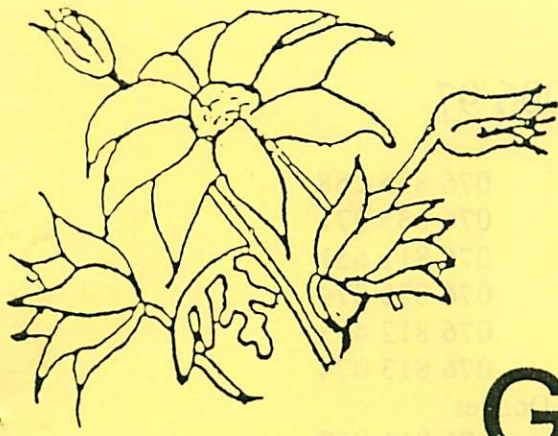


AUGUST 1996

Vol 282



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 1996/97

President :	Kris Carnell	076 835 268
Vice-Presidents :	Rob McCosker	076 835 371
	Lincoln McPhee	076 811 651
Secretary :	Liz Bourne	076 836 374
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. As you fill it in as you pay your sub for 1996/7 please make sure that it is correct for Australia Post delivery. IF YOU HAVE A MAIL SERVICE OR A POST OFFICE BOX NUMBER WE NEED IT!

FOR YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE !!

1. NEXT MEETING will be held on August 28th at the CWA Rooms, Victoria Street at 8.00 pm. Frank James will take us travelling with him through some of this great land of ours.

2. AUGUST OUTING - To Red Rock Gorge led by Kris & Margaret Carnell on 25th, leaving Weeroona Park at 9.00 am. Conventional vehicles will be able to reach the site of the old homestead and from there 4 WD vehicles will be needed.

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.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC. 1996.

Fellow club members, it is with much pleasure that I present my report for the 1995-6 year. I believe that we have had a very successful year with a varied range of activities. It is a long time since we've had outings disrupted by rain, but this year we had two wash outs and the break-up was curtailed by a fierce thunderstorm. Hopefully the drought has gone and we can look forward to a number of normal years weatherwise.

A club such as ours only functions satisfactorily if members are willing to be leaders as well as followers and I would again thank those members who organized outings in the last 12 months. These outings have been well thought out and varied enough to cater for the needs of all members. This year saw a first with Errol Walker organizing two very successful trips to Lord Howe Island. Plans are well under way for other similar trips, so this is adding another facet to our club.

Special thanks must also go to those members who organized programmes on our meeting nights. Two of these programmes have been educational and I would suggest that we could have more of this type.

The Learning for Pleasure group has been quietly working away under the watchful eye of Gordon Davis (when he's home). About 15 members meet regularly and study French, History and Current Affairs. I'm sure they would appreciate any other members joining their group.

Our major project for the year was the gardens at Heritage Park. I'm sure that some members thought that we would never finish the project. With the change of weather came the opportunity to achieve what we wanted as far as planting of trees was concerned and everything else fell into place. It was an honour to dedicate the seating in memory of Ray Marsden. As the gardens grow it is hoped that more plants will be added giving a wider cross-section of the species discovered by the early botanists.

The gardens have been nominated for an Arbor Day Award by the Stanthorpe Shire Council.

The future for the Nats Club looks bright with a strong membership and enthusiastic members. The only concern I have is the escalating costs of Incorporation and the club will have to keep a watchful eye on these costs.

Finally, I would like to thank the officers of the club for their support during the past year. It really has been a team effort and it has been a privilege to be a part of the team.

Kris Carnell
President

MINUTES OF MEETING OF STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC.
HELD IN Q.C.W.A. Rooms, Stanthorpe on 24/06/96

Opening: The meeting followed the Annual Meeting.

Attendance: 30 present, 13 apologies as per attendance book.

Minutes: of the previous meeting were received as a correct record on the motion of Jean Harslett, seconded Frank James.

Correspondence: The following inwards correspondence was received and outwards adopted on the motion of Margaret Carnell, seconded Jean Harslett.

Inwards 1. J. Deutscher - subs; 2 M. Walters - subs; 3 A. Jones - subs, 4. Dept of Environment - form re Coastal Management; 5. J. & S. Kenna - subs; 6. R. & N. Gooding - subs, 7. D. Rothwell - subs, 8. T. & D. Archer subs & donation, 9. P. & B. Power - subs, 10. Chinchilla Field Nats - re application to Gaming Machine Fund, 11. Q. naturalist Club Inc. - "The Queensland Naturalist" June 1996, 11. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club Inc - "Footprint" July '96, 12. Siegfried Manietta - invitation to exhibition of landscape photographs, 13. Consumer Affairs Dept - Annual Return, 14. Office of Sport & Recreation - newsletter.

