

17 0 MAY 1990



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

PRESIDENT	RAY MARSDEN (811 593)
VICE-PRESIDENTS	ROBIN MC COSKER JEAN HARSLETT B.E.M.
SECRETARY	DOT ARCHER (811754)
TREASURER	JULIA BROWN
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	MILLIE MARSDEN
NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE	DORE MC COSKER AILS A WILKINSON FRANK WILKINSON
PUBLICITY OFFICER	TOM ARCHER
FLORA & FAUNA OFFICER	BRIAN MCDONAGH
GEOLOGY OFFICER	COL HOCKINGS
YOUTH OFFICER	ROBIN MC COSKER
BUSHWALKING OFFICER	ERROL WALKER
LIBRARIAN	VAL WHITE
HON. AUDITOR	JOAN FERRIS

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 held  
in the Q.C.W.A. Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe at 8pm on  
March 28, 1990

Present 20

Apologies 6

Opening President Ray Marsden welcomed all present with a special  
welcome to Mignon Wanstall and John and Audrey Ridge who  
were attending their first meeting.

Minutes. It was moved by Mary Walters seconded by Rob McCosker  
that the minutes on the meeting of February 28 be taken as  
read and confirmed. Carried.

Correspondence. Inward received from Conservation Foundation, Australia  
Post- account for Box 154, Subs from Susan Spall, Queensland  
Naturalists re camp at Bald Rock on May 5-7.  
Newsletters received from Darling Downs Naturalist; Urimbirra  
Chinchilla Field Naturalists, Queensland Naturalists Club,  
Footprint.

Outward forwarded to Michael Sibley and Les Baldwin  
thanks for access to Mt. Dillon and Horan's Gorge. 4QS re  
outing and meeting notices for March.  
Ailsa Wilkinson moved that the inward correspondence be  
received and the outward endorsed, seconded by Joan Stevenson.  
Carried.

Treasurer's Report. Julia Brown moved that the statement which showed receipt  
of \$13.24 and payments for the month of \$35.45 and leaving a  
credit balance of \$359.44 and the following accounts be  
passed for payment Rent \$8.00, Magazine postage for April  
\$21.00, duplication \$6.00 and postal rental for box 154  
\$30.00. Seconded Jean Harslett. Carried.

Outing Report. Leader Jean Harslett reported that a change of  
venue from Severn Hills had to be made because of the time  
not being suitable to the landowner. 19 members attended the  
outing to Foxbar Falls, meeting at the Harslett's Farm on a  
murky morning to indulge in hot pikelets and beverages. The  
walk took us past a dam where bird life was prolific and  
varied and included a family of black swans. On to Mt.  
Ferguson, the highest point in the western part of the  
distric, from where 360' views were seen. A recently shed  
black snake skin was seen, and some ground orchids. Lunch  
was eaten on the lawns at the farmhouse and then some  
aborigine rock drawings were viewed in the local area.

Specimens. Rob McCosker brought in a very active spider(encased in  
a glass jar) for identification. This was thought to be of  
the same family as the trapdoor and was found scurrying across  
the McCosker rumpus room floor one night.  
Brian McDonagh brought some eucalyptus leaves with spectacular  
galls, it was thought that they may be male and female of the  
same species.



**Campout.** Leader of the Camp out to the Chinchilla area, Col Hoekings said that there was a wood stove at the camp site and also a barbecue for the use of the campers. We would be advised to fill up with petrol on the way through Dalby as quite a bit of driving would be done while at the camp.

**April Meeting.** Our program stated that Jack and May Bennie would be invited to present a program for the meeting of April 25. As this date was not suitable for them, Brian McDonagh offered to present a program entitled "Feathers and Fur".

**General Business.** It was decided that as the May outing is to be led by Ron and Nancy Gooding that they would be advised of the date and enable them to have time to get information ready for the May Newsletter.

**Program.** Ray Marsden presented a program on South West Queensland in wildflower time after a good season. Appreciation was shown in the usual manner.

Millie Marsden(acting Sec.)

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Minutes of the meeting of the Stanthorpe and District Field Naturalists held in the Q.C.W.A. Rooms Victoria Street Stanthorpe at 8pm on  
25 April, 1990.

