



FEBRUARY 1995
Vol. 266



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.

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

OFFICERS OF THE CLUB FOR 1993-94

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------|
| President | Rob McCosker | 83 5371 |
| Vice-Presidents | Kris Carnell | 83 5268 |
| | Mary Walters | 83 5306 |
| Secretary | Margaret Carnell | 83 5268 |
| Treasurer | Roger Logan | 81 2493 |
| Newsletter Editor | Geoff Walker | 81 2008 |
| Newsletter Sub-Committee | Julie Beddow & Patience James | |
| Publicity Officer | Patience James | 81 1853 |
| Librarian | Trish McCosker | 83 5371 |
| Management Committee | President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer. | |

SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS ON NATS OUTINGS

1. Flat walking, road or track.
2. Road or track gentle hills.
3. Track, some hilly sections.
4. Track, some steep sections.
5. Cross country easy open forest, gentle slopes.
6. Track, steep section common, with steps.
7. Cross country some hills, some thick undergrowth.
8. Cross country steep section with scrambles over rocks etc.
Some thick undergrowth.
9. Cross country, steep, hilly, rough, thick undergrowth.
10. Mountain climbing, hard going, higher level of fitness or plenty of time required.

STATE FOREST CAMPING CODE

Camping in State Forest Parks will be more enjoyable for you and other visitors if you observe this simple camping code.

- All plants and animals are protected - please don't disturb or damage them.
 - Keep your camp clean and tidy and respect your surroundings. At the end of your stay, make sure the site is tidy for those who follow.
 - Tables and fireplaces are for all to use - please don't monopolise them.
- Leave waterfront areas clear for everyone - pitch your tent well back from the creek bank.
- Light your fire only in the fireplaces provided. Use firewood sparingly.
- Be sure your fire is out before leaving.
- Avoid polluting creeks and lakes with soap, detergents or shampoo. Draw water in containers for washing purposes and dispose of used water well away from the stream.
 - Be aware of plants and creatures that might make your stay uncomfortable for example, leeches, ticks and nettle.
 - Don't leave clothing or footwear out on the ground overnight - biting insects, spiders or centipedes may crawl in. Always knock out your shoes before putting them on.
 - Take care when swimming in creeks and waterholes - before entering the water check for depth, snags or other obstructions.
 - If you go bushwalking, always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
 - Camping is limited to two weeks. If you wish to stay for a longer period, please contact the local Forestry Office.

This code applies to most places where Nats. go on outings.

Minutes of meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. held in the Q.C.W.A. Rooms, Stanthorpe on Wednesday, 23 rd November, 1994

Opening: Chairman Rob McCosker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Attendance & Apologies: as per attendance book.

Minutes: of the September meeting were accepted as a correct record on the motion of Noor Davis, seconded Desley Mc Donagh. carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards: 1. Snr. J. Coulter - Sept. "Canopy", & Correction to "Canopy", Toowoomba Field Nats. - "Darling Downs Naturalist" Sept. '94 & Oct. '94, 3. Toowoomba Bushwalkers - "Footprint Oct. '94 & Nov. '94; 4. Wild Country Safaris - Information re Safaris 1995, 5. Chinchilla Field Nats. - "Urimburra" Oct. '94; 6. Information Australia - Ad. for "Who's Who", 7. Inter National Parks Tours - Brochures, 8. Tweed Byron Eco Travel - Brochures, 9. Stanthorpe Shire Council - Australia Day Awards, 10. Queensland Health - Sunsmart Sport, 11. Subs from J & S Kenna, M.S. & B., J. Moulds, M. Compton, J. Luck & Mrs. Taylor.

Outwards: 1. Round the Ridges & Community Billboard - notice of activities for October & November.

Mary Walter moved and Herb Colley seconded that the inwards correspondence be received and the outwards adopted. Carried.

Financial Report: As there was no meeting in October the treasurer presented two financial reports.

Financial Report for 28.9.94 to 26.10.94: Balance b/f \$1092.62, Receipts \$2938.45 being Subs \$124.00, Room Rent Collection \$14.45, Grant from NPWS \$2800.00. Expenditure: Room Rent \$12.50, State Govt. Tax 0.50, totalling \$13.00 which left a Balance at 26.10.94 of \$4018.07.

