

FEBRUARY 1996

Vol 276



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.

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 1995/96

President :	Kris Carnell	076 835 268
Vice-Presidents :	Rob McCosker	076 835 371
	Lincoln McPhee	076 811 651
Secretary :	Mary Walters	076 835 306
Treasurer :	Roger Logan	076 812 493
Newsletter Editor :	Desley McDonagh	076 813 074
Magazine Committee :	Julie Beddow & Wendy Donges	
Publicity Officer :	Patience James	076 811 853
Librarian :	Trish McCosker	076 835 371
Management Committee :	President, Vice- Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer.	

ADDRESS CORRECTION NOTICE

Please check your address. If it is not exactly as it should be, for your satisfaction, but more importantly, correct for Australia Post delivery - PLEASE ADVISE THE CLUB BY PHONE OR MAIL. IF YOU HAVE A MAIL SERVICE OR A POST OFFICE BOX NUMBER THAT WE DON'T KNOW WE NEED IT!

FOR YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE !!

FEBRUARY'S OUTING is to Poverty Point on 21st, led by Geoff Walker. Information is in an article inside the newsletter - check it for details.

The NEXT MEETING will be on February 28th at 8.00pm at the CWA Rooms, Victoria Street, when Vice President Lincoln McPhee will be speaking about bees. This should be a very interesting and informative evening. Come along and bring your friends.

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.

OUTING REPORT - MOLE STATION 19TH NOVEMBER

A party of forty intrepid and well prepared naturalists set off into the murky south. As they left the Sunshine State the weather cleared and thereafter (apart from a couple of short showers during smoko) the sun shone most of the time.

We left the Bruxner Highway by way of the Gibraltar Road and many people (especially non-drivers) were able to enjoy the magnificent descent to the Mole River as they looked down to the chasms beside the road.

At the Mole River crossing, a lovely spot with its tree-lined banks and (on this occasion) very vocal plovers, it was good to see that the waterhole upstream had risen quite a bit since my pre-outing visit. At Mole Station the river is not flowing though many waterholes remain.

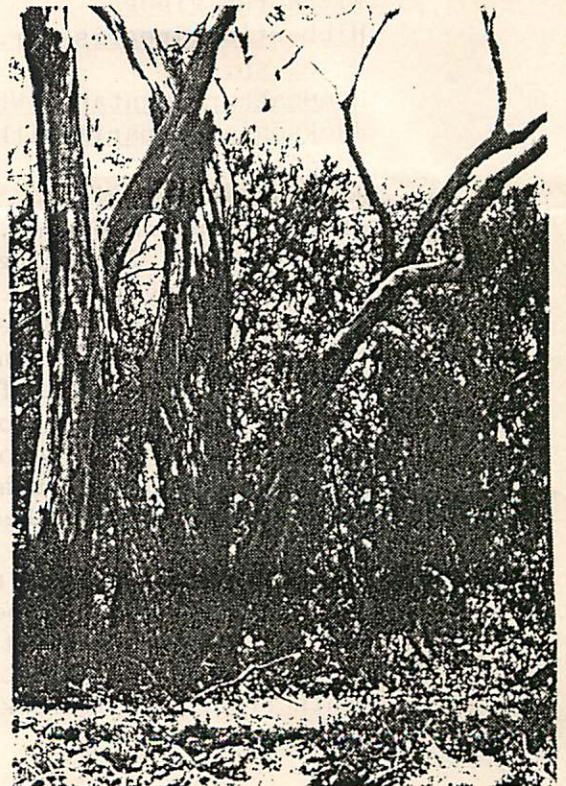
Our next stop was at two cypress (callitris sp.) tobacco barns where our explorers made diverse discoveries such as an old bullock cart axle and the lovely cool interior of the barns which date from the 1930's.

We continued on to Mole Station where we were welcomed by Sarah and David Caldwell and accompanied by Sarah and son Richard (the fourth generation of the family to live on the property) on our ramble up Tableland Creek. We were able to enjoy the rock formations of the creek bank although by now some people were beginning to feel the heat. Under Sarah's guidance we discovered a number of remnant rainforest species.