Present 18

Apologies. 6

**Opening.** President Ray Marsden welcomed all present.

**Minutes.** The minutes of the previous meeting were read by Millie Marsden as no newsletter was sent out in March. Moved by Esme Lacey that they were a true record seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

**Correspondence.** Inward was received from 1 Australia Post 2.Division of Sport and Recreation re incorporation seminar to be held on June 4 at Warwick Golf Club. 2 members will attend Tom Archer and Rob McCosker. 3. University College of Southern Queensland. Newsletters and Journals received from 1. Queensland Naturalists Club March and April 2. Footprint April publication of Toowoomba Bushwalkers. 3. Urimbirru April publication of Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club. Outward forwarded to 1. University of Southern Queensland 2. 4QS re outing and meeting notices. It was moved by Brian McDonagh and seconded by Herb Colley that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. carried.

April Minutes - continued.

Treasurer's Report Julia Brown read her report which showed a credit balance as at March 28 of \$359-44. Receipts for the month were \$9.60 Expenditure \$65.00 leaving a credit balance of \$304.04 as at 25/4/90. Julia moved the adoption of her report and that accounts of Rent \$8.00 be passed for payment. Seconded by Ailsa Wilkinson. Carried.

Outing Report No outing report for April as the campout was cancelled due to excessive rain .

Pre Outing Report for May The outing on May 20 will be to Hoffmans Falls and will be led by Ron and Nancy Gooding. Cars will leave Weeroona Park at 8am to reach Mt. Colliery at 9.30am for smoko. Lunch to be carried and the walk up the gorge will be reasonably easy. Further details in May Newsletter

May Meeting program This will be presented by David Hockings and will be a program on Australian Plants growing in America.

Specimens. Ailsa Wilkinson brought in some rosemary for remembrance as it was Anzac Day. She thought some members may like to strike them.  
Brian McDonagh brought a 'Weed' specimen to be identified.  
Rob McCosker again brought his spider - it has been identified by the DPI as a Brown Trapdoor spider.  
Colin Hockings brought some live blind snakes. These were small specimens Colin says the largest he has seen was about 16" long.

General Business. President Ray wished Ailsa and Frank Wilkinson a happy and safe trip overseas. All joined in acclamation to second this wish.  
Millie Marsden asked if any members were interested in joining the Queensland Nats. members on their walk from Bald Rock to South Bald Rock.  
Peter Haselgrove has asked if the club members would be interested in an outing July- August to locate the rock wallaby colony in Sundown National Park.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Program. The after meeting program was presented by Brian McDonagh entitled "Feathers and Fur". This was enjoyed by all, a vote of thanks was moved by Ray Marsden and carried by acclamation.

Dot Archer.

Hon. Sec.

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## The Brown Trap Door Spider.

from Rob McCosker.

A passing interest in spiders was aroused recently when my TV viewing was interrupted by the sight of a large spider scurrying across our rumpus room floor.

I captured it in a jar for closer inspection and hopefully-identification. The nearest I could get to this, after consulting a small book on my shelf, was that it belonged to a sub order of the Araneida, namely mygalomorph. I deduced this by one of the distinguishing features that there are two pairs of book lungs whereas members of the other sub-order is that the chelicerae (something like jaws) project forward, with the fangs pointing backward on myalomorph, but on Araneomorpha the fangs point sideways.

Well - I wasn't game enough to get that close to the business end of a live spider in the same sub-order as the funnel web, so after no success at the Nats. meeting, I took it to the entomologist at the Applethorpe DPI. Would you believe it? Mine was the fifth Brown Trap Door spider to be presented for identification that morning! no doubt the recent rain had spurred a flurry of activity in spiders and their prey.

The notes I obtained from the DPI indicated that this was a male because of its lighter build and swollen palps which resemble a pair of boxing gloves. The males are known to lead a roving life, especially in autumn when they are searching for females. This species inhabits silk-lined burrows which are usually open but may be concealed by leaves and debris.

Although this spider looks ferocious, it will only strike when provoked and no fatalities have been recorded from its bite, which seldom causes more than slight localised swelling and inconvenience. So much for the McCosker visitor Arbanitis fuscipes, family Ctenizidae.

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Murrindindi River Walk - Yarra Glen NE of Melbourne  
from Desley McDonagh.

