



# THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



Monthly Newsletter of the  
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club

## 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 and post it to members.

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Meetings:  
Outings:  
Subscriptions:  
Rent :  
Address:

4th Wednesday of each Month at QCWA Rooms at 8.00pm.  
The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each Month.  
Single \$8.00 Family \$15.00 per annum July to June.  
Donation per family per meeting.  
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc., P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe Q  
4380.



OFFICERS OF CLUB FOR 1992-93

President	Kris Carnell	835268
Vice-Presidents	Rob McCosker	835371
	Colin Hockings	811978
Secretary	Desley McDonagh	813074
Treasurer	Julia Brown	
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	835268
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Val White & Dore McCosker	
Publicity Officer	Tom Archer	811754
Librarian	Esme Colley	812927
Management Committee	President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer.	

Wild flower may go commercial

A Queensland wild flower *Helichrysum diosmifolium*, commonly known as rice or sago flower, is being investigated as a possible follow-on crop for Geraldton wax.

Queensland Department of Primary Industries researcher, Sandra Lacey, has been selecting plants from the bush and propagating the best of them in an effort to identify commercially viable cultivars. The cultivars are being targetted to supply a seasonal shortage of filler flowers to supplement Geraldton wax.

Rice flowers bloom in white, cream or pink forms in late September as Geraldton wax is finishing. According to Lacey, experimental yields of 60 stems per plant had occurred on a two-year-old plant that had never been pruned but growers report much lower yields of seven to 10 stems a plant in the first year and about 20 stems in the second year.

Rice flowers do have some problems when grown under cultivation, she says, with four major areas needing work before commercial production could become reality. These areas are foliage blackening, productive life, root rot and yield. She said foliage blackening sometimes occurred with cultivated material after harvest with the cause and correct handling procedures yet to be resolved.

Although rice flowers have a potential productive life span of five years, research trials and commercial plantings in Queensland recorded extensive plant losses after only two years, she says. This was apparently caused by a susceptibility to root rot disease.

"Part of the problem is that under cultivation rice flowers branch very close to the ground. The branches often break off allowing disease to enter easily. When you take this hardy plant from its native stony soil habitat and plant it in rich cultivated land it grows very vigorously. It becomes very bushy and out of proportion to its root system making it susceptible to wind damage. However, careful management of the tube stock and judicious pruning should solve this problem.

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November 14 1990 with permission.  
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WANTED Articles for the magazine. I'm sure you must get tired of hearing from me much of the time. As well as articles, if you have any snippets or "wanted" advertisements, or anything for sale or to give away we could print them on the Page Before Page One.

Editor

Our chief want in life is somebody who will make us do what we can.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



OUTING TO BASKET SWAMP

The Nats left Weeroona Park at about 9 a.m. on a hot summer morning for the outing to Basket Swamp on 24th January 1993, travelling via Sugarloaf Road to Mt Lindesay Road, admiring the golden *Helichrysm bracteatum* flowering in masses along the roadside. We noticed a paddock opposite the turnoff to Bald Rock which was full of Stinking Rogers last year, and had a lot of *Helichrysthums* growing inseed this year. Let's hope they take over.

On arriving at the picnic area at Basket Swamp we admired a clump of Hyacinth Orchids (*Dipodium punctatum*), and had morning tea before botanising along the mowed track along the creek. Colin discovered a couple of horned orchids (*Orthoceras strictum*) by the road, which created a lot of interest, as did a patch of *Cryptostylus subulata* beside the track. There were numbers of fringe lilies (*Thysanotus*) and the dainty *Comesperma defoliatum* as well as a few *Boronia polygali-folia* and *Baekia* sp.

The photographers had a field day <sup>with</sup> the sundew (*Drosera binata*), which was new to some of us. It has a number of sticky branches 30cm or more tall. Gordon discovered a couple of *Burmannia* near the creek bank, and Colin a prostrate form of *Stenanthemum*. Jenny noticed a very colourful blue and black elephant beetle and a couple of very large, overfriendly March flies.

A few hardy members set off to walk to the falls, while the rest of us drove, making our first stop at four posts set in the ground in a square, with shallow trenches dug out from each post at right angles. We had noticed these on a pre-outing and wanted to know what they were for. After deciding they couldn't be a grave, or even a yowie trap, Ray suggested that the posts marked the corners of four mining claims.

