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THE
**GRANITE BELT
NATURALIST**



**Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club**



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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
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Jean Harslett
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FAUNA OFFICER	Brian McDonagh
GEOLOGY OFFICER	Maurice Passmore
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..MONTHLY MEETING
MINUTES...WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 28th. 1981 at the C.W.A.

ATTENDANCE. 17..... APOLOGIES 14.

The President welcomed all to the meeting, especially our Guest Speaker, Keith Fraser, and Mr. Frank and Mrs. Wilkinson.

MINUTES:- That the minutes be taken as read was moved by L. Thompson and seconded by A. Wilkinson..Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:- INWARD:-

1. Raption Assoc. re Peregrin Falcon
2. Keith Fraser..re meeting as Guest Speaker.
3. Press Statements. Moreton Is., Rare species, mammal survey.
4. N.F.A. News.. Vol 51 No.7.
5. Richmond River Nats. agazine (October)
6. Contact..Vol.9, No.3. (Sept.)

OUTWARD:-

1. 4QS re meeting and outing.
 2. Keith Fraser re October meeting.
- Moved by T. Archer and seconded by M. Passmore that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed..... Carried.

Business from the Minutes.

Discussion took place about the peregrine falcon, but no recent sightings have been made by members. The effect of DDT. as a possible influence on egg shell quality was mentioned.

FINANCIAL REPORT:-

Book Balance to 28th. October 1981	\$98.08.
Receipts October... Subs...	\$32.00
Room Rent Col.....	6.00
Room Rent Col.....	6.00.....
	<u>== \$4.00</u>

\$142.08.

No payments made during month as Treasurer was away.

October 28th. 1981 Cr. Balance..... \$142.08

Accounts to be passed for payment.

October Room Rent..... \$6.00

October Mag. Duplication \$5.00

October Mag. Postage (to come)

Mrs. D. Archer moved that the credit balance of \$142.08 be received, and accounts passed for payment for Oct rent, magazine and postage (\$6.06.), seconded by D. Lightfoot, and Carried.

OUTING REPORT:-

J.O'Donnell gave a report, briefly, on the outing which was well attended, venue Lee's Hill. Many varieties of flora were observed, and it warrents a further visit.

NEXT OUTING: - Proposed outing for November is a through walk of the northern areas of town hills with an overnight camp for those interested. The camp will be in a position to enable one day hikers to join in. R. Marsden is to lead the trip.

NEXT MEETING: - Mr. John Walter from Toowoomba has been asked and is willing to do so, but would prefer to speak on a Friday night, if the meeting could be changed. D. Archer and seconded by L. Thompson that the meeting date be changed to Friday November 27th. and that the booking be changed to suit the above.

SPECIMENS: - Brian Mc. Donagh brought two specimens of Rulingia. These are the only two species which occur in this district, and both are to be found on Brian's property. One is of prostrate character, and has come up like a carpet, and is blooming in profusion this year, after a fire in the vicinity, last year. This was thought to be Rulingia dasphylla, but its more recent title is R. hermanniifolia, whilst the tall growing species is probably Rulingia salvifolia. Several species are quite similar here and our local enthusiasts really had their thinking caps on.

John O'Donnell spoke of finding a barn owl, being a traffic casualty, only to be devoured by a goanna. He also brought a pardalotes nest that had been removed from its nesting area.. (See more detailed notes further on in this issue)

BUSINESS: - There being no business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

GUEST SPEAKER: - Mr. Keith Fraser from the Passchendaele State Forest gave an outline of the plans and workings of the local forestry. He explained the purposes of planting and felling and will be only too willing to allow a Nats. outing to be held at the Forestry. Mr. Maurice Passmore extended a vote of thanks on behalf of those present

Joan Stevenson. Hon. Sec.

SPECIMENS

John O'Donnell has provided us with some fuller notes on the specimens displayed at the meeting, and the thoughts expressed are interesting to ponder upon. Thank you, John.

The Spotted Pardalote Nest This pardalote starts digging during July and excavates a tunnel about two feet long. At the far end of this a nest of fine bark strips is made. This particular nest, of stringy bark, had been dug out of the ground, presumably by a fox. One can only hope that he choked on the nestlings.

The Barn Owl: - A sad story was related about how a goanna dismembered and devoured most of an intended specimen, while I was in Warwick. This bird had been killed by a car, but was otherwise undamaged (so to speak)

The Barn Owl Cont.

Barn owls are not rare, but are very seldom seen or heard. They are almost white underneath, but have an attractive mottled pattern of rufous grey and brown on the back and wings. a pure white face and 'button eyes.

John O'Donnell.

Incidentally John had decided to share this find with us, as said, but thought it might not prove a good companion in the car on a hot day. Carefully placing it off the road, to pick it up later, he really recorded another interesting happening to catch a satisfied goanna red-handed, an interesting observation in the train of events, which we do not always have the opportunity to observe. (Ed.)

LEE'S HILL OUTING..SUNDAY 25:10:81 REPORT....

By ERROL WALKER.....

An afternoon walk was something new in the way of Nats. Club outings and judging by the roll up, we may do well to consider this format again in the future.

We welcomed Brother Lleagin and Brother Hodgkinson from Warwick who both showed immense interest in everything around them. Later in the day Brother Hodgkinson was to be all but hidden by a rucksack full of wildflowers and grasses, for his art class, and Brother Lleagin, had the whole afternoon, including bird calls and comments, all captured on a small cassette recorder.

