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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 the Annual General Meeting on July 24th at the CWA Rooms, Victoria Street at 8.00 pm. Please bring your slides and prints of the outings for the past year and something for Supper. Thanks! Also bring your subs, and suggestions for outings and meeting programmes for 1996/7.

2. JULY OUTING - Arranged by the Warwick Members on Sunday 21st July to Wilson's Peak - leaving Stanthorpe from Weeroona Park at 7.30 am - meeting with the Warwick members at the Warwick Sale yards at 8.30 am. Further details inside.

3. REMEMBER LAST YEAR. 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. (This list to remind you of which slides and prints to bring).

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.

HOWE ABOUT THIS?

LORD HOWE REUNION SAT/SUN 15/16 JUNE 1996

The Lord Howe reunion was a most enjoyable weekend. 34 attended and most took advantage of the planned activities on the Saturday and Sunday. Our thanks to Bob & Jean Harslett and the Savio family for a warm welcome to their farms on what was otherwise a cold day.

Saturday was a fun night with videos, slides and prints to relive the memories. The venue was Old Caves Winery and we were well looked after. Gino & Jeanene sang for us as they did on Lord Howe. Gino also gave some of us our first taste of mulled wine. It certainly does warm you right down to your toes. Jean, Bob and Dore were kind enough to guide us through the Stanthorpe Historical Museum on the Sunday morning.

A big thank you to them and to all who contributed to the weekend.

Errol Walker

AND HOWE ABOUT THIS??

LORD HOWE AGAIN ????????

Yes, you asked for it! Such was the pleasure derived by everyone on the first two trips that another excursion is planned for Easter '97. (School Holidays).

Remember, it is cheaper and a lot more fun with group travel but we would like to have numbers by the end of August to reserve our favourite accommodation on the island.

We have enough interest to fill half a plane already, so if you or your friends would like to see what you missed or maybe just do it all again, please ring Errol & Annette Walker. (Phone 076 812008).



GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAINS

ATTENDANCE - 19 - LEADERS - Errol & Annette Walker

In the face of weather reports indicating rain for at least 2 of the 3 days of the long weekend ten campsites were set up on Saturday afternoon at the Glasshouse Mountains Primary School. One of those camps consisted of a bed roll on the school verandah. Who forgot her tent? The school proved to be the ideal campground with flat grassy sites away from suburbia. We had access to the Staff Room with boiling water and washing up facilities. Not a bad way to rough it!

Saturday afternoon's activity was the 3 hour return climb up Mt Ngungun which was within walking distance of our camp. The climb was moderate and most managed it all be it at different speeds. Mt Ngungun features an interesting basalt cave and has faces popular with rock climbers. The view from the summit is nothing short of spectacular when looking to the west. Mt Coonowrin (Crookneck) and Mt Beerwah are in perfect alignment. What a photo opportunity for the shutterbugs!!! There was time left after the climb so most of us drove to the Glasshouse Mountains Lookout for the sunset. Not much colour but a different aspect on these fascinating peaks made the trip worth while.

The proposed evening entertainment did not eventuate but the time was pleasantly spent in conversation in small groups while others took the opportunity for an early night.

Sunday morning we were joined by our day visitors and in car convoy we drove to Mary Cairncross Park about half an hour north of the school and not far from Maleny. Once again we enjoyed views of the mountains, this time in the morning light. Most of us attempted at least part of the nearby rainforest walk before morning tea. Jean noted it to be somewhat sad to observe the scrub turkeys coming out of the forest looking for handouts from visitors. Whip birds and cat birds could be heard throughout the rainforest.

David Hockings and his daughter Lindy were waiting for us at their nearby native plant nursery. We were treated to a wonderful 3 hours as they described their successes and failures not the least of which was the overwhelming problem experienced with 'soda' bore water. Drying of flowers for export was demonstrated while we lunched in the house carport. This was for some the highlight of the weekend. Thanks again David and Lindy for your generous hospitality and also for providing tea and coffee making facilities for the group.