Outwards: 1. Round the Ridges - July outing, 2. Community Billboard - July outing, 3. Dept of Environment - re harvesting flowers from public land, 4. Dept of Forestry - re harvesting flowers from public land.

Financial Statement: Kris Carnell moved, Joan Stevenson seconded that the following financial report be received.

Balance at 26/06/96	745.52
Receipts: Subs	105.00
Room Rent 5.00	110.00-
	<u>855.52</u>

Expenditure:

State Govt. Tax	0.95
Balance at 24/07/96	<u>\$854.57</u>

Accounts for payment: Audit Fee \$150.00; Magazine Postage \$34.45, Room Rent \$12.50.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Outing Report: David Wilson gave a report on the outing to Wilsons Peak on 21st June. Twelve people climbed the peak, and enjoyed spectacular views of the Fassafarn Valley. Several others visited the Moss Gardens and Queen Mary's Falls. From the top of Wilsons Peak we saw a wedgetailed eagle being chased by a Peregrine Falcon.

Next Outing: The outing on 25th will be to Red Rock Gorge, led by Kris & Margaret Carnell, leaving Weeroona Park at 9.00 a.m. Conventional cars will be able to reach the site of the old homestead, and from there 4 WD vehicles will be required.

Specimens: 1. A piece of Red Cedar from Wilsons Peak - Kris Carnell.
2. Samples of rock from Mt Scoria & smelter slag from Mt Perry which is now a ghost town. - Lincoln McPhee
3. Ejected Pellets from Kookaburras, containing skin etc. It is all pushed into the stomach to deal with, and instead of going down the gut it is compressed in a tight pellet called a bolus and sent back the way it came. An added advantage is there is no extra use-less weight to carry. Jean Harslett.

Next Program: Gordon Davis will not be able to present the next program as he will be away.

The next Annual Meeting may have to be held in August to give time for the books to be audited.

Poppies: The Stanthorpe Shire Council will not approve the planting of poppies

on roadsides.

Frank James asked how Toowoomba Field Nats would know of outings in their area, and was told they receive a newsletter.

Rudi Neddercorne expressed concern that if firearms are banned people will resort to poison for feral animals.

Program: The program was "Remember Last Year" which was presented by Robin McCosker and was followed by supper.

Report on the July Outing to Wilson's Peak

Field Nats outings seem to traditionally attract less than perfect weather, but Mother Nature excelled herself for the outing to Wilson's Peak. As Narelle and I sat in the car at a quarter past eight sheltering from the drizzle, cloud and ice cold wind, we were secretly hoping that everyone would have sense enough to stay in bed and relieve us from what we expected would be an expedition of Shackleton proportions.

But turn up they did, but in considerably smaller numbers than usual. Seven car loads of hardy souls were willing to brave the Antarctic conditions. As it turned out, the pessimists amongst us were not to be rewarded with our pessimism being justified. With our arrival at Teviot Gap, the views to the east revealed a sunny Fassifern Valley. As the morning passed, the cloud dissipated to provide us with a perfect day despite having to endure an icy south west wind.

Twelve walkers decided to attempt the climb while the remaining members filled in their day enjoying the less exhausting sights of the Condamine Valley. All those who aimed for the summit achieved their goal. The initial climb, firstly through a private farm and then into the national park, brought us to a long ridge that leads to the foot of Wilson's Peak. The ridge provides a wonderful panorama that takes in an expanse of mountains and valleys stretching from Mt Roberts in the north, past the Moogerah Peaks and the Mt Ballow-Focal Peak complex, to Mt Lindesay, and finishing at White Swamp. It was along here that we had our path temporarily blocked by a handsome carpet python that had apparently decided winter was over. With one look at our slightly chilled band of mountain climbers, he realised his mistake and retreated to the confines of his winter home in the hollow base of a tree trunk.

The steep climb and the frequent photo stops meant our group had now stretched out to a very long line of isolated figures. The final ascent slowed most of us up again as the track became steeper to the point where some of us started to wonder if we might go past the vertical. With the summit finally achieved we settled to enjoy our lunch at the only reasonable viewpoint near the summit. Fortunately, this was out of the wind on the eastern side. The lunchtime entertainment was provided by a wedge-tailed eagle and a peregrine falcon that had struck up a less than amiable partnership as they disputed ownership of the surrounding airspace.

