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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 OF CLUB FOR 1988 - 1989

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MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each month in the Q.C.W.A. Rooms
at 8 p.m.

OUTINGS - The Sunday PRECEDING the 4th Wednesday of the month

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single \$6.00 Family \$10.00

Rent donation per family per meeting

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 Stanthorpe and District Field Naturalists Club
Meeting held in the QCWA rooms Victoria Street at 8pm on
November 22, 1989.

Present 33

Apologies 4.

Opening In the absense of President Ray Marsden due to illness, Vice president Jean Harslett chaired the meeting and welcomed all present especially John Luck and Lester McCosker of Warwick,, Ron and Nancy Gooding of Mt. Colliery, Allan Marsden, Mr and Mrs. Reg Palmer and the Doug Collett family. She also welcomed back Jill McDongah and Diana Holley members who have not able able to attend for some time.

Minutes. It was moved by Val White and seconded by Esme Lacey that the minutes of the October 25 meeting be taken as read in the November Newsletter and confirmed. carried.

Correspondence. Inward received from 1. Subs from Sgt Niel Donges and family, Peter Langdon and family and Aileen McAllister. Aileen sent best wishes to all members.
2. Newsletter and journals received from (a) Toowoomba Bushwalkers (b) Queensland Naturalists Club (c) Darling Downs Naturalist (d) Chinchilla Field Naturalist Inc.
Outward. 1. Letter of thanks to Noel Collins-Rubie Frank Wilkinson moved Joan Stevenson seconded that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. carried.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Julia Brown read her report which showed a credit balance of \$317.85 as at November 22. Julia moved her report be received and the following accounts be passed for payment:- Room Rent \$8; Magazine postage for January 1990 \$21; Magazine duplication \$6. Seconded by Millie Marsden. carried.

Camp-out Report. Leila Hermansson reported a very good weekend in spite of some changes having to be made, due to rain. The weather on the weekend was good and 39 enjoyed camping on George Bonner's property. Letters of thanks to be forwarded to George Bonner, Irma Rickard and Clem Fletcher for their help.

Meetings. Meetings will not be held in December or January.

Christmas Break-up. This will now be held at Geoff Marsdens property on Kingston Road. It will be a half day with two walks planned - one along the creek and the other to Finney's Falls. Swimming will be available and a barbecue. Bring your own food and drinks. Billy tea will be supplied.

Minutes of November meeting(continued)

January Outing Rob McCosker will lead an outing to the Sphinx area of Girraween Park on January 21, 1990.

Specimens Dore McCosker brought along a plant which the Wanderer Butterfly feeds on.

General Business. Ailsa Wilkinson spoke on Sun Safety Week and urged all members to take care in the sun.

Several members reported sightings of Scarlet Honeyeaters in Stanthorpe, Desley McDonagh reported the bright birds were often seen in her callistemons. They have also been noted by Val White and the Marsdens.

Members also reported that there seems to be a lot of koalas in the district.

After Meeting Program Chairman Jean introduced Errol Walker who opened his program with some interesting slides on Germany and the Berlin wall which is very much in the news at present. He then presented a superb program through the Flinders Ranges and Lake Eyre which he had re-visited. It was thrilling to see the scenes so vividly photographed by Errol and thanks are extended to him for bringing such an excellent program for our enjoyment.

Dot Archer.

Hon. Sec.

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Outing Report for November.

By Leader Leila Hermansson.

Owing to weather conditions, the venue was changed from Gilgurry to Lindsay View at Liston. Errol Walker accompanied Leila on the pre-outing and assisted in preparations for the camp-out.

On Saturday November 18, 30 people from Stanthorpe and Warwick camped overnight at Lindsay View, the property of George Bonner. Another nine joined the group for the Sunday activities.

On Saturday, after setting up camp, Mrs. Irma Rickard led the group to a nearby hill, known locally as Fussy's Knob or Mt. Fussy-oscuisko. The geology was totally different from that of the surrounding countryside, many of the rocks featuring indentations of small marine shapes including shells. This proved immensely interesting to the photographers in the group.