After lunch we drove through Maleny and Montville on the way to Kondalilla falls. Most of us were really 'turned off' by the crowds in the towns and also at the falls, Some of our party sought 'quieter pastures' leaving only 6 of us to walk to the base of the falls which were flowing nicely.

The journey home presented time to visit the craft shops or watch the radio controlled gliders being expertly landed above the eastern escarpment of the Blackall Range. The views north to Maroochydhore, east

to Moreton Island and south to Redcliff were magnificent.

Sunday night was pretty quiet except for an unscheduled visit from 2 policemen demanding to know what we were doing and taking copious notes as we explained our presence. A security alarm had been set off within the school. This alarm was extended to Brisbane Security who alerted the local police. They suggested it may have been a moth activating the alarm so we were let off on a 24 hour good behaviour bond.

Monday 8.30 am.

After welcoming another day visitor we once again car convoyed, this time east to the Bruce Highway and a Mobil Service Station. None of us, including the leaders, were prepared for what was going to happen during the next 30 minutes. 'Neville' from Moby Vic's Service Station welcomed us with his free shuttle bus to transport 14 Nats to the top of Wild Horse Mountain. As the bus departs the service station an on-board audio cassette explains the Glasshouse Mountains forest management scheme. On top is a large covered fire tower with interpretative signage and audiovisual equipment to explain more of the forest and the aboriginal legend of the mountains. The view and a pair of binoculars could keep an observant naturalist busy for hours. One couple in our group actually remembers how good the wildflowers were while camping here on their honeymoon 45 years ago.

It was a fairly cool south easterly which drove us Stanthorpians to the shelter of the bus much to the amazement of Neville who was still in shirt sleeves. Not to have his thunder stolen he opened the bus doors and insisted on giving us his rendition of the Last Post on his 'funnel phone' which he claims he normally needs to rally his passengers to the bus. What's a 'funnel phone'? It's a bugle mouth-piece stuck in the end of a six foot length of plastic tubing which has a funnel attached to the other end. A vibrato effect is accomplished by twirling the funnel end around and above the operator's head while blowing into the mouthpiece. That was not all. Once we started down the hill, enjoying Fred's lollies which Neville sampled and kindly offered around, we were entertained by Slim Dusty singing the Legend of the Glasshouse Mountains. The real highlight came when Neville yodelled his way back to Moby Vic's. Such was the atmosphere we all sat down to Cappucino and cake in the restaurant before another short drive to view the dramatic basalt cliffs on Mt Beerwah. (from the bottom of course).

Geoff, Karol and Peter had climbed Mt Beerwah while we were on Wild Horse Mountain. They started their climb earlier in the morning while a valley mist was curling up the leeward side of the Mountain. This mist formation looked impressive from the fire lookout but was a bit of a worry to the climbers. Their climb, however, was uneventful and they were surprised to find some footholes cut into the rock in the exposed steep sections.

Returning to camp around midday allowed us to fold up dry tents which had been wet from the heavy dew. The weather had held for the entire weekend and this outing made us realise that there is a lot more to see in this area. Another trip, another time?

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General Business

1. Outing Report :- Errol Walker reported that 19 people had been able to attend the Glasshouse Mountains Campout. It had been a very enjoyable successful campout, with so many things left to see and do that there could be another in the future. Errol and Annette were thanked for the work they had put into the outings that they had arranged. Errol also reported on the Lord Howe reunion and advised that there was enough interest for another Lord Howe trip in the future.

2. Frank James reported that he, with Bill Goebel had accompanied the Toowoomba Nat to places in Girraween National Park that same weekend. the Toowoomba Nats would like us to advise them of outings we have in their direction they could join in.

3. Next Outing :- To Wilson's peak on July 21st led by the Warwick members, Stanthorpe members leaving at approx 8.00 am meeting the Warwick members at the Sale Yards. 7km return walk Grade 7 or 8.

