

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

Monthly Newsletter of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club.

No. 22.

November 1971

P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe.

Officers and Committee 1971 - 1972.

President	Mr. W. Cathcart	Ph.812
Vice Presidents	Mrs.R. Harslett and Mr. T. Chapman	
Secretary	Mr. E. Walker	Ph.888
Treasurer	Miss J. Westcott	
Editors	Mr. D. Pfrunder	Ph. Pozieres 219
	and Mrs. D. Orr	
Librarian	Mrs. R. Tremear	
Publicity Officer	Mr. F. Wilkinson	
Bushwalking Representative	Mr. R. McCosker	
Geology	Mr. P. Higgins	
Flora	Mr. B. Dodd	
Fauna	Mrs. Z. Newman	
Youth	Mr. G. Marsden	
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Mrs. B. Krautz and Mrs. W. Cathcart.	

Activities.

Meetings	4th Wednesday of each month
	C.W.A. Rooms 8 p.m.
Field Outings	Sunday preceeding 4th Wednesday.

Annual Subscription.

Single \$1.50.	Family \$2.00.
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Programme.Field Outings:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Boonoo Boonoo Falls	21st November	Mr. P. Ingram
Girraween Park		
Christmas Barbeque	19th December	McCosker Family.
Tooloom Scrub	23rd January	Mr. E. Walker
Boonoo Boonoo River Crossing	20th February	Mrs. J. Harslett.

Meetings:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Film Night	24th November	
Botany	26th January	Mr. D. Hockings
Bird Evening	23rd February	Mrs. I. Chapman
		with M. Fletcher and W. Goeble

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Minutes of General Meeting - 27th October, 1971.

Members present at meeting totalled 19 with apologies received from 11.
Minutes of September meeting: Moved Mrs. Z. Newman, seconded Mr. N. Butler
 that the minutes of the September meeting be confirmed. Carried.

Inward Correspondence: (i) Y.H.A. Membership card.
 (ii) Letter from Apple and Grape Festival Committee
 re participation by Nats. Club in sporting activities on the
 weekend of the 12th March, 1972.

(iii) Newsletters from other Nats. Clubs.

(iv) Letter from D.P.I. re protection of native
 fauna and future legislation.

Outward Correspondence: (i) Application to Y.H.A. for group membership.

(ii) Letter to Adult Education re advertisement for
 inclusion in Border Post for October meeting and outing.

Moved Mr. W. Newman, seconded Mrs. F. Tremeer that the Inward
 correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Balance on hand \$74.08. Moved Miss J. Westcott
 seconded Mr. F. Wilkinson that the Treasurer's Report be received
 and accounts passed for payment. Carried.

Business from Minutes: Nil.

Outings Reports: Miss J. Westcott reported on the outing to the
 "Town Hills" area which she led with Mr. P. Higgins. 40 members
 attended this outing.

It was mentioned that Mr. P. Ingram will lead
 the next outing to Boonoo Boonoo Falls and it was suggested that
 parents should be made aware that this area can be dangerous and
 that children should be closely supervised.

General Business: The President moved a vote of thanks to the
 Editors of the magazine, reporting that it now has official status
 to be posted as a periodical attracting low postage rates.

The Richmond Valley Nats. visited Girraween
 recently and our president was there to welcome them and to record
 their activities and interests which was mainly bird-watching.

Mrs. J. Harslett led a large group of Brisbane
 Nats. to the Jollys' Falls area on the 17th October.

Mr. John Harslett reported on progress being
 made on the Mt. Norman road creek crossing. The road is now open
 to light traffic and should be right for all vehicles after next
 weekend.

The magazine editor Mr. D. Pfrunder sought
 approval of the meeting to reprint material from the Border Post
 and in return to allow the paper to reproduce articles from the
 Granite Belt Naturalist with the authors' consent.

The School of Arts is to be included on the
 mailing list of our magazine.