During my recent stay in Melbourne, I was able to do quite a number of walks in Victoria. The Murrindindi River Walk described in "Park Walks near Melbourne" as "Foaming cascades, a timber tramway and one of our finest waterfalls" was one such walk, and a thoroughly delightful area.

We went once for a day's outing, and later took two cars, some camping gear and did the whole walk over two days - about 1½ walking because we liked the place so much. "Park Walks" says many would be able to do the return walk in one day, but we found the area so beautiful that we did quite a bit of sitting and soaking up the atmosphere.

Some of the track follows the original timber tramway - with wooden sleepers and rails still intact. One set of bogeys complete with loaded logs as would have been pulled by horses is set on a 'branch' line to show some of the early history of the area.

## Murrindindi River Walk.

The walk follows the Murrindindi River with a side track to Wihelmina Falls which tumble down a rocky hillside and are visible from the road. The walk ends at the Cascades. The full distance from The Cascades is 11.3km; with the return walk to Wihelmina Falls 3.6km extra. The Cascades are quite spectacular, with white water surging more than 100m over black rocks with overhanging trees and ferns waving in the draught caused by the force of the water.

The track goes down steeply from the Cascades to Bull Creek, then back to Murrindindi River, follows the formation of the old timber tramway, some complete. The entire walk had interesting flora, varying from that around the Cascades to the drier community of flora on the spurs forming the valley.

There are several rather primitive camping areas along the track and water is plentiful, but the camping area at the Murrindindi end of the track has septic toilets and good barbecue facilities. We left the one car at The Cascades, drove to Bull Creek in the other, then walked back on the first day, then camped at the Murrindindi end of the track, then covered the rest of the river walk and Wihelmina Falls on the second day. We took back packs with lunch, camera(of course) and the guide book.

The trip up from Bull Creek to The Cascades is exceedingly steep:- one of a party was 17 and even he kept saying "The track still goes up". It may have been a better idea to do that part on the trip down.

An interesting note:- we were having lunch at the foot of Wihelmina Falls when a pea fell out of one of Steven's sandwiches(lunch was left-overs from tea) and was rapidly eaten by a lizard. This lizard was quite happy to continue to eat other peas which Steven dropped on the ground deliberately.

The book quoted from is "Park Walks Near Melbourne" by Sandra Bardwell published by The Age - one of The Age Special series.

We also walked Churchill Island, French Island, Warrandyte State Park, Kinglake National Park, Marysville and Fernshaw Reserve, all mentioned in this book.

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May Outing. Meet at Weeroona Park at 8am on May 20 travel to the Mt. Colliery home of Nancy and Ron Gooding for smoko. Nancy provides more details.

On May 20, we would like to show you our beautiful, peaceful Hurtle Creek(Hurdle on the old maps) valley. Peaceful, now that there is no more mining, but there are still interesting relics and evidence of this occupation which came to a close about 20 years ago.

The trees and ferns on the creek banks are beautiful and the bird life is profolic. You'll love it!

See you for morning tea at our Mt. Colliery homestead about 9.15 to 9.30am, then we will carry out lunch, drive one kilometre, walk two more and back again. Easy walking.

May Meeting program will be presented by David Hocking on Australian Plants growing in America.ooooo000ooooooo

The world is a small place no doubt. Recently while involved in a QCWA activity in the Charleville area I was pleased to see a friendly face in the Tent City food queue. Wats. member Peter Kerr had answered the call also and was part of the Toowoomba Rotary team which helped in the clean up. (Ed)



REPORT ON THE MARCH FIELD NATURALIST OUTING AT THE CHANGED VENUE OF  
MOUNT.FERGUSON AMIENS. Led by Jean Harslett. 25.3. 1990.

