

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

Monthly Newsletter of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club.

No. 33

November 1972

P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe.

Officers and Committee 1972 - 1973.

President	Mrs.R.Harslett	Ph. Amiens 5U.
Vice Presidents	Mr. W.Cathcart and Mr.F.Wilkinson.	
Secretary	Mr. E.Walker	Ph. 888
Treasurer	Mrs.R.Leisemann	
Editors	Mr.I. Jackson and Mrs.D.Orr.	
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Mrs.B.Krautz and Mrs.W.Cathcart.	
Librarian	Mrs.R.Tremeer	
Publicity Officer		
Bushwalking Officer	Mr. R.McCosker	
Geology "	Mr.P. Higgins	
Flora "	Mrs.W.McCosker	
Fauna "	Miss J.Westcott	
Youth "	Mr. G.Marsden.	

Activities.

Meetings	4th Wednesday of each month
	C.W.A. Rooms 8 p.m.
Outings	Sunday preceeding 4th Wednesday.

Annual Subscriptions.

Single \$1.50	Family \$2.00
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Programme.Field Outings:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Leader.</u>
Queen Mary Falls	19th November	Mr. D. Orr.
Girraween Park - Christmas Barbeque	December	McCosker Family
Bluff River	21st January	Phillip Ingram

Meetings:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Scouting Today	22nd November	Mr. I. Jackson
No Meeting in December		
First Aid in the Bush	24th January	Mr. F.Guerney.

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Did you know: All members are entitled to be present at all Annual, Ordinary, and Special Meetings, and the Ordinary Meetings are open to visitors. (2) All financial members are entitled to receive the monthly newsletter. It shall not be sent to members still unfinancial after warning is given in the newsletter. Family membership shall entitle the family to one copy of the newsletter per month. (3) Any member may be expelled from the Club by Council for unbecoming conduct, provided a written complaint is lodged and sustained.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Minutes of General Meeting held 25th October, 1972.

Forty members were present with apologies being received from nine.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: Moved Miss J. Westcott, seconded Mrs. Z. Newman that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as written in the newsletter. Carried.

Inward Correspondence: (i) Press releases from D.P.I.
(ii) Letter from H. McKecknie on the Cooloola Sands issue.

(iii) Newsletters from other Nats. Clubs.

(iv) Letter from Mrs. K. Hirschfield advising intention to participate in Carnarvon outing.
Outward Correspondence: (i) Letter to Board of Adult Education with details of our October meeting and outing.

(ii) Letter to H. McKecknie M.L.A., seeking a public hearing on the Cooloola Sands issue.

Moved Mr. W. Newman, seconded Mrs. F. Wilkinson that the correspondence be received and adopted. Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Report from 23rd August to 25th October:

Credit Bal.	\$59.65	Duplicating paper	\$72.50
Subs	33.20	Postage	3.62
	\$92.85		\$76.12

Credit balance on hand \$16.73.

Moved Mrs. G. Leisemann, seconded Mr. E. Walker that the Treasurer's Report be accepted and the accounts passed for payment.

Outing Reports: Miss J. Westcott reported on the outing to Mt. Banca.

Next outing - Queen Mary Falls to be led by Mr. D. Orr.

General Business: Mr. I. Jackson requested any handy hints to photographers for the next issue of the newsletter.

Life membership was unanimously granted to Mr. & Mrs. T. Chapman.

A letter to be written to Mrs. K. Hirschfield with advice of the Carnarvon trip in May.

Samples of designs for a future club badge will be shown at the next meeting.

Are reminder was given those attending the meeting that no further newsletters can be posted to those members who are not financial.

Mr. W. Newman suggested that the club takes an active role in the prevention of bushfires next spring. Mr. Newman suggested that we may be able to advertise in the paper as to when the best months are for burning off. This ad. should appear in mid-winter.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.30 p.m. after which the McCosker family presented "Through the Centre". The programme was a pre-recorded commentary with colour slides.

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IMPORTANT: As funds are so low, please check whether you have paid your subscription for 1972 - 1973.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Through the Centre:

A dream of a lifetime come true was related at our last meeting by the McCosker family, when they presented us with a most enjoyable evening on Central Australia.

A trip of this type is the wish of nearly every Australian, but when it is made by three generations of the one family, it becomes something of a record. I feel that there are very few parties who are able to make an identical journey - 7,000 miles in 21 days is a long way!

A lively presentation of slides took us from Stanthorpe to such landmarks and towns as Longreach, Middleton, Burke River, Boulia and the Katherine Gorge. At Mt. Isa a tour was made of the surface workings.

