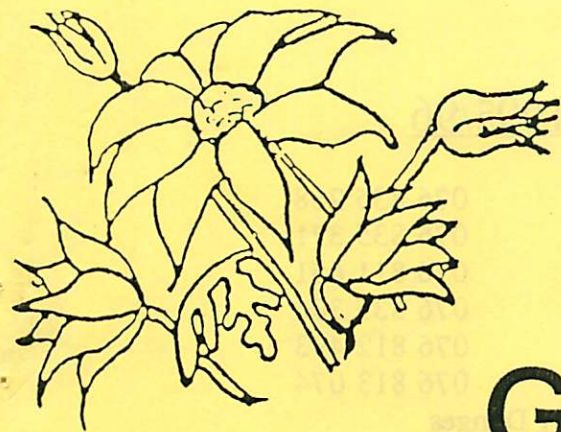


JUNE 1996

Vol 280



# 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 !!

1. NEXT MEETING will be on June 26th at 8.00pm at the CWA Rooms, Victoria Street. Brian and Noela Dodd will be presenting the programme titled 'Cairns to the Cape' and taking us 'way up North!'

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

3. JULY MEETING - REMEMBER LAST YEAR. We will be looking at slides and prints of the outings for the last year - please hunt them out and bring them along. The outings were :- August 1995 - Racecourse Creek and Aztec Temple; September - Mt Colliery; October - Campout Urbenville; November - Mole River; January 1996 - Basket Swamp; February - Poverty Point; March - Campout - Emu Vale; April - Slip Rock; May - Bluff, Lyra; June - Campout - Glasshouse Mountains.

## 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.

## YELLOW FACED HONEYEATERS AT "ORANA"

A few days ago I picked up a Yellow-faced Honeyeater's nest in the yard, which had blown out of a gum tree. It reminded me of the nest still hanging in the Magnolia outside the kitchen window.

Around Christmas 1995 a pair of birds started building their nest about a metre above the ground in the Magnolia near the back door. By standing near the sink we had an excellent view of proceedings through the window. As the frail looking nest progressed the female would hop in and try it for size, then fly off to gather more bark or string to improve the structure. Both birds appeared to work at the building. On the 1st January 1996 two speckled eggs were found in the nest. They were whitish with brown speckles. I was surprised at the amount of time the birds spent away from the nest. It was quite often vacant when we walked past. Perhaps our movement disturbed them, although they didn't seem to mind us looking at them through the window.

On the 11th January there was obviously at least one hatchling in the nest. In fact there were two. Both parents were kept busy feeding the pair with insects. The parent birds would, from time to time, do minor repairs to the nest from the outside, adjusting the fibres with their beaks. I'm not sure whether both did this, or just one as it's impossible to tell them apart (for me at least).

I did not write down the date when the fledglings left the nest, but as far as I remember it was towards the end of the month. After leaving the nest they spent some days in the Magnolia tree flitting from branch to branch before venturing a few metres to another shrub.

The previous season a pair built in the Camellia outside the bedroom window, and one baby spent a few days in the garden just outside the front door while learning to fly. One evening this bird flew into the lounge room and had to be caught and released, as it was very confused by the artificial light.

Kris has seen at least four Yellow-faced Honeyeater's nest recently while pruning the Wilson Plum trees, as well as Double Bars' nests. He thinks the reason they nest in these trees, is that they are picked by the middle of December, and nobody goes back into the patch to work until April.

We are waiting with interest to see where in the garden the birds choose to build next Summer.

Margaret Carnell

## SOME MINING INFORMATION ON POVERTY POINT

Approx in 1853 the original find of gold was made in the grass roots, all over the surface of the hill by sluicers. They worked the area for 30 years. For many years there was insufficient water to sluice more than 13 weeks in the year, but regularly realised about 2500 pounds (\$5000) worth of gold per man per year. (In those days that was a LOT of money.) The rocks contain approx 4 gram of gold per ton of rock. In 1937 Argentine Gold Mining Company treated 700 ton of ore and recovered 236 oz of gold. In 1975 or 78, 25 men were employed at Poverty Point - 8 were crushing quartz mining, 17 fossicking in gullies and when water was available sluicing the shallow ground.

From 'Forgotten Country' by Isabel Wilkinson



Minutes of Meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.  
held in Q.C.W.A. Rooms Stanthorpe, on 22nd May 1996 at 8.00 p.m.

Opening: President, Kris Carnell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present & Apologies: There were 28 present and 11 apologies as per attendance book.

Minutes: of the previous meeting were adopted on the motion of Robin McCosker, seconded Desley McDonagh. Carried.