The next meeting will feature a selection of
 films of much interest to nats.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

After the meeting Mr. R. Marsden lectured on Mechanical repairs to cars as
 could be effected in the bush!

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Address by Mr. R. Marsden:MECHANICAL REPAIRS TO CARS IN THE "BUSH".

Father, Mother and family are going to Boonoo Boonoo Falls for a picnic outing. About five miles along the track into the Falls, Father splashes into a creek crossing, the car stops, - wet ignition system.

Father decides to dry out system and in the process crosses plug leads with the result - "it won't start". Father walks five miles to call R.A.C.Q. It is two hours after this mishap that R.A.C.Q. Mechanic untangles plug leads and family proceed.

All of this was unnecessary. If Father had taken family to see how many different wild flowers were to be found in thirty minutes, the car would be dried out from engine heat and the party away to a good start for the day.

The Moral of this story, "true", is - don't panic, stop and think. If you must pull things apart, make sure you know how to put them back again, as it could be you who has to walk many miles for help. When your car stops don't panic and start pulling things apart.

Another true story:

A car load of Field Nats. miles from nowhere - car stops - driver decides fuel trouble. So... remove and dismantle carburettor.

"Not that", says Master Mechanic. So... remove fuel pump and dismantle.

"Not that", says Master Mechanic. "Call R.A.C.Q.".

Many hours after, R.A.C.Q. Mechanic arrives and asks, "When you dismantled carby, was there petrol in it?"

"Why, yes, it was full".

"Well, why remove and dismantle fuel pump?"

Master Mechanic's reply, "I didn't think of that."

After an hour's labour to reassemble and replace carburettor and fuel pump, R.A.C.Q. Mechanic wiped spilt battery acid from distributor cap and away Nats. go. A little wiser maybe.

Now, if you have trouble, stop and T.H.I.N.K.

It may be very simple, just a wire fallen off, or a blockage in a fuel line. You have to start somewhere to make a check and the easy and first check should be: - Remove a spark plug lead, have someone try to start the car, hold lead near to metal and see if you have a spark jumping to earth. A good spark can be heard, a sharp click, don't hold the lead close to the end or the spark may jump onto you. It won't hurt you, but it can give you a big fright!

Now you have proved one of two things - Electrical or Fuel.

Let us deal with some of the simple Electrical Faults.

(i) Are all wires in their correct places? Have a good look at your car's wiring when it is going and then you may be able to spot where the wire has fallen off.

(ii) Remove distributor cap and have someone try to start car. Rotor should turn. If it does not, you can start walking if you have no mechanical ability.

(iii) Next look to see if points are opening as motor is turning over. If they don't open they can be adjusted, but - be careful and think - before you act. Turn engine until the cam opens the points and then adjust to a gap of say thin cardboard.

(iv) If points are opening - closing as engine is turned over and you can see a small spark at point contacts, the next check is distributor cap and rotor for carbon tracks. These tracks or cracks, look like a hair line crack, never straight, but more like lightening in the sky. This track will run high tension

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.MECHANICAL REPAIRS TO CARS IN THE "BUSH". Cont.

spark to earth. The temporary repair is to scratch out to base material the full length of the track. Have new parts fitted as soon as possible.

Further electrical troubles should only be attempted if you have the ability and tools and please be honest!

Fuel troubles: (i) Don't trust fuel gauges.

(ii) First check is to remove fuel line at pump. This is the fuel line that comes from fuel tank. Connect to this line a piece of clear P.V.C. plastic tubing. First try to suck fuel into the tubing. If you can suck fuel, the fuel pump should be able to pump fuel, provided the fuel filter is not blocked. In line filters can be discarded and a short piece of p.v.c. tubing used as a temporary repair.

You can carry in your car two feet of 1/4" p.v.c. tubing and two feet of 5/16" will fit into the other and make a syphon hose. You have material to repair broken fuel lines or make temporary syphon line to carburettor in case of fuel pump failure.

Overheating problems?