Next stop was lunch back at the homestead or on the riverbank and after lunch came the nursery, and after that came some careful talking as plant fanciers discovered yet more irresistible delights.

We moved on to the arsenic mine (a little over a km away) accompanied by Sarah (now wearing her geologist's hat) and son Frank Caldwell who recalled the operation of the mine in his boyhood days, spoke about the extraction process and answered many later questions. We wandered around the site, an evil-smelling wasteland with mountains of rusty 44 gallon drums, collapsing brick-built kilns, decaying storage tanks and derelict timber frames. We became aware of the great changes in industrial safety standards in 50 years when we heard about worker's toenails dropping off from long exposure to poison.

We left this devastated area to return to the river bank where some investigated a small cave overlooking the river, while others were content just to admire the river views and enjoy the shade along with the last cuppa of the Outing Report 'Committee' - Helen Hartman, Mary Clark, Millie Marsden. Helen Hartman.



Photographs taken at the Mole River Crossing on a previous outing.

PLANTS NOTED ON THE MOLE RIVER TRIP - 19/11/95

Tom, Carmen and I travelling in the same car were given a blank sheet by outing leader Helen Hartman with the suggestion we provide a plant list for the day, so pencils got busy. We have included some non-indigenous plants, since a deal of our observations were along the road verges which we travelled and ideal places to see such species.

At our first stop at Sunnyside we saw Purple Top (*Verbena bonariensis*) from South America. Maynes Pest (*Verbena* sp.) pleasing to the eye of the tourist the reverse to the pastoralist. Its mat like plant and mauve flowers are nice to see. *Trifolium angustifolium* was the small plant with a compact cylindrical head of small pink flowers, which changed as it matured into a bristly brush.

Acacia implexa (only acacia flowering)

Ailanthus altissima (Tree of Heaven) native of China and Japan. Early settlers used timber for tool handles.

Mistletoes (*Amyema cambagei*) on the Casuarina, foliage closely resembles its host. (Matchstick Mistletoe).

Nothothixis subaureus golden underleafed species on mistletoe.

Dendrophoe glabrescens mistletoe broad leaf attractive golden flowers probably the third species. Seen elsewhere on Eucalypts.

Nothothixis cornifolius bright green rather square leaf.

Amyema miquelli mistletoe on Eucalypts along road.

Beynia oblongifolia small shrub, Tableland Gully, conspicuous round green fruits which turn red as they mature.

Bursaria spinosa (blackthorn) fruits only.

Callistemon viminalis drooping red bottlebrush.

Callistemon (species not yet named) small flowers soft pink later turning cream. Very successfully grown by Marsdens.

Cassinia quinquefaria wild rosemary.

Clematis glycinoides narrow leaf headache vine.

Clematis aristata broad leaf.

Cymbidium canaliculatum on ironbark flowering well.

Dodonaea viscosa still see signs of bountiful fruiting, faded.

Ficus sp. (Sandpaper fig) severely frosted this year, but shooting again which pleased Mr Caldwell.

Ficus rubiginosa

Hibbertia linearis var. obtusa.

Hovea sp.

Hymenathera dentata (Whalebone Tree) remnant rainforest tree.

Jacksonia scoparia with its deep orange pea flowers brightened the roadside way.

Jasminum suavissimum its wonderful perfume was in the air at one of our stopping places.

Lomandra sp. flowering profusely along the banks of the Mole.

Notelaria longifolia

Olearia viscosa wild peach bush.

Pandorea pandorana wonga vine.

Pavonia hastata pink flowering flower shown to us by Sarah.

Swainsona galegifolia orange flowering form, attractive pea.

Xanthium pungens Noogoora burr.

Xanthium spinosum Bathurst burr.

Castor Oil Plant These last three all on river flat where we paused.