Correspondence: The following inwards correspondence was received on the motion of Margaret Carnell, seconded Errol Walker. Carried.

Inwards 1. Stanthorpe Shire Council - acceptance to Barbeque Heritage Park;  
2. Qld Field Naturalist Club - QNC News; 3. Matrix Office Systems - Account; 4 Glasshouse Mountains S.S. - Permission to use facilities;  
5. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - May Newsletter; 6. Clean up Australia - Newsletter No 2; 7. Chinchilla Field Nats - Letter of thanks re support for book publication; 8. Granite Belt Enterprise Assn Inc. - letter re meeting & workshops; 9. Chinchilla Field Nats - "Urimbirra" May '96; 10. Qld Dept of Environment & Heritage - discussion Paper - Environmen & mining.

Outwards: 1. Chinchilla Field Nats - Support for book; 2. Round the Ridges - Outing for Mav; 3. Community Billboard - Outing Mav; 4. L. Hermansson - Sym pathy Card.

Finance: The financial report was adopted on the motion of Roger Logan, seconded Gordon Davies, and accounts passed for payment.

Balance as at 24/04/96 \$1216.86

Receipts:

Room Rent Collection 7.90  
1224.76

Expenditure:

Room Rent 10.00  
Magazine Postage 33.50  
Postage on toner 5.30  
State Govt. Tax 1.70 50.50

Balance as at 22/5/96 \$1174.26

Accounts for payment: Matrix Office Systems \$80.00, Stanthorpe Shire Council \$320.00, K. Carnell \$90.00 for cement.

Outing Report: Brian McDonagh reported o the outing to the bluff in Girraween National Park adjoining his property. We climbed 1000 ft and saw many interesting rock formations - one in the shape of a footprint with six toes. There were flowers on most plants with the promise of a good flowering in spring. It was a superb day, appreciated by all participants.

Pre-outing Report: The next outing will be on the long weekend in June to the Glasshous Mountains. Details were in the last magazine.

Next Program: Noela and Brian Dodd will present the program on Cairns to the Cape.

General Business: 1. President Kris thanked everyone who had helped at working bees at Heritage Park. The paving is started around the seats, and the park is something to be proud of.  
2, Poppies - Kris Carnell reported that he was concerned about the plan by the tourist association to plant Flanders poppies on roadsides in the Stanthorpe Shire as there was a risk that they would become weeds in orchards, and be detrimental to the ecology, choking out native plants.. After some discussion Brian Dodd moved that the secretary write to the Council expressing our concern at the plan to plant poppies. It is not in our terms of reference as we are trying to promote natives.

seconded Gordon Davies. Carried

3. Brian McDonagh has a thesis on flying foxes if anyone is interested in reading it.

**Specimens:** 1. Frank James - 2 photos of the Little Red Bridge, before & after flood. Some bolts & nuts need redoing, and it needs painting.  
2. Desley McDonagh - photos of Sunday's outing.  
3. Margaret Carnell - pressed flowers collected on outing.  
4. Kris Carnell - 5 different galls on one gum tree about 2 metres high. The tree appeared to be quite healthy.  
5. Doorne Neddercomb - Ilminite in granite (type of iron ore).

**Program:** Kris Carnell presented the program, showing slides of four National Parks, each of which is within a day's drive of Stanthorpe. They were Mt Kaputar, Illaroo Rest Area at Minnie Water, The Washpool & Gibraltar Range and Cathedral Rock.

Desley McDonagh moved a vote of thanks which was carried by acclamation.

## OUTING TO LYRA - MAY 19TH

Only 19 members arrived to climb the bluff. After smoko we set off at about 10, moving up a gully which had had a controlled burn last winter, which certainly reduced the fire hazard a little. The burn was only about 100 yards before it went out.

After passing beside a small steep sided gorge (the northern side of the range has a much larger gorge) we swung up the hill, passing through dense undergrowth and over large flat(?) rocks, finally reaching the top of the ridge where we had lunch. It has been a few years since I have been up there and I had forgotten how massive and impressive the rock formations are.

The view was quite impressive, mainly towards the west - Jibbenbar was visible on the horizon, but looking down into the Doctor's Creek gorge, 1000 feet below one could see the remnant rainforest because the light was so good.

After lunch we walked along the crest towards the main bluff, lower than where we lunched and the rock formation became more and more impressive, particularly a 6 foot long foot print with 6 toes, upside down inside an overhang.

At one stage we found a group of caverns - I suggested that they were worth exploring, whereupon the whole party (less a couple) disappeared for some time - shades of 'Picnic at Hanging Rock' or maybe the Black Mountain at Cooktown, but they eventually returned.