Loose fan belts should be tightened, hoses checked for leaks. Hoses can be repaired with plastic insulation tape, but may not stand pressure so don't tighten pressure radiator cap, leave it on first catch. Don't drive with water boiling in radiator as you can do a lot of damage to your motor. Never add cold water to a boiling radiator as this can crack the hot cast iron engine block or head.

Brake troubles?

If you have no brakes due to loss of brake fluid, the only safe substitute is water, so you should never be without brakes on this count. The other problem is a master cylinder fault, where the fluid cannot return into the cylinder and the brakes are on all the time. The simple temporary fix is to loosen a brake line union nut somewhere on the system. This will let the built up pressure go and so release the brakes. If you use your brakes again after this, they will build up again, so you will have to let the pressure go if you want to keep on driving.

Mr. Field Nat out on a trip was unlucky to have transmission trouble. In this case if he had heeded the warning and had his mechanic advise him he would not have been in trouble. No temporary repair can be made, so send off an S.O.S. to R.A.C.Q., "My car won't go".

R.A.C.Q. arrives in a small car as tow truck is on another job. Now we find the motor will go, but the car won't, so Mr. Field Nat. now has to wait until R.A.C.Q. can return with tow truck. The moral of this story is, if you have "funny" noises in your car, have them checked, and if you send for help, send a clear message.

Any strange noise or rattle should be checked as it can be serious troubles starting to develop. Preventative maintenance is not as costly as breakdowns.

What tools should I carry?

Firstly, a wheel spanner that will fit and a jack that will work and fit under your car when you have a flat tyre. This is important, as many jacks will not fit under the car when the tyre is flat and also many will not lift high enough to fit on your spare tyre that is pumped up. As for the rest of your Tool Kit, relative to your ability and PLEASE BE HONEST!

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.MECHANICAL REPAIRS TO CARS IN THE "BUSH". Cont.

What spares should you carry?

Fan belt, radiator hoses, including by-pass hose if your car has one, insulation tape, p.v.c. tubing, axe and shovel. Coil condenser, points, rotor carry them all if you have the ability to fit them.

Remember, don't panic, stop and think, if you must pull anything apart, be careful, it could be you that has to walk many miles for help!

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Report of outing to "Town Hills" area, October 24th.

About forty people attended, and it was surprising to find how few amongst those present had previously visited Mt. Banca, though it is so close to town.

An exceptionally clear day made viewing easy, and the whole area seen from Lookout Rocks was voted the best view of the town it was possible to find.

Peter produced an old map which made very interesting reading, and many points of interest were marked and discussed. In fact the interest was so keen that it was lunchtime when we got back to the Nursery where we had left the cars, and it was decided that time would not permit a visit to the wild flowers on one of the other hills in the Higgins' property.

After lunch, we travelled over a rather hair-raising road to the Little Broadwater, which is part of the forestry reserve. Here we saw some very odd rock formations, but the highlight was a visit to an eagle's nest which was reached after some hard climbing. As one member remarked "It is the closest I ever expect to be to an eagle in my lifetime and an opportunity I'd hate to have missed". Some very good photographs should be the outcome of this visit and will be looked forward to with much interest.

J. WESTCOTT AND PETER HIGGINS.

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Editors' Note:

The Editors have obtained permission to use material from "The Stanthorpe Border Post" in "The Granite Belt Naturalist" and have reciprocated by allowing the "Border Post" to publish articles suitable to them from our newsletter.

However, if any member indicates to the Editors when submitting any contribution or report that they do not wish to have it re-published outside our magazine, then the Editors will respect any such request.

ED/

--oOo--

Did you know: That the golden flowered shrub currently adorning our hills is called Jacksonia or "Dogwood". You can tell it by its bark!!

--oOo--

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Has my country gone?