Zinnea was *pauciflora* now *peruviana* the old name referred to its diminutive flower - one found only had three petals. The latter name describes where it comes from.

Wahlenbergia sp. bluebells.

Xanthorrhoea sp. blackboys or grasstrees, tall stately spikes.

Jean Harslett.

BIRD LIST - OUTING TO MOLE RIVER 19/11/95

(Supplied by Millie Marsden)

Masked Plover	Wedge-tailed eagle
Dotterel	Honeyeater - brown
Wood duck	Honeyeater - striated
Magpie lark	Honeyeater - spiny cheeked
Blue wren	Honeyeater - white naped
Cockatiel	Red-winged parrot
Dollar bird	White eyed scrub wren
Red wattle bird	Grey thrush
Sacred kingfisher	Red browed finch
Sulphur-crested cockatoo	Butcher bird
Galah	Scissor grinder (Restless flycatcher)
Willy wagtail	Koel
Kookaburra (laughing)	Cicada bird
Welcome swallow	White rumped tree creeper
Yellow rumped thornbill	Crow
Helmeted friar bird	Crimson rosella
Sand piper	King parrot
Apostle bird	White winged triller
Channel-billed cuckoo	

FEBRUARY 25th PRE-OUTING REPORT

Leader:- Geoff Walker Ph: 81 2117

POVERTY POINT MINE

The February outing will be to the Poverty Point Mine south-east of Tenterfield. This mine was gold bearing. Actual discovery date of these mines is not known but original holders had been working on the ground about thirty years in 1889. Mine companies are today doing test drillings with promising results.

Cars will meet at Weeroona Park an hour earlier than usual at 8.00 am travelling to Tenterfield for morning tea. We will travel along the Tenterfield/Casino before turning off on to dirt. Drivers who do not appreciate driving on less than perfect dirt or who's vehicles are low slung may like to organise a lift with someone else. There is nothing on this road that will stop any vehicles, this is just a small warning.

We will stop to take in a view over Demon creek and drive past Timbara Homestead before arriving at the mine. Lunch, then a short walk to the actual mine. The day is pretty well your own to do as you wish but we will start at a certain point showing points of interest as we walk past.

Things you will see:-

- Small horizontal mine shaft (torch could be helpful)
- Various capped test drills
- Blasted rock showing seams and other interesting metals
- Open channels cut through solid rock following gold bearing seams

Geoff Walker

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC HELD IN
THE CWA ROOMS STANTHORPE ON 22ND NOVEMBER 1995

Opening :- President Kris Carnell welcomed everyone present to the meeting. A special welcome was extended to guest speaker Judy Heil.

Attendance :- 25 present, 6 apologies as per attendance book.

Minutes :- The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a correct record on the motion of Rob McCosker seconded by Frank Wilkinson and carried.

Correspondence :- Inward :-

1. Queensland Dept of Environment & Heritage - Environmental Protection Policies
2. Chinchilla Field Nats - October & November issues
3. Queensland Naturalist News - Nov/Dec issue
4. D Rothwell, M. Taylor, R Fletcher M Moulds - subs.
5. Darling Downs Region Health Promotion unit - information sought.
6. Columboola Environmental Education Centre - camping facilities
7. Toowoomba Bushwalkers - Nov Issue.
8. C.B.A. - Statement
9. M.E.P.A. - Maiala National Park protection.
10. Stanthorpe Shire Council - Australia Day Awards.
11. Qld Dept Tourism Youth and Sport - letter
12. Dept of Forestry - management journal
13. Dept Environment & heritage - Annual Report.

Outward:-

1. Rob Clark - Thanks
2. Community Billboard and Round the Ridges - particulars of outing and meeting.

The inward correspondence was received and the outward adopted on the motion of Mary Walters, seconded Margaret Carnell, Carried.

Business Arising from the Correspondence:-

1. Kris Carnell asked the members to take magazines, newsletters, other literature to read, circulate and return to the librarian.
2. The Columboola Environmental Centre :- This centre is available for holiday bookings. Easy access to the Barakula Forestry and other bird watching areas. Hot showers well established kitchen and excellent Astronomy facilities. \$5.00 per person per night.