From the everchanging colours of Ayers Rock to the Olgas we note the true beauty of the country, then on to Alice Springs, the town. The tour continued with a quick study of the Pitchi Ritchi Sanctuary and museum and Bill Ricketts clay moundings of aboriginal lore and then on to the Stanly Chasm. Here we saw some of the rich earthen landscapes of the Centre.

Soon our guides had us back to the Barkly Tableland and the Ant Hill country. Then on to Charters Towers, and the coast. A fleeting glance of the Moura Coal Mine and home again.

Our thanks and congratulations go to the McCosker and Burton families for providing us with such an interesting tour of Central Australia.

A MEMBER.

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Report on outing to THE TOWN HILLS:

About thirty people took advantage of a break in the weather to come on this outing, which was less strenuous than those usually planned as the state of the tracks in to the wilder, less frequented parts of this area made travel difficult.

First stop was at the Nursery where flowers and birds were photographed and then the party climbed to the Mt. Banca Lookout, where clear views of the town were enjoyed.

Lunch was eaten back at the Nursery and then a visit paid to Peter Higgins' property to the east, where there are fine flannel flowers.

A "cuppa" and friendly gossip completed a relaxing outing.

J. WESTCOTT.

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Did you know: Lizards can be found nearly everywhere, being most common near the Equator, cities, in rain forests or hot deserts being absent only in the polar regions. Lizards have adapted to a great number of conditions in many different ways. Some lizards live in a number of different climates but others have a restricted habitat. Lizards have developed special features in order to survive in certain environments. Some lizards are spiny, some smooth, some are thick and stunted others long and thin, some are colourful others dull and drab, some are thickly scaled and others velvety. Lizards belong to the scientific sub-order Lacertillia, a division of the class Reptilia.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.DON'T THROW IT! - PACK IT!

The times are changing! This is the age of science! The space age: yes, the 70's are on the move! It is printed before us in newspapers, on posters, our ears are "bashed" by it through radio, television. We know we are on the move, just look around you and see for yourself.

"BASH, BURN, BURY"! The slogan needs a change.

Modern science has produced rush-proof aluminium cans, how does one dispose of alfoil? - even some types of plastic are not fully burnable, and very few will rot.

Would it not be a good idea if we adopted the slogan "PACK IN - PACK OUT"!??

Let's face facts, the time has now come, whether we hike or camp on private property or in national parks, where we are CONSERVATION MINDED! Let's take the plastic "gar bag" type bag with us to camp (a smaller variety on a hike). Let us be naturalists in this fast moving new era: "PACK IN AND PACK OUT"

Burn, bash and bury are on the way out.

DON'T THROW IT! - PACK IT!

R.A.D.

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HANDY HINTS:

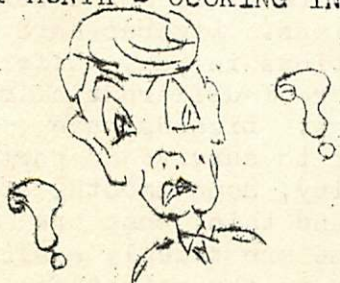
This month's Handy Hints are designed for the younger members of our group and those who are new to the art of photography.

- (1.) Always try to have the horizon of a picture either below or above half way. This provides better balance and does not "cut" your photograph in half.
- (2) Frame your picture with a tree or some other point of interest. This helps to keep the eye in the picture and not wander off looking for more detail.
- (3) A point of interest should not be "dead centre", but a little to one side.
- (4) Children should be photographed from low down so as to make them look bigger and help fill your photograph.
- (5) The camera never lies. Look for telephone and electricity wires and poles, rubbish heaps and other unsightly objects. You might not see them at a quick glance, but the camera will.
- (6) Cloud formations make interesting backgrounds and help fill that empty space of blue sky.
- (7) Try to create an interesting picture which can tell a story.

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NEXT MONTH - COOKING IN CAMP.

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DID YOU KNOW THAT SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

If you have not paid your subscription for 1972 - 1973 please see the Treasurer at the next meeting or post your subs to :-
The Secretary,
Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club,
Box 154, STANTHORPE.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.A word from our Youth Officer:

In my experience the benefits of membership of the Field Nats. are many and varied.

While taking part in the organized outings, the conservation of Flora and Fauna is always to the fore. Being in the company of older and more experienced people, we younger ones learn to appreciate the wonders and beauty of nature and learn to preserve these for those who come after us. Most of the organized outings are conducted in National Parks and we can see the amount of effort put into these parks by the rangers.

The benefits of this healthy outdoor activity to young people are great. To be able to get away from the hustle and bustle of the cities and out into the fresh clean air of the bush gives one a really great feeling. Here we can study nature at our leisure - whether our interests be in bird watching, wild flowers, geology or bush walking there is always someone with a greater knowledge to answer our questions or guide us on the right paths. We, the youth, appreciate the help given to us by the more experienced members of the club.