Next stop was to view the first fall, which was lovely as there had been a storm the night before, and there was quite a good flow of water in the creek. Here we met up with our intrepid walkers: most of whom continued on foot to the lower fall for lunch. One of the interesting features of this spot is the "gusher" where the water flows for several metres beneath the rock, to gush out through a small hole. From a distance it looks as if it is coming out a pipe.

The children were able to cool off under a small cascade while there was a hole deep enough for swimming for those who wished. Some of us sat and talked or botanised around the pools while others explored upstream or down. The outing ended around 2.30 p.m, with quite a few people vowing to return now that they have discovered the area.

Margaret & Kris Carnell

HORNED ORCHID (*Orthoceras strictum*)

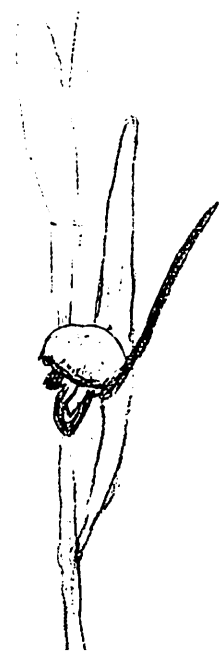
The Horned Orchid (*Orthoceras strictum*) is the only species of its genus. It is quite distinctive with its horned sepals standing erect, and its hooded flowers. It varies in colour from yellowish green, to brownish or blackish, carrying several flowers on a stem. The leaves are grass-like. It grows in open grassy habitats which are moist to wet for part of the year, usually in sunny locations.

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No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else.

Charles Dickens

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CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP

Our Christmas break-up on 13th December took the form of a relaxed barbeque in the floodlit garden at "Pinaster", the home of Janet and Colin Hockings, Peter and Robert.

We all walked down to see the Bower Birds' bower built in the shelter of a patch of tea tree, when we arrived, then strolled back to the garden to cook our barbeque. We saw several *Mycotis* in the paddock and a beautiful Hyacinth Orchid near the gate. There were a number of birds in the garden, and we had a good view of a honeyeater's nest close to the house.

After eating we sat around and talked before heading off homewards ahead of a storm. I would like to thank Colin and Janet for making us so welcome at their place, and for a delightful final outing for the year.

Editor

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OUTING SOUTH OF THE BORDER ON 21st FEBRUARY.

The outing on 21st February will be south of the border through Cowie's property, led by Colin Hockings.

We will meet at 9 a.m. at Weeroona Park, and travel to "Pinaster" where we will have morning tea, and a chance to view the garden in daylight. We will need to carry lunch and water (it could be very hot). The distance is 6km total, and is easy walking, graded at a 5.

Of particular interest are some spotted gum on the border and some old wolfram scratchings.

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NEXT MEETING 24th FEBRUARY

At our next meeting on 24th February, David Hockings will give a practical demonstration on propagating native plants. He will deal with seeds and cuttings, and perhaps budding and grafting. Please bring along any questions you may wish to ask. The meeting commences at 8 p.m. in the C.W.A. rooms Stanthorpe.

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FLOWER LIST - BASKET SWAMP OUTING

*Comesperma defoliatum*  
*Hybanthus filiformis*  
*Lobelia gracilis*  
*Utricularia dichotoma* (bladderwort)  
*Hypoxis hygrometrica*  
*Senecio*  
*Goodenia* - *hederaceae*, *bellidifolia*  
*Styphelia viridia* (creamy)  
*Petrophila canescens*  
*Xyris operculata*  
*Cassinia*  
*Actinotus helianthi* (flannel flower)  
*Rurmannia distichus*  
*Stygidium graminifolium*  
*Grevillea* sp.  
*Cryptstylus subulata*

*Comesperma ericinum* (matchsticks)  
*Brachycome* sp.  
*Wahlenbergia* - 3 sp. (bluebells)  
*Helichrysum* (everlastings)  
*bracteatum*, *ramosissimum* & *elatum*  
*Hibbertia* 2 sp.  
*Podolepis jaceoides*  
*Persoonia tenuifolia*  
*Ranunculus* sp. (buttercup)  
*Baekia* sp.  
*Pimelea liniifolia*  
*Thysanotis* (fringe lily)  
*Dypodium punctatum* (Hyacinth orchid)  
*Boronia polygalifolia*  
*Drosera* - *binata*, *spathulata*, *auriculata*  
*Orthoceras strictum* (horned orchid)

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC. HELD AT 8.00PM ON WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 25 1992.