Financial Statement

Treasurer Roger Logan moved and Dot Archer seconded that the Financial Statement be adopted and that the following accounts be passed for payment. Room rent \$10.00; Magazine Postage \$35.05. Signs for Heritage Park \$1231.00 Hardware for Heritage Park \$304 .50

Balance as at 25/10/95	\$3618.56
Receipts	133.40
	\$3751.96
Expenditure	1617.10
Balance as at 22/11/95	\$2134.86

General Business

1. Outing Report :- The report on the outing to Mole River Station on 19/11/95 was read by Margaret Carnell.
2. Letter of thanks:- The Secretary was asked to write a letter of thanks to, the Caldwells at Mole River.
3. Next Outing :- Christmas Breakup party at Trish and Rob McCoskers home on 10/12/95.
4. As there will be no magazine in January members are reminded of the outing to Basket Swamp on the 21st January, leaving Weeroona Park at 11.00 am.

Minutes - Continued.

5. Specimens:- 1. Specimen from the Arsenic Mine at Mole River 2. Turtle brought in by Jean Harslett 3. Scarlet robin's nest brought in by Rob McCosker 4. Orchid brought in by Brian McDonagh for identification - probably Cymbidium 'caniculatum.' 6. Book depicting the Barking Owl, also called the Screaming woman owl.

6. Management Committee Meeting :- Kris Carnell informed members of the decisions made at the Management Committee Meeting.

Next Meeting :- The next meeting will be on the 28th February; Lincoln McPhee will talk on BEES.

Program :-

Judy Heil gave a very interesting talk on the Remnant Vegetation in the Stanthorpe area. Judy provided excellent maps to illustrate various points.

LEARNING FOR PLEASURE

The Learning for Pleasure group will be operating again in 1996.

Three courses from last year will continue. These are :-

1. Ancient History (convener Gordon Davis)
2. French Conversation (convener Pat Whelan)
3. Current Affairs (convener Mary Walters)

A meeting will be held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday 21st February in the QCWA rooms, Victoria St for current and potential members to meet and discuss further courses for 1996. This is an opportunity for new members to join the group. We stress that our courses are free and for pleasure only. If you know someone (of any age) who has time for leisure and may be interested in joining, or convening a discussion group on any subject, please tell them to come along to see if they can meet others with the same interests.

For more information ring Gordon Davis on 836294.

CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP

A pleasant afternoon was held at Rob & Trish McCosker's home 'Shortlands' Severnlea on Sunday 10th December. A number (8 people and several dogs) of folk arrived at approximately 2.00pm and were taken on a tour of the area. Trish led us along a track alongside Bamerry Creek where Tom's hat had an encounter with a red-bellied black snake which we all watched slither away. We climbed to a high point overlooking Severnlea. The view there was quite expansive because we were so high. We could watch the traffic on the highway and locate the properties in Severnlea.

After we arrived back from the walk we were joined by a good number of the rest of the club (some just returned from Lord Howe Island) for a bar-b-q tea. About the time all had finished their meal, the storms, which had been building up, started to make their presence really well felt.

This caused an exodus of Nats from 'Shortlands'. I understand that, in a very short time, the McCoskers were on their own again. I can't prove that because I was in the vehicle which was first out of the gate! The lightning which we observed as we drove back to Stanthorpe was spectacular when viewed from the highway.

We thank Rob & Trish for their hospitality. Although a short evening, it was a worth while social activity.

Desley McDonagh
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OUTING REPORT FOR 21.01.96

Leaders: Kris & Margaret Carnell

On Sunday, 21st January 27 people set out from Weeroona Park to travel to Basket Swamp via Sugarloaf Road and Wilsons Downfall. We noticed several patches of golden everlastings (*Helichrysum bracteatum*) along the roadside.