February Camp-out (continued)

During the afternoon 4WD's took the members to a number of interesting and scenic spots on neighbouring properties, ending up at Undercliffe Falls. Some people explored the Bookookoorara Creek above the falls, others clambered down the steep ascent track to vantage points for viewing the falls and a few hardy souls went right to the base of the falls. Because of the abundant wet weather, the leeches were more than friendly.

On Sunday morning, the 39 people present set off on a 4WD trip to the Tops, or Circular Quay as it was affectionately known by the locals. En route, a visit was made to the Plumbago Mine where high grade graphite was mined during the last century for export and was also used for lining smelters in the local district. A stop at the edge of Gorge Creek enabled Undercliffe Falls to be viewed from a different angle, across the deep gorge.

Participation in the camp-out gave members many wonderful views of the wonderful rugged terrain, it is anticipated that a visit will be made to Gilgurry at a future date. The road is very definately a dry weather road, it is amazing that the construction was able to be made at all. Great credit must go to the Bonner family for opening up much of the grazing country in that area of Liston.

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Christmas Break-up Outing.

The end of year function was held at the Kingston Road home of Gloria and Geoff Marsden on December 10. Once again, owing to the great amount of rain, activities had to be curtailed.

During the early afternoon several groups walked down the creek and were intrigued with the patterns the water has made on the granite rock creek bed. The fast flow of water made crossing the creek almost impossible without getting very wet. Some hardy souls managed to get across, with difficulty and explored the boulders on the other side and inspected a 'garden' of flannel flowers on the northern side.

When it came time to see about lighting the fire in preparation for the cooking of the barbecue meal, thunder was heard in the south. Very few people had their meal under way before we were invited by Geoff and Gloria to adjourn to their garage. Soon Geoff had the gas barbecue alight and the group proceeded to indulge in a very pleasant indoor barbecue while the rain tumbled down.

It would be interesting to check out just how many times the outings have been influenced by rain. Many times there are frantic phone calls between leaders and members as to whether an outing will still be on or not, other times we have set off and got very wet and some have been cancelled because of rain. Many times, arrangements have had to be altered because of wet roads or fast flowing streams.

Thanks are extended to the Marsdens for opening their garage and providing facilities for the end of year function.

January Outing to Sphinx.

By Leader Rob McCosker.

The outing was attended by 29 people and we left Weeroona Park at 9.00am and paused on the Mt. Norman Road to admire a fine specimen of *Lobelia gibbosa* growing on the roadside.

After morning tea at the Mt. Norman parking area, we set off at about 10am along the Mt. Norman walking track. The party split before reaching Mt. Norman with five members continuing along the walking track and the others struck off in a westerly direction. After negotiating some rough scrub we followed the expanses of flat granite so typical of this area skirting Mt. Norman. The good season and recent rain was evident in the numerous streams and rock holes full of crystal clear water. At one of the streams we were fortunate to see an unusual *Cryptostylis* orchid in bloom - unusual because its upside down flower is pollinated by a wasp.

We made our way to the bottom of the ferny gully west of Mt. Norman and had lunch under a giant gum tree, thought to be *E. deanei*. The undergrowth was so lush here that someone commented on the possibility of leeches, and, sure enough one was found. We continued uphill to the west, pausing often to sample the bright red *Leucopogen lanceolatus* and *Exocarpos cupressiformis* berries. It was discovered by many that the latter, the wild cherry, has to be a deep red colour before losing its astringent taste.

The heat and the rough going had taken its toll by the time we topped the ridge and we decided not to continue to the Sphinx. We had a good view of it and Turtle Rock, Castle Rock and the Pyramids from a vantage point atop of a large boulder. As a bonus, a lyrebirds nest was found in a nearby crevasse on a ledge some 3.5metres above the ground. On examination, after chimneying up the crevasse, I found it was in sound condition though it had not been used recently.

We returned to the cars along roughly the same route, reaching them at about 5 o'clock. Although we failed to reach our objective the Sphinx, I'm sure everyone enjoyed the bush - off the beaten track, and in mid-summer when we seldom venture far.

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BUTTERFLIES IN CARNELL'S GARDEN.

By Margaret Carnell.