When participating in club activities the companionship between the different age groups is very marked. Campouts have the atmosphere of one big happy family, the campfire bringing all together in a relaxed mood. We younger people would like to see more campouts.

We, the younger members of the club, feel that this club is very educational, providing us with a knowledge of nature and her ways.

Guest speakers play a very important part in the educational side of our club. It is through these specialist people that we are able to learn some of the finer points of many subjects.

I feel that we should make an all out effort to encourage young people to join our club so that they may learn to appreciate the different aspects of nature. This learning at an early age should benefit the community in later years. At a young age is the time to learn that

"a thing of beauty is a joy forever".

GEOFFREY MARSDEN.

--oOo--

BIRDS:

What is it that draws your attention to birds? Their beauty, the charm of their song, or perhaps it is the poetry of motion expressed in flight? Whatever it is, birds exercise an unfailing appeal. I am sure no one takes me wrong, I am talking about those pretty little shapely creatures - our feathered friends.

Suburban or city gardens, rain or open forest, tree-trunks, among foliage, on the ground, heathlands, or in swamps - no matter where you look you will find one of the species of native Australian birds which number approx. 700.

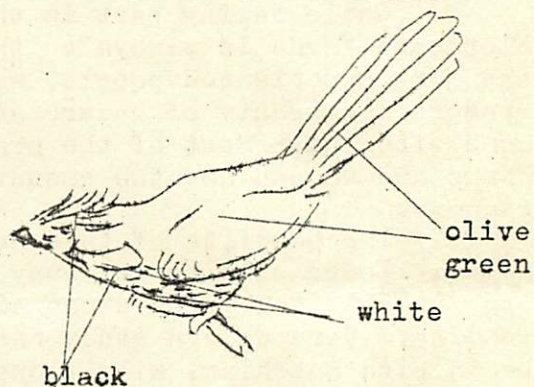
An interesting bird, which we hear often, but rarely see is the Eastern Whipbird, *Psophodes olivaceus*, taking its name from *Psoph-o'-des* Greek, meaning noisy, *ol-iv-a'-ce-us* Latin meaning olive-coloured.

This shy bird is found from north-eastern Queensland to Victoria inhabiting bushes and coastal thickets usually seeking the seclusion of the undergrowth. The bird spends most of its time on the ground turning

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.BIRDS Cont.:

over fallen leaves and debris with its bill looking for insects. The Whipbird derives its name from its extraordinary call, an extended whistle ending on a loud "whipcrack" followed by two notes "choo-choo" or "choo-eee". The last notes are usually uttered by the female (sometimes from the nest) but the male occasionally renders both the crack and the succeeding notes.

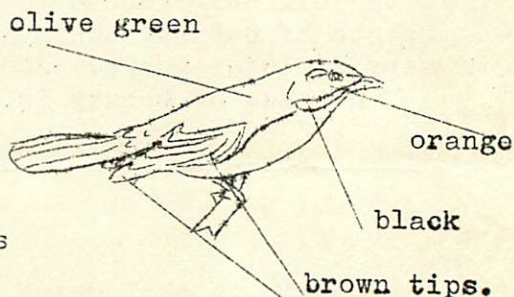
The breeding season is from July to November, during which two pale blue or bluish white eggs, with irregular black and lavender markings are laid in a cup-shaped nest, composed of fine twigs and rootlets and lined with finer material. The nest is usually built in a low bush or among undergrowth.



Another bird which has been claimed as unusual for its song is the Bell-Miner, *Manorina melanophrys*. Man-o-rin'-a Greek, manos Gk. thin rhis (rhinos) nose; mel'-an-o-phrus Greek. melas (melanos) black, Gk. phrys (phrus) brow. Also called Bellbird, it is found in coastal and mountain areas of eastern Australia from the Mary Valley in Q'ld. to south-western Victoria.

The bell-miner is usually found in flocks frequenting leaves of tall eucalypts and the undergrowth beneath the trees. Large colonies will remain for years established beside creeks or on timbered ridges.

The notes uttered by a number of birds sound like the tinkling of small bells. The birds food is mainly leaf insects and nectar. Cunninghams Gap is noted for these birds, which can often be heard at resting places.



From 3 to 20ft. above the ground a cupshaped, moss, thin strips of bark, twigs and cobweb nest is found. The eggs are rich flesh colour, spotted reddish-brown purplish-brown and purplish grey, numbering 2 or 3. The breeding season is usually June to November, but this can vary in some areas.

R.A.D.