Financial Report for 26.10.94 to 23.11.94: Balance b/f \$4018.07, Receipts \$31.50, being Subs \$31.00, Photocopy use \$0.50. Expenditure: Magazine Postage \$30.25, State Govt. Tax \$0.25, totalling \$30.50, which left a balance at 23.11.94 of \$4019.07.

Account to be passed for payment Refund of Subs overpaid \$15.00.

R. Logan moved and F. Wilkinson seconded that the financial report be adopted. Carried.

Outing Report: Tom Archer reported that 29 or 30 people went to Mt Cordeaux led by David Wilson. It was an energetic climb and everything was moist and green. There were 20 to 30 species of birds identified and many large slugs coloured orange to watermelon pink, to red were seen. David gave a talk on the geology of the area.

Next Outing: The Christmas Breakup will be at Mary Walters place and will start at 4 p.m.

The Outing on 22nd January will be to Harrigans Lane led by Tom Archer

Specimens: A photo of a *Homoranthus* with a query if anyone had seen it and galls on a Eucalypt found on the Strezlecki Track.

General Business: Kris Carnell suggested a working bee at the Red Footbridge on Sunday 27th at 1.30 p.m. to give the bridge another coat of paint and renew footprints on the rock.

The secretary asked the president of the Q.C.W.A. if the club could have a key to the rooms and was given one.

We also asked if there was storage room for the projector, screen and stand in the Q.C.W.A. hall and were told there was.

Ailsa Wilkinson mentioned it was Skin Cancer Awareness week and was glad to see club members wear hats.

Millie Marsden invited members to attend a luncheon on 2nd December to raise funds for food parcels for drought assistance.

Programme Fred Simpson presented an excellent programme of slides of Frazer Island. After Fred was thanked the meeting closed.

NOVEMBER OUTING REPORT

The outing for November was to Bare Rock in the Main Range National Park. Despite the distance from Stanthorpe, about 25 to 30 people turned up to tackle this fairly well-known walk. The customary tea break was had in the Cunninghams Gap picnic ground. We were serenaded by the ever-present bell minors while many shared their morning tea with the numerous satin bower birds.

We then drove to the car park at the saddle. The walk to the rock shelf below the summit of Mt Cordeaux was done at a leisurely pace with plenty of opportunity to soak up the sights, sounds and smells of this wonderful rainforest. Rob McCosker went ahead though with his family to tackle the Mt Cordeaux summit. An inspection was made by all of the gold mine. All had the same question: Why? Probably no-one will ever know what convinced them to undertake such an ambitious mining project in such a fruitless search for gold.

The lunch break was at the rock shelf below the summit. There are arguably few finer views on which to feast your eyes while enjoying a well-earned lunch. I took the opportunity to discuss the geology of this once wild volcanic area. The many mountain peaks were located and identified.

After lunch, roughly half the group opted to extend the walk to Bare Rock. As I indicated, the walk was relatively level (except for the 90% uphill and the 5% downhill). The rainforest along most of this section is more stunted than that which comes earlier. As the track here follows the ridge, the stunted forest may be the result of less ground water, wind and altitude. Just before reaching Bare Rock, we encountered numerous giant slugs about 10cms long scattered through the forest. They ranged in colour from brown through to bright orange and each had a dark triangular mark on its back.

Once the weary walkers reached Bare Rock, the stunning views of the Goomburra ramparts and Mt Castle forced them to forgive me for my mild exaggeration about the slope of the walk. Now all that was left was to retrace our steps the 6kms back to the Gap.

This walk was the only viable option left to us as a result of most of the park being closed due to the extreme fire danger. It seems all enjoyed the walk and it appears it was a most acceptable choice under the circumstances.

David Wilson

CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP

1994's Christmas Break-up party was held at the home of Mary Walters.

40 members turned up on a beautiful, clear, cool evening. Some went for a walk in the bush, then we all sat down to enjoy a chat and barbeque.

Thank-you Chris for providing the barbeque equipment. Thanks also to Rob for a jolly tune on the bagpipes (the frog mouth owls took off and haven't been seen since!!).

Many thanks to everyone for making the evening so enjoyable.

Mary Walters

OUTING REPORT TO MORGAN'S GULLY

Sunday 22nd, January

The club's first outing for 1995 found the Club at Morgan's Gully, 6kms east of Boonoo Boonoo.

There was a good turn out of members. The first problem of the trip came early in that all the parking places around the Civic Centre were occupied by cars whose occupants were attending a big function inside. We had to gather up near the Plaza Car Park.