With hypothermia again tightening its grip, we began our return journey. More than one of us made a less than graceful descent as we tested both the efficiency of our posterior padding and the gripping threshold of our shoe tread. Despite some cuts and bruises, all made it back to the starting point immensely satisfied with our achievement. It really was a pity that such unpleasant weather in the morning denied many people a very rewarding day out.

David Wilson

RED ROCK OUTING 25TH AUGUST 1996

Leader: Kris Carnell

Cars will leave Weeroona Park at 9.00 a.m. to go to the Ballandean end of Sundown National Park. We will pick up other cars at the Sundown Road / New England Highway junction at Ballandean at 9.15 a.m. We can travel part of the way through Ballandean Station in conventional vehicles. The road then deteriorates and we will transfer to 4 W.D s.

Smoko will be at the site of the old Sundown homestead, now completely gone. We will then travel along the "top" road into Red Rock Gorge. The trip takes about an hour depending on the number of stops.

Lunch will be at the vehicles. Activities available when we arrive include viewing the gorge from the lookout (well made track), walking down to the top of the falls, walking along the cliff top, and walking up Red Rock Creek (all three rough under foot).

Visitors who have 4 WDs are welcome to join us.

On the pre-outing trip on 4th August there were a few wildflowers in bloom - Iron Bark, Olearia, Hibbertia, Pimelea and Acacia. A Pomaderis was in bud and should be in bloom for the outing.

Wildlife of note included Pardalotes and a huge Wallaroo in a clearing by the road.

GROUND CUCKOO SHRIKE

On 5th August when I was leaving the Severnlea school at about 4.30 p.m. I saw a small flock of Ground Cuckoo Shrikes feeding on the oval with a flock of Grey Crowned Babblers. The babblers took no notice of me, as they are often around the school, but the Cuckoo Shrikes flew into nearby trees.

I had never seen these birds before and had to return to the library to identify them. According to the "Readers Digest Complete Book of Australian Birds, the Ground Cuckoo Shrike is a nomadic bird of the interior, widely dispersed in small numbers, occasionally wandering to coastal regions. It is the only member of its family to walk and feed on the ground, eating grasshoppers, beetles and other insects.

Margaret Carnell

ADVANCE NOTICE - CAMPOUT 19/20 OCTOBER

This will be to the Inverell area; camping on Saturday night on the Northern shores of Copeton Dam; a beautiful place; walking through several nature reserves and bird habitats during the weekend.

Leader - Desley McDonagh.

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES IN YOUR DIARY NOW !

STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC.
OUTING AND MEETING DATES 1996/97

Date		Activity	Leader/Speaker
September	22	Outing - Junction walk	Brian Dodd
	25	Meeting - National Parks of Qld.	Paul Sattler
October	6	1/2 day wildflower outing - Lyra Bluff	B. McDonagh
	19/20	Campout - Inverell Area	D. McDonagh
	23	Meeting - Volcanoes of Australasia.	David Wilson
November	24	Outing Hardy's Gully & Donnelly's Castle	K. Carnell
	27	Meeting	Gordon Davis
December	8	Breakup	J & S Kenna
1997			
January	19	Outing - Quatpot Creek	Roger Logan
February	23	Outing - Waterfall Creek Falls	Errol Walker
	26	Meeting	Errol Walker
March	22/23	Campout - Boonoo Boonoo	Eric Andrews
	26	Meeting - Quiz	D. McDonagh
April	20	Outing <i>SPICES GAP</i>	David Wilson
	23	Meeting	N. Crawford
May	25	Outing - Walk through National Park	Rob McCosker
	28	Meeting - Hinchinbrook	Rob McCosker
June	7/8/9	Campout - Northern N S W	L. McPhee
	25	Meeting - Northern Territory	M. Marsden
July	20	Outing - Doctors Creek Falls	B. McDonagh
	23	Meeting - Brian & Noela Dodd	
August	24	Outing - Tenterfield	Helen Hartman
	27	Meeting - AGM - Remember Last Year	
September	21	Outing - Nudubbermere Falls	Liz Bourne
	24	Meeting - Maps	Eric Andrews

SPARE OUTING - Boonoo Boonoo - Rob McCosker