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Did you know: Banksias commemorate the name of Sir Joseph Banks who was the Botanist who accompanied Captain Cook on his first voyage to Australia in 1770. Banks collected the first specimens of the genus at Botany Bay. There are about 50 species, all except one being confined to the Australian mainland, being particularly prolific in West Australia, where 40 endemic species occur.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.A Time to Remember.

A time to remember
 The month of September -
 The country taking on a mantle new
 Of colours in every hue,
 Provides a spectacle to see
 For you and for me.
 Shoots and flowers, green and gold,
 Take the place of lifeless old
 Branches to the sky bare
 Through which the winds tare.
 Lo the winter is past, the rains gone
 No longer days cold and forlorn.
 A chance to see something new
 In every nook, cranny and mew.
 The reawaking
 The taking
 Of life anew
 For me and you
 The month of September -
 A time to remember.

R.A.D.

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BUSH WITCHERY:

It came down close all around us, dark and stern, along the ranges, lighter-timbered toward the valley, where the fertile land followed the rambling creek. The massed foliage of the ranges flowed back and back; the sombre greens made by the alchemy of the atmosphere in distance into a deep blue.

We used to go up the rise in front of the house on mellow evenings to see the sunset behind the ranges and the blue become purple and gold under his passing touch. It was a wonder of which Claribel and I sometimes spoke after we had gone amid those ranges and proved the blue, the purple and the gold to be green. But the green was infinite in its variety of shadings, for the native trees that grew and hung with the mischievous mistletoe were many. The high spurs flaunted a miracle of growth from the apparently barren soil; the slopes and gullies calling to the instinct of the native cherry and blackwood had grown these beautiful trees in profusion where Nature had sown them, building them in the faultless symmetry of their kind....

I do not know when the bush is most full of witchery. Her extremes of September and June have alike for those in whose veins her sap has entered, the charm irresistible. Away on those seeming barren places where the only path is the path that peters out, made by the inconsequential feet of the native creatures, away on those places when September flaunts incredible vistas of the softest, fairest flower on earth - the puffy, fluffy, golden wattle blossom - when all among the bending glory of it hang the purple gestoons of the sarsaparilla. Is not then the bush

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.BUSH WITCHERY Cont.

the royal home of nature? Oh, the softness of touch and scent of those masses of blossom against one's face, the coolness, the sweetness - Mother Nature's kisses on her babies' faces!

But she has moods, and we, her children, have answering moods to them all. I know no deeper joy than a howling peak in June, with the weird voices eerie and awful all around and about, and over the dark brows of the range the curtain of thunder-cloud. The brooding, silent moments of the coming storm, broken by the scuttling of bird, the withdrawal of beast to its covert. And then the roar, the rush of the elements that make the environment for a tragedy where tragedy is not, unless you feel for the terror of the small things that Nature makes and breaks in her prolific and destructive way.

We thought it tragedy once, two small sprites of us, caught afar in a cataclysm of storm, with whirl of flying limb and roar of thunder - "the shout of God" some picturesque phrase of our reading had called it - then the lightning and the rush of rain. We had a story of a man who sheltered under a tree in a storm, and was found drenched and splintered like the tree where he had stood, and so we ran with drenched hair and streaming faces till into the world of fences we came, and through, or over, half a dozen brush barriers, panting to the house door.

(From "Land of Wonder edited by Alec Chisholm, published by Angus and Robertson, with kind permission. This piece by Mary E. Fullerton is an extract from "Bark House Days").

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NOVEMBER OUTING

DEPARTURE: 9 a.m. Sharp from Weerooma Park.

EVENTS: We shall proceed north via Liston and the Mt. Lindsay Highway to Legume (36 miles) where we turn left on the Killarney road and cross back into Queensland. Five miles past Legume we turn right at the signpost indicating Queen Mary's Falls.

Scrub: One and a half miles along this road we make our first stop at Apex Park for a half mile walk along a babbling brook to Brown's Falls. The walk is easy going with a few slippery spots requiring shoes with good treads. Toilets are available at Apex Park.

Lookout: We will then proceed to a roadside lookout over Dagg's Falls where a short stop will allow photographers some interest.

Falls: Two and a half miles further on the Queen Mary's Falls Picnic area in National Park will be our venue for lunch. Toilets and drinking water are on hand. A one and a half mile graded walk is well worth exploring and leads around past the foot of the falls.

Panorama: The return to Stanthorpe will be made by continuing along the falls road for some spectacular views, then descending some 2000 feet to The Head, crossing back into New South Wales on the White Swamp road, passing through Old Koreelah onto the Mt. Lindsay Highway again and returning through Legume and Liston.

The complete round trip is 120 miles.

see you there !

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