

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

Monthly Newsletter of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club.

No. 25

March 1972

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 and Mrs. D. Orr	Ph. Pozieres 219
Librarian	Mrs. R. Tremear	
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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>
Swanfels	19th March	Mr. E. McCulloch
Undercliffe Falls - Rivertree	23rd April	Mr. F. Wilkinson
Tenterfield Area	April Extra	Mr. P. Ingram
Mystery Camp-out	20th-21st May	Mr. W. Cathcart
Texas Caves	25th June	Mr. D. Bluhdorn.

Meetings:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Antarctica	8th March	Mr. B. Lacy
Orchids	26th April	Mr. P. Grant
Basic Geology	24th May	Dr. Branch
New England National Park	28th June	Mr. J. Poulton

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Minutes of General Meeting held 23rd February, 1972.

The meeting opened at 8.05p.m. with 28 members present and 4 apologies received.

Minutes of January Meeting: Moved Mrs.J. Paskins, seconded Mrs. D. Wiseman that the minutes of the January Meeting be confirmed. Carried.

Inward Correspondence: (i) Reply from Mr. H. McKechnie advising that he has received our petition on Sundown.
 (ii) Letter from Mr. M. Fletcher expressing regret that he will be unable to be guest speaker at the February Meeting.
 (iii) Letter from Adult Education seeking further details of Mr. Brian Lacy's qualifications.
 (iv) Press release from D.P.I. re Crocodiles.
 (v) Letter from Dept. of Main Roads, Warwick giving permission for us to erect arrows to the Mt. Norman Rd. on a temporary basis only.

(vi) Newsletters from other Nats. Clubs.
 (vii) "The Queensland Hosteller".

Outward Correspondence: (i) A request to the Main Roads Dept. seeking permission to erect "blue arrow" signs to the Mt. Norman Rd.
 (ii) Letter to the Adult Educations advising them of Mr. B. Lacy's qualifications.

Business from Minutes: It was resolved by the committee and further supported by the General Meeting that it would be unwise to erect the "blue arrow" signs to Mt. Norman in view of the poor road conditions existing owing to the heavy recent rains. A motion to this effect was moved Mr. W. Cathcart and seconded Mr. E. Walker. Carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Bal. in Bank at 30.1.72	\$51.48	Expenditure - Postage	88
since banked	7.50	"	1.76
	<u>\$58.98</u>	S.Lee & Co	1.28
		Power Bros.	3.00
Leaving a balance of	<u>\$52.06.</u>		<u>\$6.92</u>

Moved Miss J. Westcott seconded Mr.D.Orr that the Treasurer's Report be received Carried.

Accounts passed for payment Moved Mr.D.Orr seconded Mrs.D.Orr Carried.

General Business: The President reminded the meeting that the next month's meeting will be bought forward to co-incide with the Festival week and will feature Mr. B. Lacy as guest speaker. Details of activities concerning the Nats. Club were further outlined by the President and a general appeal made for members to volunteer to act as guides on the bus tours. The Club was reminded that two members of the Club had been responsible for the production of two books on the Granite Belt and that these books would be available during the Festival week.

Outing Reports: In the absence of Mrs.J.Harslett, Mr.W.Cathcart outlined the events of the January outing and gave details of the next month's outing to Swanfels.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

"The call of the Birds" was the programme hosted by Mr. W.Goeble and Mr. R. Tremeer.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Report of Field Outing 20th February - Wallangarra Area:

Because of considerable rain, various reports and inspections of the road, the scheduled venue of the Feb. outing had to be changed. However, the change was probably a good one, as it encompassed the new road opened by the Service Clubs, Jaycees and Apex.

This road will be of considerable benefit to tourists who wish to do a round trip and who enjoy traversing countryside of a somewhat rugged and isolated character. It is also of particular interest to our own Club as an access to quite a large new field.

This road too, had suffered from excessive rain. However, only one spot caused any real concern - being a boggy area on a rather steep slope. Planning to negotiate this from the Southern side, so that we would be going down the grade instead of up it, made it possible after some spade work, and care by drivers of cars to get over it without any mishaps. Under normal weather conditions this would provide no hazard.

The creek where the new crossing has been made by the Clubs was excellent and they are to be complimented on the work done. A large flow of water was being carried by the creek.

In the morning we inspected an area near Racecourse Creek, not visited before by our Club, and interesting for its unusual formations.

"Ladies Tresses Orchids" (Spirathes) were seen in numbers. Incidentally the Genus name refers to the unusual spiralling of the flowers along the spike.

