.65.

\$82.65.
\$138.96

Payments

August 3rd. 1981.

July Room Rent \$6.00

June/July Magazine

duplication... \$10.00

July Magazine Postage \$6.15.

Magazine Back Pages \$12.80.

\$34.95

August 26th.1981 Credit Balance...

\$ 104. 01.

Treasurer's Report Cont:-

Mrs.D.Archer moved that her report showing a credit balance of \$104.01 be received and that accounts for C.W.A.: Rent \$6.00, Rover Scouts for printing Magazine \$5.00 Paper for Bulletin and rubber stamp \$82.50 and \$4.25 from Lees, Postage \$5.68 and the secretary's Petty Cash \$10.00 be passed for payment, seconded by Mr.L.Thompson Carried.

OUTING REPORT The outing to the Coolmunda Dam area was led by Mr. M. Passmore. the best display of wildflowers was on the poor sandy country, with boronia being most prolific. Lunch was held at the Coolmunda Dam picnic area with interest focusing on the pelicans and the gulls seen there. A new area to the Club was at Mosquito Creek where we were just too early for the Kunzea and the Calythrix.

NEXT OUTING(SPECIAL EXTRA) A wildflower special will be held on Sunday 6th. September to the Blue Mountain area. Dore and Leon Mc.Cosker will be the leaders. Members are asked to meet at the Bowhunters parking area situated on the Amosfield Road at 1.30pm.

NEXT OUTING:-The next outing will be to the Mount Norman area and will be led by Mr.Robin Mc.Cosker, will be of a walking nature, and probably in a south-easterly direction from the take-off point. Lunch will be carried and had en-route. Departure time from Weeroona Park 8.30am. At the time of going to print Robin is away in Brisbane but he rang before departure, with the above information.

DATE:- SUNDAY 20th. Sept.

PLACE:- Mount Norman area.

LEADER Robin Mc.Cosker (Phone 835217)

TIME:- Weeroona Park 8.30am.

NEXT MEETING Frank and Aisla Wilkinson will take us to Norfolk Island, depicting a recent visit there. They have had several visits there and have lived with local residents so have a much better appreciation of the countryside than most visitors.

GENERAL BUSINESS:- The Heritage Festival at Brookvale Park. need wildflowers for their display on August 29th.

Mrs.M.Marsden will endeavour to have these specimens taken to Toowoomba for dispatch to Dalby.

S.G.A.P. Flowers will be needed for their display and they are to be left at The Health Food Shop, from where they will be sent to Brisbane

A report was given on the area at Beaudesert, where parties can meet and visit the Stinston crash site.

Camping is allowed at the 'Cattle Camp', adjacent to the National Fitness Camp. The walk to the site would be

GENERAL BUSINESS Cont.

a good 10 hours, while to Westray's grave it is about 7 hours.

Mr. and Mrs Tom Chapman then gave a most interesting and illustrated talk on the Wildflower Trust of Great Britain. They explained how each of the seven trust areas had a different ~~waterfowl~~ purpose in breeding or migration of waterfowl.

REPORT ON THE INGLEWOOD OUTING 23rd. August. by

Maurice Passmore.

A perfect day drew about 40 members out for the day at Inglewood, despite the distance involved. After meeting at Greenup and after enjoying morning 'smoko', the group proceeded to a Yarran ridge west of the Coolmunda Dam, to inspect the wild flowers. This type of country must be the most infertile of any to be found in Australia, but this obviously suits the Boronias, Hoveas and Acacias etc. As the country improves Broadleaf Ironbark appears amongst the Thready-barked Oak, and it doesn't need much imagination to realise what such areas are like in a bush fire. However no such problems worried us, on this occasion, and the Boronias, Hoveas, Indigofera, Ricinocarpos, Pultenea, Stypantra and Acacias were a sheer delight. Unfortunately we were just too early for the Grevilleas.

Having spent a pleasant morning amongst the flowers we moved to the Coolmunda Dam for a prolonged lunch, when attention was focused on the bird life. Although 142 species have been recorded for the bird atlas from this area, only 36 were seen during our visit. The most conspicuous were the Pelicans, Coots, Pied and Black Cormorants, Grey Gulls and the western parrots, but it was a large white Egret that attracted the most attention as he fished the shallow waters, accompanied by two black-fronted Dotterels.

Errol's kite also vied with the birds for our attention the two-stringed steerable variety being something new for most of us.

Having allowed lunch to settle we ventured north to the Mosquito Creek area, and Forestry Reserve, hoping to find the Caythrix and Sprengelia in flower, but unfortunately we were too early. A week of warm weather would have done the trick, but it was not to be on this occasion. We did however, find the mosquitoes, but there were a few enthusiastic entomologists who wished to study these more closely.