By 1pm our driveway resembled a used car lot. Forty-two walkers plus one 'hanger-on' in a pouch in front of Dad were introduced to Mr. Roy Fetzler, who was to guide us for the afternoon. We then headed west along Hale Haven Drive towards Roy's home.

Roy led us up the old track past an inquisitive donkey from where we were able to ascend Lee's Hill, on the least possible gradient. He was kept busy all afternoon answering questions and quoting interesting snippets of local history. I even noticed a few old friendships being re-kindled.

There was no shortage of wild flowers for the enthusiast. Some small patches of flannel flowers were just about at their best, while the 'callitris, at the summit was all but finished.

A Bearded Orchid caught Brian Mc.Donagh's eye. Not a good specimen but it is a little late in the Spring, for a good show of this variety.

Kerry Mc.Cosker unearthed an aboriginal stone axe. She later said that she found it because her nose is closer to the ground than anyone else's!!

We were able to obtain a grandstand view, and a rather different view of Stanthorpe from one vantage point, while from the summit a panoramic view of the Severn River valley

LEE'S HILL REPORT by ERROL WALKER..Cont:-

unfolded all the way to the Border Ranges and Sundown. Jean Harslett came to light ~~te~~ with a bit more information regarding the Hon. Charles A. Lee, after whom this hill was named. The name of 'Beverley' C.A. Lee's property name for the siding south of Stanthorpe was requested by the railway to be changed, because of confusion with another place with a similiar name. Mr. Lee submitted the name of Severnlee, combining the river and his name. This was basically accepted after the Railway suggested that the spelling be Severnlea not 'lee'.

After the views had been enjoyed and some fine stands of the white mint bush (*Prostanthera nivea*) had been admired, we followed to the summit on the south ridge to where some native figs had a good hold on 'house-sized' boulders.

Fifteen minutes rest allowed us oldies to catch our breath, while the young Nats. burnt off their excess energy, up, over and under the rocky outcrops.

Then it was down the eastern slope of the hill onto an open forest of cypress pine which had'n't been cleared out by the fire 12 months ago. I was quite surprised to find only small regrowth after the fire, but I do recall the scrub was originally very thick, so the fire would have been fairly hot.

By 4.30pm we were back at the cars not much the worse for wear and some of us were even planning a return trip.

Thank you fellow Nats. for having some faith in me after the last outing I led. I seem to remember it rained that day!!

A special 'thank you' to Mr. Roy Petzler for joining us on this outing and for allowing access through his property.

As Stanthorpians we are, indeed, fortunate to have some beautiful wild areas, within a few kilometres of the main street.

Errol Walker.

HAVE YOU REMEMBERED THE CHRISTMAS PARTY ?

This will be in the form of a Barbaque at 'Mountain Park' Dalveen. (John O'Donnell's property) It is planned to be on Sunday 6th. December, starting about 5pm. (final plans not made re-time.)

Directions from Stanthorpe. Travel north along the high-way and at Dalveen, turn right off the New England Highway, then left again, before crossing the railway on to the 'Mountain Park Road' and go past the Post Office. Travel about 2.5 km (1½ miles) and then turn right at the finger-board 'Mountain Park'.

John O'Donnell our president says some liquid refreshment and some salad will be provided, but bring along a bit of old 'roo for the fire!

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CHRISTMAS PARTY Cont.

John also passes on that there is a panio at the home-
-stead, and recalls there was quite a singalong at Mc.Cosker's
place last year.

As for the more serious minded, or less tueful, there is
a three inch refracting telescope, plus star maps etc avail-
-able..... Final plans will be given at the meeting

NEXT OUTING and ,or , CAMPOUT.

The next outing arranged for the club has been one care-
-fully planned by Ray Marsden, with some inspiration from
his partner-in-crime Millie. Both have done pre-outings of
both sections. They have also planned the nights camping
venue, so that if it is impossible for you to stay there or
only one day can be spent, that you can avail yourselves of
part of the pleasures, anyway. Indeed you are being spoilt
to the extreme by arrangements being made for your gear to
be taken to the site by their son Geoff. Ray and Millie
plan to set up a camp there on the Friday night, so that every-
-thing will be ready for you, and even tested. They will have
two tents erected, take camp oven and some grilling gear.
You will camp at Leo Butler's Dam

Plans at the moment are leave on foot from the High
School area at twelve noon. (Your heavier gear taken from
there or Marsden's home by Geoff to the camp site.
You will carry a cut lunch, to be partaken of on top of
Mount Banca, then into Happy Valley with pleasant walking
and plenty to see and time to enjoy it, before reaching the
camp site. Something to drink should be carried, while in
the higher country.

Departure from the camp on Sunday morning will be at
8am. so if you can only join us at that time, be on time
before we disappear into the bush, (leaving no trace that
we have pssed that way!!)

If you wish to be picked up after the walk on Saturday,
from the camp site... make your own arrangements.

If further information is required ring Marsden's home
at 811593.

This should be great experience with campers of top exper-
-ience to lead us. Ray and Millie have put a lot of thought
and effort into planning it so give it support. What a time
for the kids... and are we not all kids at heart!!

NEXT MEETING John Walter... a keen and well known bird
watcher. NOTE THE MEETING DATE HAS BEEN CHANGED FROM
WEDNESDAY 25th to FRIDAY 28th NOVEMBER to suit John.
If you turn up on 25th you might find yourself at the
Historical Society meeting, also changed!!

Yours in Nats. Jean.