

MAY 1996

Vol 279



# 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: 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 !!

1. THE MAY OUTING on May 19th is to the bluff above Brian & Jill McDonagh's property at Lyra. Brian will be leading the walk up the bluff which will be a 5-6 scale of difficulty walk. Details in article in this newsletter. Meet at Weerona Park at 9.00 am.

2. NEXT MEETING will be on May 22nd at 8.00pm at the CWA Rooms, Victoria Street. At time of printing, the planned programme has been changed and its replacement is still being planned. Come along and find out what it is!

3. NEXT CAMPOUT - GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAINS - 8/9/10 JUNE. Leaders - Errol & Annette Walker. Make that entry in your diary NOW ! These campouts are great fun!!! Further details in this newsletter as the June one won't be out on time.

4. CHANGE TO PROGRAMME - The Warwick Members' Outing will be in July, not August as per programme. More details later.

## 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 23RD/24TH MARCH 1996.*

*The morning of the 23rd was overcast and cool making it excellent for hiking. The slope to the Bat Caves was testing. Many rest stops were required before we reached the pinnacle of rock where we saw the Brush Tailed Wallabies. These little fellows hung around and gave everyone the opportunity of a clear view. When we looked to the west we saw Yangan, Warwick and the 'Big W' which stood out like a sore thumb. Telstra's towers were also visible on the high points.*

*Many birds were seen and heard on the walk. It was lovely to be so close to the Wedge Tail Eagle. The walk along the top was easy going until we found the spot where the beer tin jammed in the big gum tree gave the signal to change direction to down.*

*Several people ventured into the bowels of the caves while others stayed inside the first chamber, which was a little muddy and cramped for space. Many bats were seen and Rod informed us that they were all Horseshoe Bats. Some made the trip back the same way we came while other more adventurous members went straight down through the scrub. Were all the Cobbler's Pegs worth it???*

*The next day we accessed Rocky Creek National Park through Mrs Roser's property at Emu Vale. The walk started on tracks which petered out and the long slow rock hopping began. It was made more difficult by the fact the small showers would come through lasting only a few seconds but make the rocks very slippery. The cliffs on the way up the creek were spectacular and a taste of what was to come.*

*The falls are a horseshoe shaped ravine with very high sides. Much higher than Queen Mary Falls but no water falling over them. With the aid of a rope we ascended to the next level where a lovely unspoiled pool reflected the splendour of the cliffs. It was all too much to fit in the photos we took. Where was your camera Errol?? Lots of birds were spotted including a Powerful Owl who was woken up by the noisy tourists. A native rat was seen to be playing on the rocks.*

*We found the walk back quicker and despite a few grazes and stings all were glad of the adventure.*

*Alan & Diane Jones.*

## *REMEMBER LORD HOWE ISLAND*

*Over 40 Field Nats and friends visited Lord Howe Island last December and April. A reunion is being planned for the weekend of June 15/16 in Stanthorpe. Keep the date free because you will soon receive details of what should be a great weekend.*

*Errol & Annette Walker 076 812008*



Minutes of Meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. held in the Uniting Church Hall, High Street, Stanthorpe on 24th April 1996 at 8.00 p.m.

**Welcome:** President Kris welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Megan Kerr who was attending for the first time.

**Present:** 36 as per attendance book

**Apologies:** 5 as per attendance book

**Correspondence:** The following inwards correspondence was received and the outwards adopted on the motion of Margaret Carnell, seconded Herb Colley. Carried.

**Inwards:** 1. John Oxley Library - receipt for issues of newsletter, Stanthorpe Camera Club - cheque for mailbox rental; 3. A. Jones - outing report; Tennis Assn. - Ad. for Fun Day; 5 Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - "Footprint" April '96; Koala Council - Letter re conservation of Koalas; 7. Directory of Australian Assns. - letter re our entry in Directory; 8. Commercial Union Insurance - Insurance Policy; 9. Stanthorpe Landcare Group - Remnant Vegetation Report; 10. Chinchilla Field Nats - "urimbirra" April '96; 10. Dept. of Environment - Corporate Plan & information of grants, 11. Matrix - Account.