4. August outing will be to Red Rock Gorge - 4 wheel drive vehicles needed.

5. Reminder to members - July Meeting is AGM - remember to bring supper.

6. Jean Harslett brought up the subject of cut native flowers for sale in the Brisbane market - obviously cut from the bush. David Hockings had spoken of this at the recent camp-out. After discussion it was agreed that the club write to the Forestry Department and the Department of Environment and Heritage asking what their policy is on removal of protected native plants from their area. We believe that these plants are being removed from forestry areas.

7. Specimens:- 1. Picture of rough scaled snake - amongst the most deadly in Australia - from Jean Harslett. Noor Davis had some fruit off an out of season Leucopogon.

Program :-

Brian and Noela Dodd presented a very interesting program on a trip from Cairns to the Cape in a 4 wheel drive Unimog; and the return trip by catamaran. The slides and commentary were very much appreciated by those present. Rob McCosker moved a vote of thanks which was carried by acclamation.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BROWN CHOUGH

We occasionally have a small flock of White Winged Choughs visiting our yard and orchard. Around the 22nd June they appeared again, but instead of all being black, one was mottled brown with a dark grey head and a red eye. According to Simpson & Day's "Field Guide to the Birds of Australia" immature birds have a brown eye, so this was apparantly adult. Immature birds have a line of buff down above the eye until 8 or 9 weeks old which is moulted when no longer needed for camouflage. We are watching to see if the brown bird comes again.

Margaret Carnell

July Outing to Wilson's Peak

The outing on 21 July will be to Wilson's Peak in the Main Range National Park. This impressive 1231m peak rears its head at the point where the McPherson Range meets the Great Divide. It is the starting point of three major river systems: the Clarence, the Logan and the Murray-Darling.

The walk to the summit from Teviot Gap is a strenuous 7km return trip involving a vertical ascent of 450m. Much of the walk through a mixture of open forest and rainforest is probably a grade 7 to 8, with the final few hundred metres to the summit being about a grade 9. The final ascent involves some rock scrambling and would be quite difficult after any rain. Walking time is about 5 to 6 hours. Views can be enjoyed at several points along the walk, mainly towards the east. Thick heath at the summit makes for limited viewpoints.

For those who may balk at this fairly strenuous walk, the following options may be considered:

- * a short walk along the beginning of the Wilson's Peak walk to gain views to the east
- * views of Teviot Falls from near the car park
- * a walk of a few hundred metres to the top of Teviot Falls
- * a scenic drive back to Killarney stopping at Moss Gardens, Carr's Lookout, Queen Mary Falls, Dagg's Falls
- * 4WD trip back to Killarney through the Condamine Gorge
- * Scenic drive back to Killarney through White Swamp (Note: the road below Teviot Falls to Boonah is currently closed.)

Stanthorpe members will meet at Weeroona Park at 7:30 a.m. All those participating will meet at the Warwick Sale Yards at 8:30 a.m. for the 60km drive (15km of gravel) to Teviot Gap. The sale yards are located along the Killarney road. Look for the Killarney turnoff, just after the 80km/h sign on the southern approaches to Warwick. Turn right and continue for about 2km. The sale yards will be on your left.

BIRDS SEEN DURING CAMP-OUT TO GLASS HOUSE MOUNTAINS

Willie Wagtail	Scrub Turkey	Red Wattlebird
Welcome Swallow	Grey Fantail	Lewins Honeyeater
Silver Eye	Black Duck	Egret
Pee Wee	Frogmouth	Grey Butcher Bird
Emu (in captivity)	Black Faced Cuckoo Shrike	Noisy Miner
Crested Pigeon	Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo	Magpie
Rainbow Lorikeets	Indian Mynah	Pied Butcher Bird
Crow	Glossy Black Cockatoo	Black & White Wading Bird
Cat Bird (call)	Whip Bird (call)	(unidentified)
Bell Miner	Kookaburra	

Compiled by Margaret Carnell