On arrival, we were greeted by three members who had already arrived and had the fire going. After lunch members set out in various directions to explore and botanise. There were a number of *Cryptostylus subulata* growing in the swamp and a tiny *Boronia*, a few inches high which had one or two pink or white flowers. One flower which I found very appealing with its two blue petals, was *Comesperma defoliatum*, the leafless Milkwort, which I could not have identified without Joan's assistance. The creeping flannelflower (*Actinotis gibbonsia*) was growing vigorously along the road verge, and I saw one flower of *Burmannia* near the swimming hole.

At the rest area there were stands of *Banksia integrifolia*, and through the swamp a low growing shrubby *Banksia*, neither of which was in flower. I tried to identify the smaller one from a spent bloom, using "A Field Guide to Banksias" by Ivan Holliday and Geoffrey Watton, without much success. I did wonder if it was a *B. spinulosa* or close relative.

The only birds identified were Crimson Rosella, Magpie and Superb Blue Wren. There were quite a number of Blue Tiger butterflies (*Danaus hamatus*) flitting about, as there have been in the garden recently.

Several members walked downstream to the site of a mine which is showing signs of activity at the moment. There were bags of drilling samples sitting about marked with the depth at which they were drilled. Nobody was certain what mineral the samples contained, but copper was suggested.

We drove to Basket Swamp Falls for afternoon tea and were pleased to see a good flow of water, with plenty gushing through the hole through the rock. A couple of people braved the slippery rocks to have a swim, while others walked downstream to view the falls, or sat about doing nothing much but enjoy the atmosphere of this lovely spot. Flannel Flowers (*Actinotis helianthi*) were observed amongst the rocks.

After a leisurely interlude members made their way home at their own pace. Those travelling via Tenterfield may have noticed White Everlastings (*Helichrysum elatum*) growing by the roadside. I always think they look as if they've been washed rather roughly and left to dry.

All in all it was a pleasant, relaxed outing to a very special, unspoiled area close to home.

Margaret Carnell

FLOWER LIST FOR BASKET SWAMP ON 21.01.96

- Actinotis heliathi - Flannel Flower - white daisy-like flower with green tips.
 Actinotis gibbonsia - Creeping Flannel Flower - small daisy flowers which look like burrs at first glance.
 Boronia sp. - small white or pink flowers with 4 petals, 8 stamens.
 Boronia microphylla - small shrub, pink flowers - 4 petals 8 stamens.
 Bauera rubioides - dog rose - small shrub, pink flowers hanging down 6 - 10 petals.
 Baekia sp. - shrub, tiny white 5 petalled flowers like Leptospermum.
 Burmannia - blue/purple tubular flowers tipped yellow held in cluster upright on stem to 30 cm.
 Calotis cuneifolia (I think) - blue burr daisy few inches high.
 Cryptostylus subulata - red and green orchid in raceme, flowers appear to be upside down. Pollinised by wasp
 Comersperma defoliatum - leafless milkwort - blue flowers somewhat pea-like, two petals, in racemes.
 Comersperma ericinum - heath milkwort- shrub, flowers pink to magenta somewhat pea-like, 2 petals.- matchsticks
 Conospermum mitchellii - smoke bush - shrub creamy white flowers in terminal, flat-topped clusters.
 Casuarina sp. - tree - fuzzy red flowers along branches.
 Dilwynnia retorta - shrub - yellow pea flowers with red centre.
 Drosera - sundew - rosette of sticky leaves, red or green to trap insects, flowers white open, 5 petals in clusters.
 Epacris sp. - heath - shrub, white tubular flowers, 5 lobes in dense clusters.
 Grevellia sp. - prickly leaves, somewhat like holly, dark red flowers.
 Glycine - climbing purple pea.
 Goodenia hederacea - creeping plant, yellow flowers with 5 petals.
 Goodenia ? - upright small plant with yellow or orange flowers, 5 petals in raceme.
 Helichrysum bracteatum - Golden Everlasting - golden yellow daisy-like flower, papery petals to 1 metre.
 Helichrysum elatum - White Paper Daisy - white daisy-like flowers with yellow centres, papery, 1 m or more high.
 Helichrysum diosmaefolium - wild rice -, shrub, 1 - 4 m, flowers white compact buttons in dense flat topped clusters.
 Helichrysum apiculatum - yellow buttons - bright yellow buttons in clusters, grey foliage with rather unpleasant smell.
 Hibbertia sp. - Guinea Flower - small shrub, flowers yellow, open, 5 petals.
 Hypoxis - Golden Weather Glass- flower yellow star, 6 petals, leaves grass like.
 Lobelia sp. flowers blue tubular, 5 lobes - 2 small, 3 larger.
 Lobelia sp. - flowers white similar to above, plant creeping, fleshy leaves.
 Leptospermum sp. - shrub, white flowers, 5 spreading petals.
 Persoonia sp. - prostrate shrub, flowers yellow, tubular with curled back lobes.
 Petrophile sp. - Cone Bush- shrub, flowers yellow, hairy cone-like clusters.
 Pimelia linifolia - small shrub, flowers creamy white tubular in globular terminal heads.
 Stypanandra sp. grass like leaves, flowers blue, open, 6 petals prominent yellow stamens.
 Stylidium graminifolium - trigger plant - flowers pink - 4 petals in loose raceme, stamens form trigger which springs across when touched at base.
 Urticularia - bladderwort - flowers blue/purple with onepetal, grows in water.
 Whalenbergia stricta - Australian bluebell - flowers blue bell shaped, 5 petals
 Xyris - swamp grass - flowers yellow 3 petals, on tall stems.
 Trachymene - yam - wild carrot - flowers white button like clusters
 Dandelion
 Yellow Pea - unidentified.