The scene is set, nothing unusual, just a small babbling creek, winding its way through maiden hair and strewn moss covered boulders, intertwined with the roots of gum and willow. Small wildflowers strain their necks around the rocks to be smiled upon by the golden sun. A water spider goes through his steps on a tranquil part of the clear water. This is my country. The country that McKellar wrote about when she proclaimed "I love a sun burnt country, A land of..." A land, A land of what? "Of sweeping plains, of rugged mountain ranges, of drought and flooding rains". That is what this land is, or so McKellar tells us. How many of us have seen the things that are described in that poem.

How many of us have heard Kendall's "Down the dim gorges I hear the creek falling" "The noise of the bell-birds are running and ringing". That line that comes to mind about the bell-birds. These are beautiful verses by great poets, but how much of it is actually true? To the average person this is just a lot of rubbish and you may as well throw it on the pile that already litters the country side.

The trouble with a lot of people is they are so used to the concrete jungle that this sort of thing is so unreal. It is only the person who is interested, the person who goes out looks and finds for himself, who really appreciates these things.

Sitting upon the banks of the stream I mentioned previously, I let my mind wander. One seems to be able to do this easily when one is in a paradise. The warm, clean sandy gravel trickling over one's feet and between one's toes, the scent of willow and gum douse the air in a perfume bringing on that drozy, sleepy feeling.

The twitter of Jenny Wren as he flitters about on the branches, splashing his brilliant blue here and there, adding to the many reflections in the water, the tiddlers as they weave their way through the water, to them the world is carefree.

I remember when I hiked through Lamington National Park how the rain trickling down the back of my neck made little rivulets as it ran over my bare skin. How if one brushes against the "Gympie Gympie" that tingling feeling is stimulated throughout the body, til one feels one could scream, do anything, to be rid of it. The same tingling feeling, but not so vivid rushes through one as one climbs the cliffs of Spicer's Peak with the fog and wind whistling around one. One slip could be death.

Then I think of the feeling of achievement as I climb to the top of Mt. Norman, hot though it was, a feeling of satisfaction. As I gaze out over the world below me the perspiration running down my face makes puddles for the flies to paddle in. Just memories, they will fade like the "everlasting" daisy must finally fade, but dim though they will be, I will remember them.

I think of my stream and that phrase "It is not possible to step into the same river twice". Yes, it must flow on, nothing can stop it, an everlasting motion which will be there long after I am gone. I think of where it comes from, high up on the mountain, soakages of water as they slowly drip over the eges of rocks, dripping slowly, then fusing together, a drop, a trickle, a stream. I think of where it will go, not today, not tomorrow, but one day it will reach the ocean and be lost forever. On its journey it will pass opal hearted mountains, rolling plains, dim gorges, drought and flood. It will pass the city, the farm, it will be polluted, used and cursed, but it goes on through the country, my country. My country is still here! "All you who have not loved her, you will not understand".

ROSS ALLAN DAVID.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Outing to Boonoo Boonoo Falls - Sunday 21st November:

Stanthorpe cars will depart Town Park at 9 am. sharp. Proceed via Amosfield and south along Mt. Lindsay Highway to Boonoo Boonoo Falls turn-off (opposite Boonoo Boonoo Post Office).

Cars from South of Stanthorpe will go on to Tenterfield and meet at Rotary Park near Junction of New England and Mt. Lindsay Highways at 9.30am., then proceed north along Mt. Lindsay Highway to Boonoo Boonoo Falls turn-off, where the Stanthorpe party is. Meet at 10am. Then drive the 9 miles to the top of the falls.

The Fall's area is very scenic, and the track to the bottom rather steep.

There are tables at the Parking Area near the top of the Falls.

The Fall's area is steep and DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN, so children are PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY.

Bring : suitable footwear, picnic lunch, camera etc..

PHILIP INGRAM.

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WARNING ON BIRDS:

The regulations governing the keeping of native fauna are now being rigidly enforced. This warning was given on 5th October by the Minister for Primary Industries, Hon. J.A. Row, M.L.A.

Mr. Row said that fauna rangers had recently made a survey of fauna dealers and private aviaries in South East Queensland. They had found over 1000 birds of 40 protected species that were being kept illegally. Some of the more commonly kept protected birds were the scaly breasted lorikeets, native pigeons and doves, and even some of the rarer palm cockatoo and ground parrots.