Highlight of the day was the finding in flower of a rare orchid CHILOGLOTTIS TRAPEZIFORMIS FITZG. This species was recorded from the Stanthorpe District in 1937 by the late Mr. Harry Simpson from Happy Valley near Stanthorpe. The same year (in May a couple of months later) the late Dr. C.P. Ledward recorded it from Springbrook, Q'ld., not being found north of the Hunter River area at that period. To my knowledge it has not been recorded again in the intervening 35 years, though some enthusiasts have been searching for it. Our guest speaker in April Mr. Percy Grant had noticed unusual leaves in the vicinity recently.

Our President Wal was anxious to catch a "fast lizard" on the outing and nearly dived into the fast flowing stream after a water dragon. However his interest in conservation won out - and it is noted he did not participate in the Lizard Derby at the Centenary Celebrations. It is noted, however, that he and his wife worked untiringly throughout the week in so many capacities towards the smooth running of the Festival, and no time was left for lizard training!!! While on the subject, thanks must be offered to members for their part in the celebrations which covered so many fields including special outings and guiding bus tours, films produced by members, coalating books, long periods at the Art Festival in various capacities and many other activities. Special mention and conccratulations to members who so capably and graciously conducted buses with hundreds of visitors, must be made.

JEAN HARSLETT.

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REMINDERS: Outing to Swanfels departs Weeroona Park at 9.30 a.m. sharp.
PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL.

Next Meeting: As our March meeting was brought forward to 8th March to coincide with the Apple and Grape Harvest Festival and Centenary celebrations, the next monthly meeting will be on Wednesday, 26th April, 1972.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Outing to Swanfels, Sunday 19th March:

The next field outing will depart from Weeroona Park at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday, 19th March. This outing will be to the Swanfels area about 20 miles from Warwick and should be of much interest to "rock hounds"; so bring along your picks etc. The area will also provide interest for our bird watchers, bush walkers and plant enthusiasts.

Leader for the outing will be Mr. Edgar McCulloch, of Warwick.

Members are requested to be punctual as we have to meet Mr. McCulloch in Warwick.

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ALL ISLANDS ARE SANCTUARIES:

As all islands that formed part of Queensland were sanctuaries, wildlife on them was protected, stated Mr. C. Roff, District Fauna Ranger in the Queensland Department of Primary Industries.

He said: "Therefore, shooting on them is illegal, and it would be wise to leave your rifles at home".

He said many of Queensland's scenic islands, which were popular tourist resorts, were also nesting places for various birds, and provided food water and shelter for mammals as well.

For those reasons, holiday-makers on the islands should co-operate by refraining from hunting on them.

"Leave your guns at home and you can't be tempted", Mr. Roff said. "Do your shooting with a camera - it's much more rewarding. These island sanctuaries are a valuable national asset, and only the continued help of visitors will ensure that they are preserved".

From a Press Release by the Dept. of
Primary Industries.

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SANCTUARIES IN MARYBOROUGH DISTRICT:

Residents of the Maryborough and Hervey Bay districts are fortunate in having right at the door some of the finest sanctuaries in the whole of Australia.

They lie along the coastal strip from Boonooroo to Bingham along the Great Sandy Straits. Most of the extensive strip of country, which includes scenic spots in the thriving agricultural areas, is part of the extensive sanctuary system. The sanctuaries take in part of Maryborough and the fore-shores from Urangan to Toogoom. Several smaller sanctuaries are scattered throughout the watersheds of the Mary, Isis and Burnett Rivers. Across the Bay from Maryborough is Fraser Island and other smaller islands, which, like all islands, are sanctuaries. Gigantic timbers, freshwater lakes, and the varying coloured sands in profusion are a usual sight on the island. In all, about 500,000 acres in the Maryborough district have been declared sanctuaries.

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SANCTUARIES ON GOLD COAST:

Residents of the Gold Coast have at their door some of the finest sanctuaries in the whole of Australia.

They lie along the coastal strip from Southport to Coolangatta and West of the popular surfing beaches. Most of the range country which includes a great deal of rainforest along the McPherson Range, is part of the extensive sanctuary system.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.HIDDEN BEAUTY:

Take one look at "The Steamers", Emu Creek area east of Warwick and you will ask yourself, "Why was it when mother Nature was bestowing her wonders upon this humble earth, she placed such high quality beauty in 'such out of the way places'?"

For those who have purchased a copy of "The Bushwalkers Guide" to South-East Queensland" it is far easier to gaze upon the photographic cover and sigh "How beautiful", "How marvellous", or any of the other phrases you utter when you examine something to your liking.