Wildflowers in abundance, a couple of winter flowering ones out properly. *Cryptandia* sp and one *Acacia*, but the weather had the others very confused, and few flowers were found on 2 species of *Boronia*; 2 species of *Zieria*; *Acacia adunca* (not that confused); *Westringia* sp.

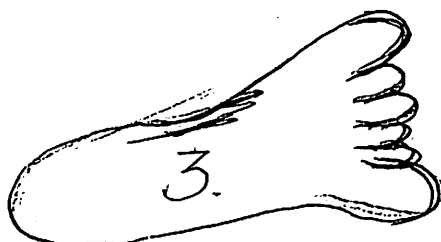
Some members complained about the scent of acres of *Boronia* which we were forcing our way through.

Very few birds were seen, the highlight being the sight of 2 Golden Whistlers.

A team of rock climbers spent Queen's Birthday weekend crawling up the cracks in the rocks on the main bluff.

Worth a trip in Spring.

Brian McDonagh



## BEWARE THE AIR IN BAT CAVES

(This article to answer queries from some who went to the caves at Emu Vale. The information is taken from an article titled 'Diseases caused by animals.' Thanks to Karol Stica for the research.)

Evidence is mounting that bat caves are places to avoid because infectious organisms thrive in droppings that may have accumulated for centuries. The microscopic fungus *Histoplasma capsulatum* grows in the droppings of bats and birds. The disease histoplasmosis infects only mammals and is spread by bats in their seasonal migrations. Until the 1980s, the fungus in Australia had been identified only in a few chronic patients and once in the soil of a chicken coop. In 1976 scientists learned of an epidemic of this disease amongst cavers who had explored Church Cave at Wee Jasper near Yass. The cave is a breeding site for the bentwing bat. Researchers grew the fungus in laboratory cultures at the end of 1983, after many visits to the cave wearing protective clothing. Bentwing bats breed in at least 10 other localities in eastern Australia. Some are believed to change from one cave to another and share caves with other species. Many of those are the same species that are known to carry the disease in other countries. Scientists believe other caves in Australia may be similar. They advise people spending any amount of time in a cave to take precautions such as wearing protective clothing.

A WORD FROM YOUR SPONSOR/S ? - WELL NEARLY -

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT -

Kris has asked me to publish a correction to some information he gave while presenting the programme at the May meeting. (If you didn't see the programme you missed some excellent slides of very interesting places presented very professionally. Ed.) The road to Kaputar is not all bitumen - it is good travelling for conventional vehicles with some gravel sections. He wouldn't suggest caravans because of the grade.

FROM YOUR NEWSLETTER EDITOR -

By the time you read this I will have been to hospital (and home again), and had an arthroscopy on my right knee. I'm not looking for sympathy but as I hurt my knee while on the May outing I want to make sure that nobody even thinks that it was that outing that caused the trouble. The last straw that broke the camel's back, maybe, but not the cause - the trouble's been there for quite some time. After the surgery I expect to be more mobile than I've been for a long time. I'm looking forward to that very much - there's a lot of walking and climbing left in me !!!!

### ARCTIC BEACH by Fred Simpson

In the cool and misty mountains  
Of the Border Ranges Park  
There's a relic from the Dream Time  
That lived before the ark  
Its parents braved the snow fields  
Its seeds spread on the drift  
A thousand seedlings flourished  
From every crack and rift.  
Now, living through the ages  
To defy the hand of time  
Its seeds no longer fertile  
In the present warmer clime  
Standing in defiance  
To dominate the range  
Alone this great Antarctic Beach  
Defies the hand of change.

# ANNUAL MEETING JULY 24TH 1996

SUBS ARE NOW DUE FOR 1996/7

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$15.00 SINGLE \$8.00

NAME (Title please - Mr / Mrs; Mr & Mrs; Miss ; Ms; ...;)

ADDRESS

P.C.

*Please make sure that your address is correct for posting through Australia Post !!!! PLEASE !!!*

Enclosed please find :-

\$15.00 Family \$8.00 Single  
(Cross out what does not apply)

*Some members find it convenient to pay the donation for room rent at this time in one amount also - you may do this if you wish.*

Please bring your sub to the July Meeting or post to

Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.  
Box 154  
Stanthorpe 4380

\*\*\*\*\*

We need suggestions for outings and meeting programmes for 1996/7. You may suggest either without being responsible for the organisation or leadership; but please make yourself available if you are willing and able! We need programmes for 9 meetings and about a dozen outings. Three of these outings are campouts - October, March and June (Queen's Birthday Weekend). We have occasional half day outings also.

Please return your suggestions to the club as soon as you can.

OUTING / PROGRAMME

LEADER/PRESENTER

THANKS VERY MUCH !