Mr. Row said persons holding protected native birds should either release them or surrender them to the Department of Primary Industries for placement in approved local authority zoos. He said that anyone in doubt on fauna matters should contact the Fauna Conservation Branch of his Department.

Under the Fauna Conservation Act all Native fauna belongs to the Crown. Only a few species may be taken and then only under special permit which will be issued only during prescribed open seasons. Aviaries containing more than 20 birds must be registered with the Department of Primary Industries and royalties are payable to the Crown on all open season fauna taken.

Mr. Row stated that fauna rangers would continue their surveys. With regard to minor breaches fauna rangers may issue a warning and discuss with the offender the best method of resolving the illegal retention of fauna by either release or handing them into official custody. Those continuing to keep protected fauna would render themselves liable to legal proceedings.

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To a Bird:

I know that I shall never lift a gun
At sounds of wings that flutter in the wheat..
They say that you arrive on alien wings
To spoil the grain, and maybe it is true;
But I can only think that there are things
That go against the grain far more than you.

--oOo--

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.ARTICLE ON LOCUSTS:

That Biblical scourge, the locust, is rekindling age-old fears lately among Queensland, New South Wales and Victorian farmers.

During late September the Victorian Government planned to send helicopters to the N.S.W. border to spray locust egg beds at a cost of \$1,000 a day, using vast amounts of Lindane spray, an organochlorine-based pesticide, which they hoped would kill the insects before they reached the hopper stage.

It appears that the locust has a very complicated life cycle. Mr. Max Cavanagh, a N.S.W. Agriculture Department entomologist, explains that there are two, and sometimes three, generations of locusts a season.

The first generation comes from eggs laid the previous season, these hatch in spring and take six weeks to reach adulthood. By mid-November most of them are hoppers.

Then, in late November, the locusts (which find safety and happiness in numbers) develop into swarms. Within two weeks of swarming, more eggs are laid beneath the ground in egg pods (which look like tiny bananas) each containing 40 or more eggs.

The adults may lay more eggs a week later and if conditions are especially favourable another two or three times as well. These eggs begin hatching in early January, causing further swarms to develop.

Locusts from the eggs that hatch in November will begin to swarm and lay eggs themselves later in the autumn. According to Mr. Cavanagh: "The real threat of locust infestation is the threat of multiple generations."

Unlike its cousin, the grasshopper, the locust can travel long distances munching through crops at a speed of six miles an hour. It is also not to be confused with the cicada, that cheerful chirper on hot summer nights.

There are many old wives tales concerning locusts. One theory was that an outbreak of infantile paralysis (polio) followed a year after a locust plague. Entomologists no longer believe that major plagues occur approximately every 15 years, though the last in Australia was in 1955.

Perhaps the locust's strong instinct for togetherness may bring about its downfall. Scientists have developed radar which can track the swarms on their journeys, making full-scale pesticide offensives possible.

By kind permission of THE AUSTRALIAN.

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REMINDER: A few members have still not renewed their subscription for 1971 - 1972 year. Subscriptions are \$1.50 single and \$2.00 family. Anyone who has not yet renewed his subscription, please give this early attention.

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Did you know: Not only is it illegal to remove the whole of a protected plant, but also to pick its flowers or leaves. Among the protected plants are maiden hair ferns, treeferns, haresfoot ferns, staghorns, elkhorns, birdsnest ferns, various palms, numerous orchids, Christmas bells, boronias, tassel ferns and some lilies.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Naturalists Paradise.

In close proximity to Stanthorpe is the delightful Girraween National Park, which affords the keen naturalist the opportunity of pursuing his interests in an area preserved as a natural bushland type of park, established with the objective of preserving the natural bushland characteristics of the area.

Ten miles on the Queensland side of Wallangarra, at Wyberba, the Girraween National Park spans an area of 12,640 acres, and is controlled by the Queensland Forestry Department.