Cypress Pine forests do, however, have their attractions and after a general look around we all decided to head off for home. The consensus of opinion was that it had been a very enjoyable day.

HALF DAY WILDFLOWER OUTING 6th Sept 1981.

A small group of members enjoyed a climb up to the summit of Blue Mountain, on a perfect Spring afternoon, thanks to

BLUE MOUNTAIN TRIP Cont.

the Leon Mc.Coskers who knew the area very well and to Dore Mc.Cosker who was the 'inspiration' on the wildflower scene. Blue Mountains special is the Boronia species with a lovely deep pink bud, and still some doubt to its identity. Millie also showed us another of the lesser known Boronias, called B.anethifolia. Millie Marsden and May Prentice had gone up Blue Mountain the previous week to gather some specimens for the Brookvale Park Heritage Display and we thank them for doing this for our Club.

An ACIENT TRADITION..... by J.O.D.

I used to think that the English Monarchy had a long history, around a thousand years of heritage. The Romans held power in Britain a thousand years earlier again. But the great tradition of tree eradication is far older-faithfully handed down through generations to the present day, where the art has reached great depths of sophistication.

We don't know when the process of deforestation and over-grazing started, but early in the history of civilisation, (around 3,000 B.C.) the Sumerians on the Euphrates had to clear silt clogged irrigation channels. The increased silt load of the river was carried down from the Armenian hills following clearing of trees and the grazing of sheep and goats. The Phoenicians (in Lebanon) mercilessly levelled their magnificent cedar forests from about 1,200 B.C. onwards. At one time, 150,000 men laboured to procure timber for sale! Grass and tree seedlings grew behind the axemen, and so the goatherders moved in and made regeneration impossible.

The Greeks cultivated the best land early in their history, but under population pressure, cleared the hills to grow wheat. Around 600 B.C. Solon advised Attica that the farmers take this land out of cultivation and to plant olives and grapes instead. The advice went unheeded and by 450 B.C. this land was worn out, and civilisation would have declined without grain imports.

The great tradition is upheld with almost religious fervour, in Australia. It matters little whether one looks at the pushing of mulga trees for drought feeding, gidyea and brigalow scrubs being "levelled" for "improved" pastures, wallum lands for pastures or exotic pines, rain-forests for dairying or sugarcane, or the endless clearing of land for crops, or the dreary poisoning of the Eucalypts with Tordon, the idea behind it is always the same...maximum production..with minimum imagination. This is exactly the same approach as that of the Roman proconsuls in North Africa around 100 B.C., which changed the land from a granary to semi-desert in about five centuries.

The first problem is to find or determine why disrespect for the land still exists. Perhaps it is ig-

AN ANCIENT TRADITION Cont.

ignorance and greed....a case of miserable minds drugged by materialism. But this explanation does not cover all cases. Is it because trees seem to mock us with their height and grandeur - giving us a sort of 'mental mentality'? Is it their longevity - still far greater than ours, in spite of the modern miracle of medicine? Or is it their usefulness, their integral part in the balance of Nature, while modern has only a reverse Midas touch, the environment crumbling in our path? Perhaps our problem's answer lies across the sea - as did that of North Africa. so long ago.

Whatever the answer, the ancient tradition goes sadly on, farmers and graziers seem to naively consider that History won't repeat itself !!

John O'Donnell

Thank you John for a thought provoking and pertinent article.

PERSONAL Our thoughts and good wishes are with our treasurer, who is in hospital, and likewise with May Prentice who has Karby in hospitable.

TREES.

A quote I always enjoy and is appropriate to fill this space, to follow John O'Donnell's article

" Among the trees are to be found the tallest, heaviest, and older plants, and for mankind perhaps the most beautiful of living things. From the substance of trees we derive food fuel and shelter. From their grace and enduring beauty we draw inspiration, and a sense of spiritual renewal.

The greatest force in the natural world is growth, and the noblest example of that force is a tree. Springing from a trifling seed, when grown it draws water against gravity. 'If a plant had a brain, said Darwin it would lie in its roots'. A single tuft of Blue Grass produces in one season up to 84,000 root branches and a million root hairs.

Transpiration pull is felt in the tiniest veinlets of a leaf and is communicated back to root hairs. A 100 year old beech tree with 1/2 million leaves gives off 50 quarts of water a day. This creates a force strong enough to pump up, in six months, ten tons of water from the soil which in turn is sent forth again into the air, in a quiet refreshing breath

Yours in Nets Jean.

NONSENSE DEPT.

Women have cleaner minds than men, they charge them more often !!