The weather was fine but cool & overcast so that no one was brave enough to go swimming. Fortunately a couple of days before the outing there had been some good rain so that everything was fresh and green and looked good. The streams had a good flow which was pleasant to watch for a change.

After smoko we went for a ramble a short way up the gully. We had a look at the channel Morgan blasted through in a solid rock bar to drain the alluvial country above hopefully to get gold. The holes for blasting would have been all drilled by hand and the explosives then were not as effective as today's. The broken rock had then been stacked rather precariously on the sloping rock just beside and above. Enough to make one nervous working below.

Above the cut some of the overburden had been excavated by pick and shovel, wheelbarrow and planks according to some of the old photos reproduced in the shelter at the Bald Rock visitors area. However most of the soil and gravel must have been sluiced out as the "V" shaped stream bed above is in places 6-8m deep and twice that in width and extends back several hundred metres.

There were a surprising number of different wildflowers in bloom for that time of year probably due to the bit of rain we have had since the dry. Jean pointed out a couple of interesting ones. One a prostrate plant (*Actinatis gibbonsii*) easy to overlook but which is a close relative of the flannel flower (*Actinotis helianthi*). The kinship was to be seen when examining the flower head, the little florets were much the same as in the flannel flower. Another was a shrub 3m high with small white star flowers each with a prominent bunch of stamens. At first sight it could have been expected to be a *Kunzia* but was actually *Leptaspermum phyllicoides*.

Morgan's Gully is said to have been named after the Morgan who discovered Mt Morgan but who prior to that had worked Morgan's Gully.

I received some information from the Parks and Wildlife Service in Glen Innes about the Boonoo Boonoo gold field. This information was some notes and a rough map prepared by James Hoskin in 1906. Boonoo Boonoo was then a staying port for horse coaches and must have been a little village as there was a cemetery.

There apparently were about 70 workings between Morgan's Gully and Boonoo Boonoo on the Boonoo Boonoo River and its tributaries. Alluvial gold was discovered there in impurities of ilmenite and silver and the country was wet and shallow. Morgan's Gully appears to have had the best gold. A miner could produce about an ounce of gold a week and this was worth £3 - 6 - 0. Some reefs were discovered and the Government did sink a shaft down 33 metres to test the gold content which was poor.

A battery was built and operated by a Mr Dopson on Dismal Creek but that apparently was about its prospects. Most of the miners moved on as better finds were discovered elsewhere. The Chinese worked there for a while but left during a drought.

Tom Archer

Wildflower list from January Outing to Morgan's Gully

Acacia mollissima - ferny leaf wattle with very pale yellow flowers
Actinotus gibbonsii - odd little creeper with button flowers
Actinotus helianthi - the common Flannel Flower we all know
Baeckea utilis - small shrub with masses of tiny tea tree like flowers
Bauera rubioides - common name, Dog Rose, a good show of mauve flowers
Boronia bipinnata - a bush with small white flowers and pink buds
Boronia microphylla - bush with pink flowers, almost spent
Boronia polygaliolia - small plant in the grass with white flowers
Calochilus campestris - a bearded orchid with brown or reddish beard
Calythrix tetragona - unusual with only a few single flowers, not masses
Comesperma defoliatum - tiny blue flowers in the grass
Comesperma ericina - purple matchhead flower about a metre high
Conospermum taxifolium - stems about a metre high with white flowers
Dillwynia retorta - one of the egg & bacon flowers
Dipodium punctatum - showy hyacinth orchids in pale pink to deep red
Drosera auriculata - the insectivorous plant, commonly called Sundew
Epacris microphylla - coral heath white flowers on an erect wiry shrub
Euphrasia brownii - small plant to 40cm with bright white flowers
Glycine clandestina - small vine in grass with purple flowers
Goodenia bellidifolia - attractive yellow flowers on small ground plant
Goodenia ovata - also attractive yellow flowers on a more robust plant
Helichrysum bracteatum - common everlasting daisy
Hibbertia sp. - yellow guinea flower, no one was sure of its name
Hybanthus filiformis - H. monopetalus was suggested, for Lady's Slipper
Isotoma anethifolia - an impressive show of the Rock Isotoma
Leptospermum phyllicoides - handsome small tree initially called Kunzea
Lobelia gracilis - vivid splashes of blue amongst the rocks
Lobelia purpurascens - purple lobelia
Lomatia silaifolia - creamy white flower head, parsley like leaves
Mirbelia aotoides - another egg & bacon flower
Orthoceras strictum - horned orchid, well concealed in the grass
Pelargonium australe - a native which can make a nice garden plant
Petrophila canescens - the conesticks plant
Persoonia cornifolia - Geebung, an erect tall shrub with square leaves
Persoonia pinnifolia - tiny ground Geebung with fine leaves
Persoonia mitchellii - erect Geebung shrub with lanceolate leaves
Persoonia sp. - I believe there was yet another Geebung there with lanceolate leaves and a prostrate habit. All have small yellow flowers
Plectranthus parviflorus - purple salvia like flower
Pimelea collina - white rice flower
Platysace ericoides - another white rice flower
Podolepis longipedata - a showy yellow flower like a large Dandelion
Poranthera microphylla - small succulent herb with showy white flowers
Pultenaea foliolosa - yet another of the egg & bacon flowers
Scaevola ramosissima - purple fan flower
Stylidium graminifolium - pink trigger plant
Trachymene incisa - Wild Carrot, white rice flower, tasty edible root
Wahlenbergia trichogyna - that's a difficult big name for a Blue Bell!
Xanthorrhoea australis - Black Boy or Kangaroo Tail