Prior to the survey of the locality as a national park in the early 1900's, Wyberba was part of the historic Ballandean Station, which has been occupied as early as 1830.

Relics of the original boundary fence can be seen today on a section of the park.

Renowned Flora:

The Girraween National Park has become renowned over the past years for the truly magnificent array of wild flowers which cover the parkland. The most impressive period for wild flowers is Spring and early Summer. All told, there are some 800 different species of wild flowers to be found in the park, 25 or 30 which are unique to the park in so far as Queensland is concerned. The vivid yellows of the acacia abounding in the area are well known. There are 77 separate types of acacia recorded on the park providing flowers through until February.

The abundance of wild flowers attracts hundreds of visitors to the Girraween Park each year.

In a 12 month period, 10,000 people visited the park. In the Easter period of this year alone, 680 people visited the park, mainly in family groups. The long week-ends of May and June are popular times for visits by bushwalking groups.

Over the five years, Mr. Tom Ryan has been Ranger at the Girraween Park, amenity blocks have been constructed, consisting of washrooms, toilets, barbeque facilities and picnic tables.

Many trees have been planted in the surroundings of the amenities area, all having been raised from seedlings on the park, in order that the park may remain a natural habitat. These trees are mostly some of the 250 different species of eucalypts to be found on the park.

Abundance of wild life:

Girraween National Park provides an abundance of native fauna. Much of the wonderfully interesting wild life that is part of our Australian heritage is to be found protected in the park.

Of special interest is the Hairy nosed Wombat, which is not to be found in any other part of Australia.

Unfortunately, the wombat, like a great number of the intriguing marsupials which inhabit the park is nocturnal, and may only rarely be spotted by the day visitor to the park.

Among the 118 bird specimens inhabiting the park is the Superb Lyre Bird. Of the two types of Lyre Bird, the Superb sports the larger tail, and its inhabitation of the Girraween National Park is the only place in Queensland that this species may be found.

A visit to the picturesque Girraween National Park will convince that here is a true naturalists' paradise.

Acknowledgment to "Stanthorpe Border Post".

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.ANTS.

As you no doubt all know, ants live in very well ordered societies. Many of their activities therein can be likened to our own.

We have the harvesters who gather certain types of grass seed common to their region, carry these to their nests (truckies) and there sort and store them like our grain graders.

Others are millers. One society of ant has a special worker which has a huge head which has powerful muscles to work the jaw and do the grinding. Ordinary worker ants gather the grain and bring it to the nest for grinding and storing. After the harvest the "millers" are killed and their heads bitten off as the ants want no extra mouths to feed. (Revolutionary France).

We have the dairy farmer. Some ants "keep" herds of aphids. These they milk by stroking the aphids sides until the sweet liquid they secrete oozes out. This "milk" is much prized by the ant so he takes good care of his "herd".

Then we have the small crop farmer. This society of ant grows fungi and lives on nothing else (vegetarians). We all know small crops need fertilizers to produce their best and here again the ants are to the fore. They make a paste which is spread for the fungi to grow on. Manufacturing.

On to our more modern methods of warehouses and cold stores. One species keeps living storehouses. The worker gathers the nectar from the flowers etc. and takes this back to the nest where the "storehouses" swallow it and during the Winter the other ants of the Society come and take enough liquid from their mouths to feed themselves until the next season.
Supermarkets????

J. ORR.

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RE M I N D E R :

If you are taking children on the next outing to Boonoo Boonoo Falls remember to give them strict supervision as this is a dangerous area for children!

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Did you know: Birds do not naturally sing the song of their species, they have to be taught!

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Subscriptions: The club's Financial Year runs from July until June each year. Have you paid your 1971 - 1972 subs.? If not see our Treasurer, Miss J. Westcott at the next meeting.

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STRONG FOOTWEAR AND CLOTHING SUITABLE FOR CLIMBING ESSENTIAL FOR THE NEXT OUTING.

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