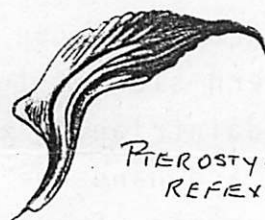
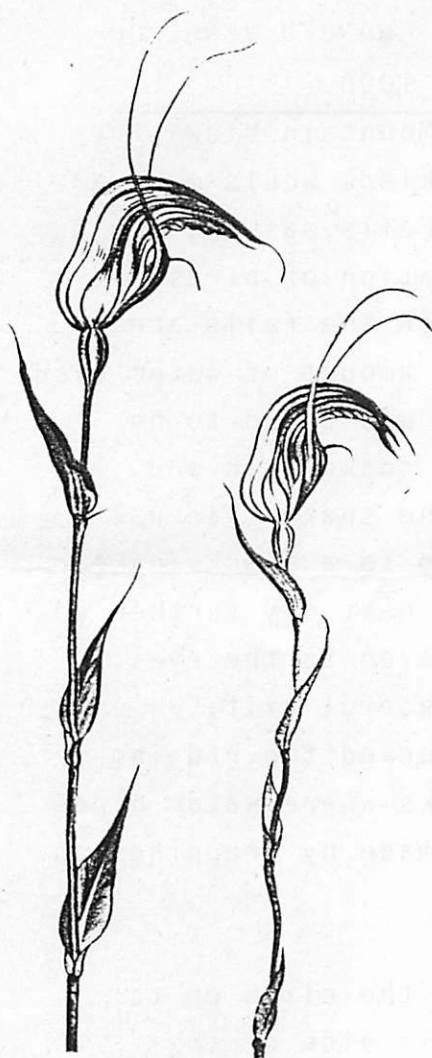
The members met at Stanthorpe and proceeded to "Mountain View" The day dictated that a hot cup of tea or coffee & picklets would make a good start. The party then set off to the "Foxbar Falls", passing the dam on the way and observing quite a variety and population of birds. A short walk through the bush brought us to the top of the falls area, and though still dry weather then, and only a small amount of water over the fall, the formations, water patterns, and wearing was found to be interesting. Crayfish, a large very perfect cast-off snake skin and "little white buttons" were treated with interest. The snake skin was singularly large, if it was, as some thought, belonging to a black snake (incidentally another of similar size was found the next day further up the creek) The first skin was remarkably complete, even to the eyes, and we decided it must have been a skillful and peaceful exit. The small "white buttons" <sup>were</sup> flat on one side with a curved top, ranging in size from  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cm. <sup>1 IN DIAMETER</sup> These appeared to be near rocks where water birds had been resting and feeding. This assumption was made by droppings on the rock. The makers were not seen.

After a fair time spent in this area, we began the climb up to the top of Mount Fergusson (the highest point on this side of the district) passing over many rocky areas, where plenty of wild flowers can be seen, in the right season. At the top a 360 degree view can be obtained, and though we could see showers on the eastern side of the district, our day remained fine. During the climb *Pt. daintriana* (a tiny greenhood) & *Pt. reflexa* (probably) and rather a large and handsome greenhood orchid were seen. A stand of *Eucalyptus scoparia* - the most western one, in the district was looked at. It is monitored by several botanical groups. We descended the mountain for lunch in the garden.

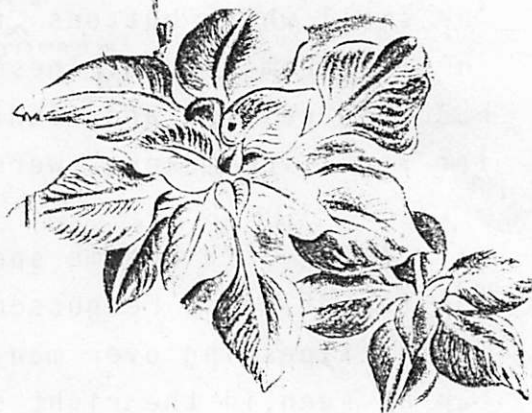
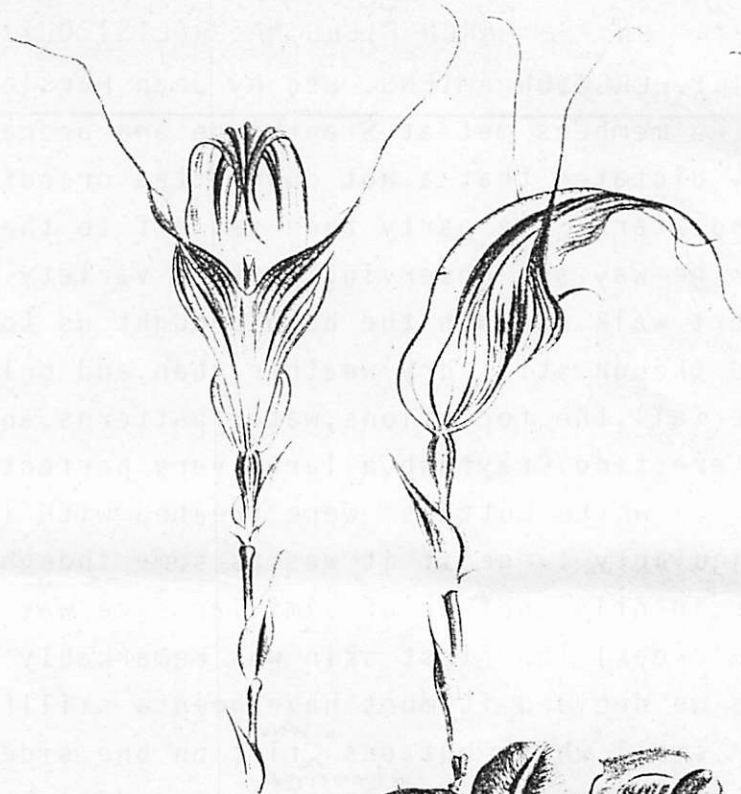
Lunch over, and with a State Forestry permit in our hands, we drove to an area where some aboriginal drawings can be viewed. These are simple in character and alas! a little faded these days. However they have created a deal of interest to anthropologists who have viewed them. This prompted thoughts on artifacts found here, and back at the house we looked at some of these things.