The group taking its name from the likeness to the features of a ship rises above the surrounding country in a formation somewhat like that of the Glasshouse Mountains, this range has everything. The easiest of the group to conquer in your climb is the "prow" which provides a fair view of the other three, the "funnel", "mast", and "stern".

Perhaps the more known mountain in this area which is in fact, a stone throw from "The Steamers" is Mr. Superbus, the highest mountain in Southern Queensland, pushing its peak to somewhere over 4,000 feet. Dense jungle type forest makes it impossible to determine the exact height of this mountain. It has won for itself a name, which few of us would want, for claiming the lives of the people in the Lincoln Bomber which crashed into its slopes some years ago. It was many months later when this wreck was found.

A steep climb for the keen walker is simplified by the well graded timber track which winds its way over the summit towards "The Head" and Killarney. Staghorns, Elkhorns, flame trees, forest giants as well as the many ferns and small flowers peeping out from under logs and rocks together with the Whip bird and many other varieties of our feathered friends, make this area a paradise garden. An area certainly worthy of a visit when you have some "spare" time and no where to go....

Leaving The Steamers behind us, our course is now plotted for Spicers Peak, Cunningham Gap area. Whereas the Steamers are for the 'average' naturalist, Spicers Peak is for the madly keen, who wish to try their skill. In the next valley to the left from the Brisbane side of the Gap this area has many interests. A road through Spicers Gap was the main road linking the Downs to the City before the construction of Cunningham's Gap Road.

Leaving the main road at the 'Old Black Stump Service Station' below the Gap, and travelling via the old road through Spicers Gap, there are many points of interest along the way. The pioneer cemetery, Jacob's Well, The Governor's Chair are only a few of the many attractions. A car may be driven past these landmarks to the foot of Spicers Peak. Because the main telephone line linking us with Brisbane follows this road it is kept in fair condition from the approach mentioned, but the road from Maryvale is said to be overgrown and four wheel drive only. To make the trip worthwhile one should pitch camp near the cairn on top, for the night. To see the sun painting its glow over the world in the early morning is worth the effort. The nil supply of water, and an area of approx. 15ft. by 10 ft. to bed down on with cliffs on all sides makes the camp more interesting, especially if a good thunder storm blows up about 12.00. One must run the risk of gaining a tick or two, but such inconveniences never deter a keen naturalist.

It is the extreme quietness of the cool frosty night that holds one enthralled. The golden cherry red of the sunset splashed across the evening sky or the stars as they twinkle in the heavens above. The rich golden grass rolling for miles swaying in the breeze, to be broken by the deep blue-purple of distant mountains and gorges. This - is Sundown Country.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.HIDDEN BEAUTY Cont.

A little closer to home but by no means easy to arrive unannounced. The birds, although you cannot see or hear them, will notice your arrival, or the sheep you disturbed, putting fear into their hearts. This country it is hoped, will be turned into a National Park, not because we need more Parks, but because its beauty must be saved. This is a place about which little has been written. Perhaps it is because words cannot do justice to its mantle or features. Certainly it is a different kettle of fish from the rain forest country, but land does not need to be dotted with trees to be beautiful.

To the armchair naturalist and bushwalker these types of trips are only dreams, but then nature had a reason for putting her beauty in tough places - it is for the keen only to experience.

ROSS ALLAN DAVID.

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Did you know: At Stanmore in the Glasshouse Mountains area, some very large earthworms, eight inches long, and as thick as your finger abound. When fully extended these would measure 16 or 18 inches.

I found strange marks in the dust under the house and one day I discovered one of these worms, which had stayed out too late, crawling as fast as it could to seek safety in the grass before daylight.

Cackasses will wait on the posts, and suddenly dive down and drag a worm out as far as possible, then wait until it relaxes a little before giving another pull, then a third 'til the bird is almost standing on its own tail, and out comes the worm and is quickly eaten.

D. WISEMAN.

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BIRDS TO BE PROTECTED:

The Primary Industries Minister, Mr. Row has announced that all native birds (except a handful of pest species) would be totally protected throughout Queensland from January 1, 1972. Whereas in the past, statutory open seasons had been fixed for many species of finches and parrots, this would now no longer be the case. Mr. Row went on to say that in addition to these aviary birds, open seasons for many so-called game species, such as the brush turkey and snipe, would also be repealed.