A few metres away from our kitchen window we have a lavender bush and a callistemon, where the butterflies have been having a party every day.

The first ones we noticed were the beautiful orchard butterflies (*Papilue Aegeus A egeus*) which lay their eggs on the orange tree. There were two different species of whites. One we easily identified as the Cabbage White (*Pieris rapae*), and the other with the help of Charles McCubbin's "Australian Butterflies" as the Caper White (*Anaphaeis java teutonia*). The undersides of the Caper White's wings look as if they've been painted. There must have been dozens of these feeding each day, particularly on the lavender.

Butterflies in Carnell's Garden(continued)

The callistemon is the favourite of the Common Australian Crow (*Euplea core corinna*) which returns to the same cluster of flowers again and again. I've only seen one of these at a time, and assume that it is the same butterfly. When it closes it's wings it blends beautifully with the background. Why, I wonder, is a butterfly called a 'crow'.

After much time and effort chasing around the garden with a large book in my hand, I made a rough sketch of a brown butterfly and managed to identify it, with some degree of confidence, as a Meadow Argus(*precis villida calybe*). The illustration in the book shows the centre of the eyes as blue, whereas the ones I saw looked black to me. I had assumed that these brown butterflies would be common browns, and upon discovering they weren't I proceeded to investigate a section of bush just outside our yard where I frequently see brown butterflies. Lo and behold there were my Common Browns (*Heteronympha merope merope*). I happened to see a pair of these mating, and as a bonus to my excursion came across several Brownhoods growing in the shallow ground near some rocks. We had been looking for these and other small ground orchids before the rain and were disappointed.

There are three other small butterflies on the lavender. One is, I think, the Blotched Blue(*Erina acasta*) which we disturb in the grass all over the yard; the second is a yellow, which won't keep still long enough to be seen in detail. From the illustration of it with folded wings, I'd say it is the Spotless Grass Yellow(*Eurema sana*). The third is a very small brown with a little yellow on the upper wing. The striking thing about this fellow is that it appears to have one pair of wings on top of the other.

As well as the butterflies there are the bees which are about the size of an ordinary honey bee, but with abdomen striped in black and a pale blue/green. Their abdomen is more rounded than that of the honey bee. We saw none of these on the callistemon, only on the lavender although there were honey bees on the callistemon at that time. The striped bees tend to hover more than the honey bees, taking a sip from one flower and going on to the next. They don't crawl about the flower heads at all, and one hovered in the air for quite some time before moving in to drink. Their legs were laden with pollen. Can anyone help identify them please?

Having just completed this article I walked outside to see a Lemon Migrant(*Catopsilia pomona pomano*) on the callistemon. Our lavender and callistemon provide us with hours of entertainment during the warmer hours of the day.

(This article was handed to me just prior to Christmas. As a January journal was not printed I have had to hold it over. Thanks for such an interesting article, Margaret. Ed.)

This month we are lucky enough to be able to add the bird list from the camp-out at Lindsay View in November and I would like to thank Jean Harslett and Nancy and Ron Gooding for compiling the list and many thanks to Jean for providing copies of the list for inclusion with the magazine.

February Outing

The outing on February 25 will be under the leadership of Tom Archer and he has chosen Horan's Gorge as the destination. Members are asked to meet at Weeroona Park at 9.30am.

The convey will head off along the Mt. Tully and Deutscher Roads to Mt. Dillon and will enter Horan's Gorge from the northern end. It is planned to have cars at the southern end Horan's Gorge Road Fletcher to ferry drivers back to pick up their cars. The walk will be a through walk and lunch and water will need to be carried.

Tom estimates the degree of hardship will be about 7 out of 10 and it will be a longish walk.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The February meeting will be held in the QCWA rooms at 8pm on February 28 when the hardworking Tom Archer will present the after meeting program. The title of Tom's program is 'Surprise, surprise'. (I think that at the time of going to print the program is still a surprise to Tom also. Ed.)

NOTES WITH THE BIRD LIST FROM "LINDSAY VIEW".