It was great to see so many people taking an interest in the flowering plants on the outing and to find so many different plants. 48 were noted, many of which were flowering up to three months late due no doubt to the upset caused by the drought.

Robin McCosker

BIRDS OBSERVED DURING THE FIELD NATS OUTING TO CORDEAUX

(on the way there and back as well)

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Bell bird | Spurwing plover |
| Satin bowerbird | Crow |
| (male, female & immature) | Woodducks (Maned Geese) |
| Currawong | Leather head (Noisy friar bird) |
| Rufus fantail | Peewee |
| Lewin honeyeater | Magpie |
| Grey shrike thrush | Welcome swallow |
| Grey fantail | Forktailed swift |
| Black faced monarch | Silvereye |
| White throated treecreeper | Crimson rosella |
| Yellow rumped thornbill | King parrot |
| Wedge-tailed eagle | Whip bird |
| Falcon | Rainbow lorikeet |
| Eastern spinebill | Cat bird |
| Golden whistler | Wee bill |
| Lyre bird (heard) | Scarlet robin |
| Red browed finch | |

The thornbill and lewin honeyeater were watering and bathing in a hollow in a tree fork containing water from the recent showers.

BIRDS 'N' STRING 'N' TWINE

One day my attention was drawn to a sparrow fluttering furiously by my sweet pea trellis. His/her wings were moving very rapidly indeed. Investigation proved that there was a bit of string, which had been used to tie up the sweet peas, still attached to the trellis. That sparrow used a great amount of energy to no avail. The string was tied on too tightly.

I also observed a white eared honeyeater attacking the twine I had supporting the *Melaleuca armillaris* near the house. He/she was doing his/her level best to pull the threads from than twine probably for the nest being built.

I'm not sure where the twine would have ended up, but, had the sparrow got the string, it would have ended up in the ceiling of my house.

I would like to meet the people who brought sparrows to Australia and tell them what I think of them!!!

Desley McDonagh.

Pre-Outing Report - Slip Rocks

Leader - Brian Dodd

The 19th February outing will be to Slip Rocks which is the large expanse of flat rock behind and above The Pyramids. This will involve a circuitous route with a direct assault on the Rock followed by a detour under the Pyramids, a total distance of approximately 5 kilometres. Category rating is estimated at 8 as it includes steady rock climbing on the way up with some bush-bashing and rock scrambling on the way back. Walkers are advised to wear long pants or slacks and to carry their lunch.

Meeting place, Weerona Park, leaving at 9am. Then drive to the main picnic ground at Girraween. After morning tea, hikers will proceed by car to the old Gunn's farm, the site of the newly fenced park rejuvenation area.

For those who do not wish to do the organised walk, there is a range of do-your-own-thing easier options at the picnic ground.

Brian Dodd

Anybody having any articles for the Magazine can mail them to

**PO Box 798
Stanthorpe Q 4380**

or drop them in at

**International Colour Productions,
52 Maryland St**

If you think you have any articles that would interest Club members don't hesitate to put pen to paper. Any articles from recent outings with the club to happenings in your own back yard please tell us about it and let this magazine contain variety of reading for us all.