Compiled by Margaret Carnell

(No responsibility taken for the correctness or otherwise of this information)

BOOK REVIEW

Reader's Digest Photographic Field Guide - Birds of Australia; Text by Jim Flegg with Steve Madge; Photographs supplied by the National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife at the Australian Museum. Revised and updated edition. 367 p. Published by Reader's Digest in Australia, 1995, Surrey Hills NSW 2010. \$35.00.

While looking for a bird book to give some friends (who didn't have one and live on 4 acres of land with many trees and birds - unbelievable isn't it?) I discovered the book mentioned above. It caught my attention because it is illustrated with excellent photographs from the National Photographic Index with all information necessary for identification on the same page. (My early Slater had information in three different places throughout the book as does my old Cayley.) The photographs are excellent - good enough to make the book a 'coffee table' book even if not used for identification.

The book is set out thus :-

INTRODUCTION

How to use the guide - (Excellent guidance)
Bird Biology - (Well described and illustrated)
Bird Habitats - (With colour photographs and description)
Bird names and Classification
Family Characteristics - (Page references and description)
THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA - 300+ pages
Field Equipment
Conservation
Organizations and Addresses
Bibliography
Acknowledgments
Index - (Separate index for Common and Scientific names)

The information is well presented and easily understood. Excellent photographs (840) supplied by the National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife at the Australian Museum are accompanied by location maps from the Atlas of Australian Birds compiled by the Royal Australian Ornithologists Union as well as other details necessary. The Acknowledgements include photographic sources. It was of interest to me to find names of people known to me on that list - Cyril Webster who began his photography exhibiting in the Stanthorpe Show in the 50's (encouraged by my father) and went on to gain AFIAP; Ted Smith who was very much involved in the Maryborough Camera Club when I was (I remember him being involved in the Bird Atlas); as well as people as well known as Vincent Serventy and Michael & Irene Morcombe. The photographs taken by these and other photographers are listed by page and can be identified if you so desire.

(Readers are encouraged to contribute their book reviews to this newsletter. I will be happy to write the review for your book if you'd like that. We can then share in this way and gain knowledge about our flora, fauna, ecology and environment. Thanks!)