**Outwards:** 1. Round the Ridges - April Outing; 2. Community Billboard - April outing; 3. Stanthorpe Shire Council - letter re privet control; 4. Mrs H. Roser - letter of thanks ; B. & s. Lockhart - letter of thanks;

**Business Arising:** The Nats are not eligible for a grant under the conditions laid down by the Department of Environment.

**Finance:** The following financial report was received on the motion of Roger Logan, seconded Frank Wilkinson, and accounts passed for payment. Carried.

Balance at 27.03.96		1384.81
Receipts: Subs	8.00	
Room Rent collection	10.00	
P.O. Box Rental Camera Club	20.00	38.00
		1422.81
Expenditure: Room Rent	10.00	
Granite News - paper	64.00	
M.J. Cadman - mulch	120.00	
M. Carnell - petty cash	10.00	
State Govt Tax	1.95	205.95
Balance at 24.04.96		\$1216.86

Accounts for payment: Uniting Church Room Rent \$10.00; Magazine Postage \$33.50;

Heritage Park Project \$2631.19 spent; \$168.81 remaining.

**Outing Report:** The secretary read an outing report from Helen Hartman on the outing to Lord Howe Island. Everyone who attended was most enthusiastic about the island which offered scenic beauty together with plant diversity, wild birds that like to be stroked, fish that jostle round your feet and colourful clams, as well as geological delights.

Col Hockings reported on the outing to the Signpost and Kitchen Caves in Girraween National Park, which was led by Bill Goebel who did an excellent job. One point of interest was the geological dykes which look like roads.

**Next Outing:** The outing on 19th may will be to Brian McDonagh's Bluff, leaving Weeroona Park at 9 a.m.

**Specimens:** Frank James - termite tunnels in interesting shapes.  
Errol Walker - photos of Undercliffe Falls in flood.  
Helen Hartman - photos of ferns on Lord Howe Island which she wanted identified.

Specimens contd. Errol Walker - photos of outing to Slip Rock  
Desley MccDonagh - photos of camp out to Emu Vale

**General Business:** 1. Jean Harslett tabled a letter from Chinchilla Field Naturalist Club who had received a Bicentenary Grant to publish a book which records changes in movement of birds and details of plants. It was suggested that members might write and comment on the book to help the club in their efforts to receive another grant to update their book.

Col Hockings moved & Ron Travis seconded that the secretary write a letter of support to Chinchilla Field Nats. Carried.

2. There is a working bee on 12th May at Heritage Garden. The Stanthorpe Shire Council staff will lay the rocks around the garden if the Nats provide them. It was suggested that the Naturalist Club provide seating at the Heritage Garden in memory of Ray Marsden. The Council will install the seats and pave the area. It was moved by Desley McDonagh seconded Frank James that we buy two seats for Heritage Park. Carried.

Barbeque: A barbeque will be held after the working bee, at 4.30 p.m and the seating will be dedicated at that time. The McAuliffe family, Cr. McMurtrie and family, Russell Carnell and family, and representatives of Kalangadoo Nursery will be invited as guests to thank them for assistance with the garden. Members and other people who wish to attend will provide their own food.

3. Change to program: The outing in July will be in the Warwick area. The president had heard from Maryanne Law of the Toowoomba Field Naturalist Club who would like to meet with us. They are having a camp out at Girraween in June when we will be camping out at Glasshouse Mountains. It was suggested that they meet us for the Warwick outing.

Peter Hazelgrove suggested that the outing for August be to Joan Starrs property rather than Sundown National Park.

4. Ailsa Wilkinson invited members to attend a musical evening on 4th May at the Art Gallery at 7.30p.m. Admission is \$15.00 and bookings may be made at Granite News.

5. Outing to Glasshouse Mountains: Errol Walker confirmed that we will be camping in the school grounds on the long weekend in June.

6. Lord Howe Island Reunion: On 15th & 16th June there will be a reunion at Old Caves Winery. All members are welcome.

7. Frank James reported that his mother, Patience who fell and broke her hip when she was to go to Lord Howe Island, was home from hospital. Our best wishes were passed on to her.

8. Remnant Vegetation Report: The book which was tabled has a very good map in it. The Stanthorpe Shire Council now has to see if landholders support the idea of leaving corridors to link sensitive areas.

The business part of the meeting closed at 8.53 p.m. after which Jean Harslett provided an excellent program with slides of Australian Eucalypts. The president moved a vote of thanks which was followed by acclamation.

# GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAINS CAMPOUT JUNE 8/9/10 1996

Leaders Errol & Annette Walker 076 812 008

This outing should give us a few days respite from what is promising to be a cold Stanthorpe winter. The Glasshouse mountains are a cluster of 13 volcanic peaks just north of Caboolture. Access to the base of each mountain is by good road and the views from the summits encompass Moreton Bay, Bribie Island and even the sky scrapers of Brisbane. Camping arrangements have been finalised with the Glasshouse Mountains Primary School. (\$2 per head per night). The campground is large and flat with trees which should offer some wind protection. Facilities at the school include water, toilets, a power point, under-school cover if it rains but no showers.

## HOW TO GET THERE

Refer RACQ map QDM9 (Brisbane Sunshine Coast). For a quiet scenic route to Glasshouse mountains the following route is recommended. Starting at Gatton - GATTON - ESK - TOOGLOOLAWAH - KILCOY - 3km west of WOODFORD TURN NORTH TO PEACHESTER AND BEERWAH THEN SOUTH TO GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAINS TOWNSHIP. See accompanying map for location of school. All roads used for this outing are quiet minor sealed roads except for a few km near the base of some of the mountains which are reasonable gravel.

## PROPOSED WEEKEND PROGRAMME

### Saturday 8 June

- Arrive Glasshouse Mts school early afternoon
- Time for a walk up Mt Ngungun which is within a 3 hour return walk from the school. (Grade 6) Sunset views over the peaks.
- Slide evening 'Geology of Australian Landforms' by David Wilson (a Warwick member)

### Sunday 9 June

- Half hour drive to Mary Caincross Park for morning tea and extensive views across all the peaks of the Glasshouse Mountains.
- Visit David & Olive Hockings' native plant nursery nearby for BYO picnic lunch.
- A 15 minute drive to Kondalilla Falls where there are some short graded walks giving access to the falls and a large pool. (Grade 2 - 3)
- The remainder of the afternoon can be spent in the amazing array of craft shops in Montville. The alternative may be a scenic drive back to camp via one of many routes available.
- Evening entertainment to be advised.

### Monday 10 June

- Walk or ride up Wild Horse Mountain for morning views of the mountains. (Grade 1 or 2)
- Morning tea then break camp for an unhurried journey home.

### Optional activities for Sunday

- Energetic climbs on Beerwah or Tibrogargan. (Grade 10)
- Short scenic drives - photo opportunities at every turn.

### Bushwalking and climbing

Bush tracks suitable for climbers lead from the base of each peak to its summit.

- Mt Ngungun, a reasonably easy walk of 1-2 hours return suitable for inexperienced climbers or family groups, provides views comparable with other peaks.

- Rough trails lead to the summits of Mt Beerwah and Mt Tibrogargan. Only the physically fit with bushwalking and climbing experience should attempt the climbs which take 2-3 hours return.

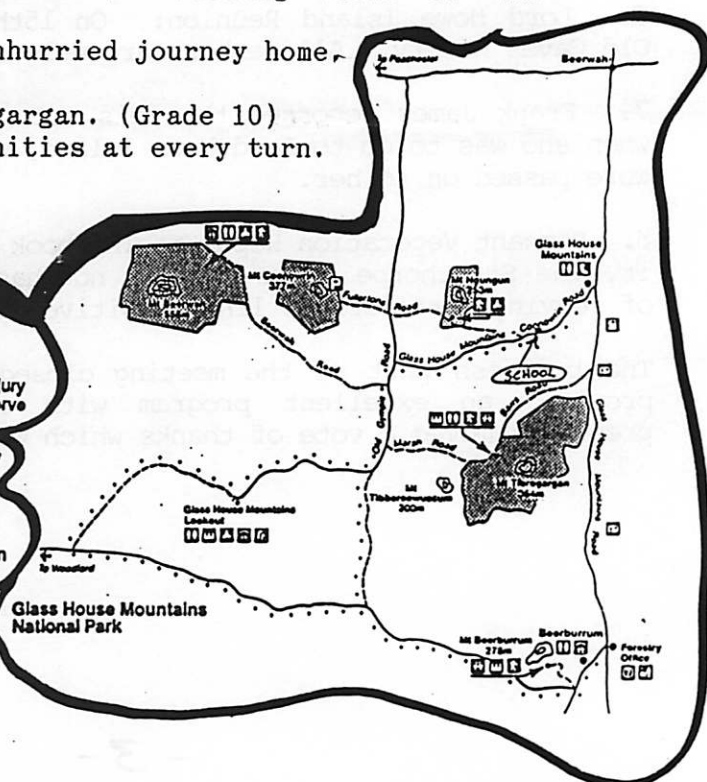
- Mt Coonowrin (Crookneck), a very steep, challenging peak, is recommended only for experienced rockclimbers.