It would now be illegal to trap native birds for aviary purposes, Mr. Row said. It was considered that sufficient numbers and species of aviary birds already existed in captivity to supply the needs of hobbyists. Mr. Row said the measure was aimed at stamping out the illegal bird trade in Queensland. It would cut off the supply of wild birds from professional trappers to dealers and aviculturists.

Mr. Row added that open seasons for wild duck and other bird species could still be declared from time to time when the Government considered such was warranted.

Aviculturists, bird dealers and others could obtain further details concerning these new requirements by contacting fauna rangers in his Department, Mr. Rowsaid.

From a Press Release by the Department
of Primary Industries.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.ALTERATION OF OPEN SEASONS FOR FAUNA."The Fauna Conservation Act of 1952"

An Order in Council printed in the Government Gazette of December 25, 1971, altered the open seasons proclaimed under previous Orders in Council.

The only species of Fauna now:

- (i) subject to open season and
- (ii) declared pest Fauna are--

(i) OPEN SEASON FAUNA:

Grey kangaroo	Red-necked, scrub or	Sandy wallaby
Red Kangaroo	eastern brush wallaby	Red-legged pademelon
Eastern or dusky	Black-striped wallaby	Water rat
wallaroo	Whiptail, grey-face or	Black-tailed or swamp
North Queensland	pretty face wallaby	wallaby.
wallaroo		

(ii) PEST FAUNA:

	<u>Mammals.</u>	<u>Birds.</u>
Wild Pig .)		
Water Buffalo)		
Dingoes)	Wedge-tailed eagle	Pied currawong
Foxes)	Cormorants	Grey currawong
Hares)	Eastern Swamphen	Sparrow
Rabbits)	White cockatoo	Starling
	Silvereyes	Turtle dove
	Crows and Ravens	Rose breasted cockatoo
		(Galah)

The following species of birds have been removed from the open season schedule:-

Banded finch	All introduced birds	Cockateil
Black-throated finch	including:-	Brush or scrub
Chestnut-breasted finch	Java sparrow	turkey
diamond firetail	Non-pareil finch	Grey duck
Longtailed finch	Nutmeg finch	Maned goose
Masked Finch	Strawbery finch	Australian snipe
Red-browed finch	Goldfinch	Pin-tailed snipe
Star finch	King parrot	Knot
Zebra finch	Rainbow lorikeet	Great Knot
	Red-winged parrot	Sandpiper
	Budgerigah or shell	Stint
	parrot	Tattler
	Rosellas	Whimbrel

Department of Primary Industries.

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Mrs. Wiseman writes telling us how schoolchildren at Wallangarra used to take injured or hungry creatures to her to look after.

One day a most emaciated Kookaburra arrived, and as it was Wintertime we contrived a perch for it in front of the kitchen fire, and it never left it, but accepted scraps. However it was too far gone, & one day it succumbed & we were startled as it died to hear it burst out laughing.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

Further to our Sanctuaries on the Gold Coast, these take in the Lamington National Park, Springbrook, Beechmont, Numinbah and the upper valleys of the Coomera and Canungra Creeks. In all, about 142,500 acres in the Gold Coast district have been declared sanctuaries.

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Contributions: Contributions from members for our Newsletter would be welcomed. We would like to keep the content of members' contributions in the Newsletter as high as possible. Please place all contributions in the hands of the Editors by the second Wednesday of each month.

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Specimens: Members are invited to bring along to meetings, any plant, rock or fauna specimens they have found, either on club outings or by themselves for identification or discussion. We are fortunate that the Club has some well qualified and willing members who would be pleased to help in identifying any specimens.

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Good Reading: A lady who enjoys good reading and showed a marked preference for the "Granite Belt Naturalist", and read all issues I have during her stay here, should be commended for her interest.

D. WISEMAN

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The earth rolls on through empty space, its journey's never done;
It's entered for a starry race throughout the kingdom come;
And, as I am a bit of earth, I follow it because---
To prove I am a rolling stone and never gather moss.

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Scorpions: Scorpions belong to the Scorpionida of the class Arachnida. They are easily distinguished by the large chelae at the ends of the pedipalps, which look like crab-claws. The abdomen ends in a slender tail tipped with a sting. The tail is very flexible and can be turned up over the back to sting prey held by the "claws". The sting of a scorpion is poisonous and can prove extremely painful. Scorpions hide by day under stones, under bark, and in fallen branches of trees, emerging at night to move about and seek their prey. Young scorpions may sometimes be seen clinging to the back of their mother, and being carried about in this manner. About thirty Australian Scorpions are known; many of them are of comparatively small size.