Most of the birds were sighted near the camp area, which was alive with birds, and ringing with bird song. However, we saw the Spur-winged Plover, Wonga Pigeon, Mistletoe Bird, Small Quail, the Wood duck and the White Faced Herons while walking over to climb Mount Fussyosko (hope I have spelt that delightful name correctly). The Currawongs, White -winged Choughs, Dollar Bird, Small Quail, Kooka burras and White Throated Treecreeper were on the way to "The Tops". Also the Glossy Cockatoos were seen for the second time there as well as flying over the camp site.

The Glossy Cockatoos were very spectacular, first seen flying over the camp in the evening, then five the next morning near the graphite mine. A beautiful pair was viewed at close quarters in a patch of Casuarinas where they were feeding on the seed. They sat side by side and the ruff of yellow feathers around the females neck was very apparent, whilst the vivid flash of red as they flew into the valley, was dramatic enough for even the non-bird watchers to be excited.

The powerful calls of the Rufous Whistlers at the camp, filled the air with rich sound both in the early morning & evening. While the repetitive calls of the Brush Cuckoo & the Coucal, both descending the scale, and the contrasting raucous calls of passing Channel Billed Cuckoos and the Koels demanded attention. The Koels got plenty of attention, unwanted by all and sundry in the bird world.

The clear powerful calls of the Lewin Honeyeaters rang out, mingling with the trill of spine-billed honeyeaters. Indeed, all the honeyeaters were enjoying the citrus blooms in the old wild garden of a home long disappeared, and also the honeysuckle flowers. The 'fussy' call of a disturbed white browed scrub wren, or the strong and commanding whip sound of the whip birds, told us of their presence. These will all be memories of a beautiful campsite, beneath huge gums, and a wonderful supply of birds, and a bubbling spring enjoyed by the birds and ourselves.

Jean Harslett.

BIRD LIST FROM THE CAMPOUT TO "LINDSAY VIEW" on 18th. & 19th. OCT.
1989 ARRANGED BY MRS. LEILA HERMANSSON. THIS LIST IS COMPILED
FROM PART TIME BIRD WATCHING BY RON & NANCY GOODING AND JEAN
HARSLETT. BIRDS ARE IN ORDER OF OBSERVATION.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Black Faced Cuckoo Shrike | 30. Welcome Swallow (& nest) |
| 2. Pale Headed Rosella | 31. Coucal or Swamp Pheasant. |
| 3. Eastern Rosella. | 32. Pied Butcher Bird. |
| 4. Crimson Rosella. | 33. Channel Billed Cuckoo. |
| 5. Restless Flycatcher. | 34. Grey Butcher Bird. |
| 6. Crow. | 35. Brush Cuckoo (Calling) |
| 7. Superb Blue Wren. | 36. Noisy Friar Bird. |
| 8. Red Browed Finch. | 37. Little Lorikeet. |
| 9. Yellow Robin. | 38. Magpie. |
| 10. Satin Bower Bird. | 39. Grey Shrike Thrush. |
| 11. Spine Billed Honeyeater. | 40. Yellow Faced Honeyeater. |
| 12. Rufous Whistler. | 41. Brown Thornbill |
| 13. Koels. | 42. Spotted Pardalote. |
| 14. Magpie Lark. | 43. White Browed Scrub Wren. |
| 15. Wood Duck. | 44. Currawong. |
| 16. Black Duck. | 45. White Throated Treecreeper. |
| 17. Spurwinged Plover. | 46. White Winged Chough. |
| 18. Silvereye. | 47. Noisy Miner. |
| 19. Wonga Pigeon. | 48. Kookaburra.. |
| 20. Mistletoe Bird. | 49. Dollar Bird. |
| 21. Small Quail. | 50. Brown Pigeon. |
| 22. White Faced Heron. | 51. Pipit. |
| 23. Rufous Fantail. | 52. Glossy Cockatoo. |
| 24. Wagtail. | 53. Golden Headed Cisticola. |
| 25. Lewin Honeyeater. | |
| 26. Little Thornbill. | |
| 27. Whip Bird. | |
| 28. Grey Crowned Babblers. | |
| 29. Dusky Woodswallow. | |

Thanks Leila for sharing
your feathered friends with
us all.