Opening:- Chairman Kris opened the meeting and welcomed all present, particularly Frank James, home for a week.

Present and Apologies:- as per attendance book.

Minutes:- The minutes of the October meeting were confirmed on the motion moved by Mary Walters and seconded by Dianna Holley and carried.

Correspondence :- Inward

1. Sub - Carmen Viviers
2. Sub - Doris Spence
3. T'wba Field Nats - DD Naturalist
4. Information Australia - For Directory of Australian Associations Entry
5. Flora and Fauna lists for Gibraltar Range National Park from Glen Innes NPWS.
6. Chinchilla Field Nats - Urimbirra.

Outward

1. & 2 Broadcast notes to 4QS and 4WK.

It was moved by Desley McDonagh seconded Margaret Carnell that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted. Carried.

Treasurer's report

Balance as at 28/10/92	\$328.83
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Receipts

Subscriptions	\$54.00	
Room Rent Collect	9.40	
	<u>\$63.40</u>	<u>63.40</u>
		<u>392.23</u>

Expenditure

Room Rent	10.00	
Postage	45.00	
Photocopy paper	78.04	
FGT Oct/Nov	<u>0.75</u>	
	<u>\$133.79</u>	133.79

Balance as at	25/11/92	258.44
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Julia Brown moved and Rob McCosker seconded the adoption of the Treasurer's report and the following accounts for payment - Room Rent \$10.00; Val White \$6.83. Carried.

Management Committee Report. President Kris advised the meeting of the recommendation from the Management Committee regarding the Private Use of the Club Photocopier. It was moved Rob McCosker and seconded Dore McCosker that the club members be allowed the use of the Club photocopier at 10c per copy, provided that the editor do the copying. Carried.

Outing reports:- Ray Marsden reported on the outing to Boonoo Boonoo. 26 people went on the outing; wildflowers were very good, particularly the fringed lilies - one with 13 blooms on stem. Somebody shifted the road to Morgan's Gully! A relaxing day was had by all.

January Outing 24th to Basket Swamp - details as in last magazine.

February Outing 21st from Cowies to the Border - leader Colin Hockings.

February Meeting - Programme - David Hockings - Plant Propagation.

Specimens - Rod Hutchin had a very interesting orchid.

Programme - David Wilson showed us excellent slides of the Kimberley Region and made us all want to go there! Thanks, David for a very good programme.

THE TAILED SPIDER (*Arachnura higginsii*)

When I called to see Dore McCosker recently, she showed me four tailed spiders (*Arachnura higginsii*) which had webs in a *Grevellia* in her garden. The spiders were pale greyish brown with the abdomen elongated into a "tail" tipped by three tiny black points. According to "The Australian Wonder Book of Knowledge" the spider may also be black, pink or reddish.

The female was positioned at the end of the egg sac several centimetres long, which she matched in colour, so you could not tell there was a spider there, until Dore gently disturbed her. After a few minutes she moved back to "disappear" again.

I think the spiders must know Dore is a friend as there were several leaf roll spiders as well, and another which had built a pyramid out of spines from the *Grevellia* with a spherical egg sac suspended underneath. I looked around my garden when I arrived home, and not one unusual spider did I see, although I did find some in the paddock, including the pyramid builder. One of these had a huge ant. caught in its web. Good for a week I should think.

Margaret Carnell

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TOOWOOMBA NATS CAMP OUT

The Toowoomba Nats are planning to have a camp-out on private property near Girraween at Easter. They have invited us to join them. Details should be finalised on Wednesday 10th February, so we should hear more after that date.

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PROGRAMME FOR REST OF YEAR

March	20th & 21st	Outing - Camp Out to 3rd Crossing	Enrol Walker
	24th	Program -	Enrol Walker
April	25th &	Outing - Sundown National Park	Peter Hazelgrove
	28th	Program -	Gordon Davis
May	22nd & 23rd	Outing - Camp Out - Main Range	Robin McCosker
	26th	Program - Landcare	Alan Robertson
June	20th	Outing - Clean-up, Nundubemere Falls	Desley McDonagh
	23rd	Program -	Jean Harslett
July	25th	Outing - Half Moon	Leila Hermanssen & Ralph Fletcher
	28th	Program - Remember Last Year	R
August	22nd	Outing - Herding Yard Creek	Val White
	25th	Program - Tasmania	Colin Hockings

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Failures are divided into two classes - those who thought and never did,  
and those who did and never thought.

John Charles Salak