P.T.O.





PTEROSTYLIS.  
REFLEXA -



PTEROSTYLIS.  
REVOLUTA -



PTEROSTYLIS.  
DAINTREANA -

Widely DISTRIBUTED FROM  
COAST - TO WESTERN HIGHLANDS  
ALSO Qld & VICTORIA -  
BANKS AND SOLANDER had a  
SPECIMEN SHEET - IN. 1770 -

Report. by  
Jean Hancock

WHICH WAS WHICH?  
(SEEN ON THE OUTING)

DID WE SEE PT. REFLEXA  
OR. PT. REVOLUTA - PERHAPES  
YOU WOULD LIKE TO  
TRY AND DECIDE -

NSW. Qld. VIC.

Originally known from HAWKSBURY  
SANDSTONE - Surprise expressed when  
I sent specimens 27:2:1951 from the PYRAMIDS & 30:2:1951 from GLEN APOLIN  
SO DEFINITELY GRANITE -

Preouting Notes

MACINTYRE RIVER FALLS, SEVERN RIVER FALLS & ASHFORD CAVES CAMPOUT

9/10/11 JUNE, 1990

Leaders: Errol & Annette Walker

The date of the June outing has been brought forward to coincide with the long weekend because of the three worthwhile attractions in the Bonshaw area and the distance from Stanthorpe.

These notes are published a month in advance to enable trip planning time. It may also be a bit of a rush to have our magazine out before the 9th June.

We shall camp both nights on a reserve near the Severn River Falls (not the falls near Sundown National Park). Small vans should have no trouble getting to the camp site.

The itinery follows:

- Saturday, 9th 11 a.m. Meet at campsite after following directions overleaf. Allow 2.5 hours from Stanthorpe
- Saturday, 9th 1 p.m. After lunch and tent pitching, we can explore the Severn River Falls and Gorge. Easy trackless bushwalking with breathtaking gorge scenery.
- Sunday, 10th 9 a.m. With packed lunch, we will drive to the Macintyre Falls via Ashford (76km). The falls are easy of access via tracks and offer very spectacular gorges strewn with huge boulders and small sandy beaches. Lunch at falls picnic area.
- Sunday, 10th 1.30 p.m. Travel to Limestone Caves (10km). Torches required but safe and very interesting. Return to camp.
- Monday, 11th 11 a.m. Break camp after a morning around the river fishing, birdwatching, walking, etc. There are several interesting alternative routes home.