### Climbing safety

Caution is required when climbing these peaks. To prevent serious injury to yourself and others, please observe the following advice:

- Don't climb during or immediately after rain. Wet rocks become slippery making climbing extremely dangerous.

- Take care not to dislodge rocks on to fellow climbers.

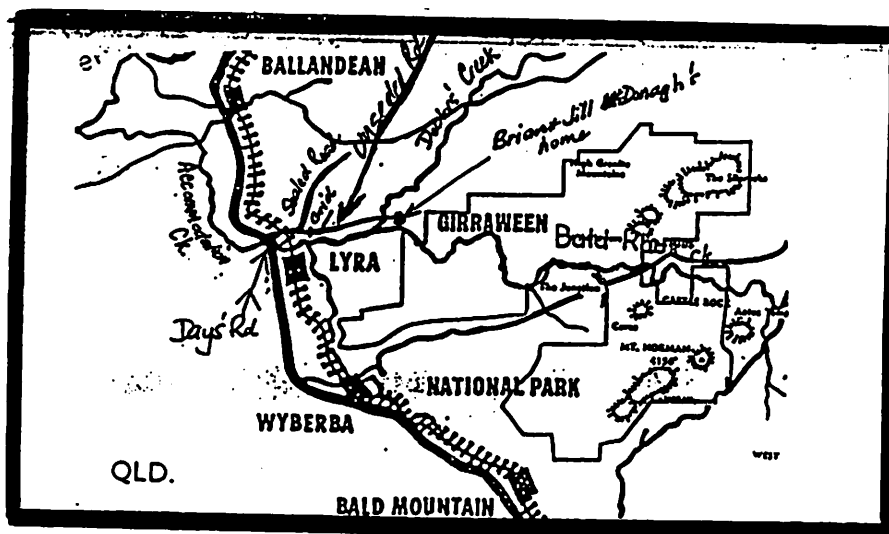


# MAY OUTING TO LYRA - 19/05/96

Leader, Brian, McDonagh

Leaving Weeroona Park 9.00 am. 'Cuppa' on arrival. Carry lunch and water/ drinks.

Travel south on New England H'way - through Ballandean. South of Ballandean turn left into Day's Road just before Accommodation Creek bridge. After driving under the railway bridge veer right into unsealed road - then over a grid. Stay on this unsealed road (do not turn off it) till you come to Brian & Jill McDonagh's house - the end of the road. (You cross several more grids).



## BIRD LIST FOR LORD HOWE ISLAND OUTING (TOTAL 40) 7-14 April 1996

by Doug and Joan Davidson

Day 1 -	Ruddy Turnstone	Whimbrel
	Sacred Kingfisher	White terns
	Blackbird	Silver eye
	Welcome Swallow	Cattle egret
	Golden Whistler	Masked lapwing
Day 2 -	L.H.I. Woodhen	Masked boobie
	Red tailed tropicbird	Emerald dove
	Peewee	Currawong
	Double banded plover	Mallard duck
	Pacific golden plover	Starling
	Bartailed godwit	
Day 3 -	Kestrel	Black noddy
Day 4 -	Common noddy	Eastern swamp hen
	Black duck	White faced heron
	Providence petrel	Banded land rail
Day 5 -	Grey ternlet	Sooty tern
	Wedgetail shearwater	
Day 6 -	Little Egret	Fleshy footed shearwater
Day 7 -	Eastern curlew	Gould's petrel
	Black winged petrel	Song thrush
	Wandering tattler	
Day 8 -	Swamp harrier	

# LORD HOWE ISLAND OUTING

## 7/14 APRIL 1996

In the disgustingly early hours of Easter Sunday, a small group of Field Naturalists and friends set off for the April outing to Lord Howe. We gathered more bodies from the highways and byways at Warwick and, in Brisbane, met the rest of the group, many of whom are members of the National Parks Association. Having these new faces (new to some of us) was an added pleasure.