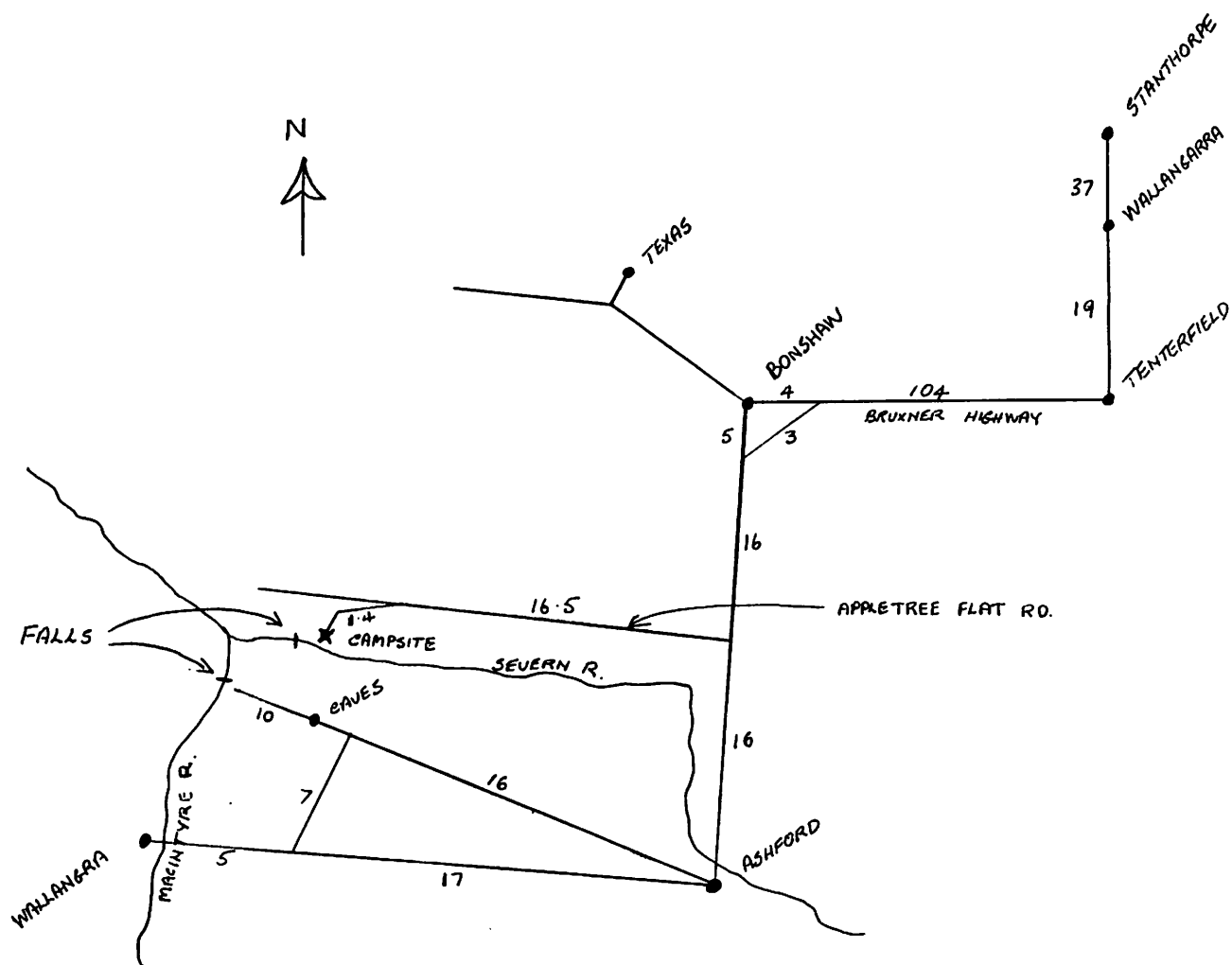
NOTES:

- Firewood plentiful
- Bring drinking water
- Rubber soled shoes or boots essential
- Torch required for camping and caving
- An easy campout
- It will be cold
- Enquires and confirmation of attendance, phone Errol or Annette Walker on 812 008.



## ROAD DIRECTIONS

- Stanthorpe to Tenterfield
- Tenterfield towards Bonshaw
- Take signposted turnoff to Ashford, 4km on left before Bonshaw
- Travel 19 km towards Ashford turning right along Appletree Flat Road at sign "Appletree Flat 16"
- Driving west for 16.5km watch for:
  - a) old steam engine on left
  - b) sign on gate "Be aware large dog"
- Turn left approx. 0.5km past the 'dog' sign along a faint track at an acute angle to main road. NATS sign if leaders get there first.
- Pass through one gate and drive 1.4km to campsite. Do not drive down steep slope to bank of river.



REFER NRMA 'NORTH WEST' DISTRICT MAP

OBVIOUSLY NOT TO SCALE