In Brisbane we were allowed ample time to observe the group check-in procedures but fortunately the plane's departure was delayed for us. Without us, it would have been practically empty.

Most people had arranged to hire bikes (and helmets) and, in the early part of the week, there were many looks of pained concentration, but soon the skills of yesteryear came back and the concentration was replaced by daredevil freewheeling.

The weather was very kind to us - until early Monday afternoon - and from then on we were treated periodically to what would have been much more use back here. One day yielded four inches.

However none of this really dimmed anyone's enthusiasm for what the Island has to offer, for this 11 km by 2 km spot has a great deal more than scenic beauty to offer. The island is really an amazing and priceless treasure house of nature: plant diversity, wild birds that like to be stroked, fish that jostle around your feet as you stand in a foot of water, clams that reveal a kaleidoscope of colours, aerial displays of the Providence Petrel and the Red-tailed Tropic Bird, geological delights like the rocks at Ned's Beach and the boulder beach at Little Island.

All of this, I might add, is available to those who travel on their flat feet. However, many conducted excursions are available and everyone took at least some of these. Several of them rated a number 1 spot in individual recollections of the week. The round-island boat trip and the flight around the island put land-based observation in perspective and most felt it was better to have these later rather than earlier. The boat trip, as well as giving a close-up of cliffs the height of the Granite Belt, gave a close-up of the petrels skimming the swell - they apparently felt quite healthy. The plane trip gave our tame (???) geologist (DW) an opportunity to fulfil a long-held ambition to see Ball's Pyramid.

The glass-bottomed boat trip enabled a close-up of yet more amazing and beautiful marine life. Some of the individual fish are identified and 'named' after clocking in for 20 + years. Fishing trips are arranged and much enjoyed (even if Frank W's catch was thrown back).

The half day bus trip (which I would not have done were it not for the weather - of course it didn't rain at all during the trip) yielded a wealth of interesting information, as did the slide show presented by the N.P.W.S. ranger. This is widely advertised but, in fact, only occurs 'on demand'. Errol demanded and we received.



Among the significant pieces of information, I found these interesting.

Lord Howe was an animal-free island, but rats, cats, goats and pigs were introduced and the last three became feral. Feral cats and pigs have been eliminated. (There are five aging pet pussycats remaining on the island and their owners will not be able to replace them). Some goats remain, mostly on the less accessible parts of the mountains where their existence is not considered a major threat and from which it is very difficult to eradicate them. You have to see the mountains to appreciate that 'less accessible'. Rats are still a major problem in the predation of birds' eggs and chicks. The ranger felt that they were probably breaking even with the rat control programme. Red-backed spiders have been introduced but do not seem to be in the permanent park preserve.

Weeds the ranger considered the most serious threat of all. I saw one area totally overrun by the asparagus fern often seen in shoulder sprays. It had climbed to height of about 12 feet and was beautiful but horrible. The ranger said that the problem is confounded by the fact that the weeding of such species must be by hand, the tubers being resistant to any acceptable herbicide.

The costs of such an eradication programme inevitably retard the provision of such things as interpretive material for visitors. The cost of living is also affected by the nature of the site. For example, since no quarrying is allowed, the administration must import material for road works and the costs are great.

If such a place as Lord Howe Island is to be maintained for posterity, and I believe it must be, then posterity, starting now, must be aware that paradise is only available at a cost. This cost must be borne by those who value such places. Dare one hope that this includes state and national governments and dare one hope they will have the wish and the will to lead and educate the citizens and electors who ultimately must foot the bill?

Finally, I must say we are greatly indebted to Annette and Errol for the bright idea and its execution.

Helen Hartman

*From 'Anonymous' .....*

*Some members keep their club going strong  
While others join to simply belong.  
Some volunteer and do their share  
While some lie back and just don't care!  
Some always pay their dues ahead  
Some get behind for months instead.  
Some do their best, some build, some make,  
Some never do, just sit and take!  
Some lag behind, some let things go,  
And never help their club to grow.  
Some drag, some pull, some don't, some do,  
CONSIDER !..... which of these are YOU?*