

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALISTMONTHLY NEWSLETTEROFTHE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUBP.O. Box 154  
Stanthorpe, Q., 4380OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1977/1978

President	Mr. Tom Archer
Vice-Presidents	Mr. Noel Butler
	Mr. Colin Hockings
Secretary	Mrs. Janet Hockings
Treasurer	Mrs. Dot Archer
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Fauna	Mr. Brian McDonagh
Geology	Mr. Maurice Passmore
Youth	Mr. Ian Jackson
Bushwalking	Mr. Errol Walker
Committee	Mrs. Jean Harslett
	Mrs. Irene Chapman
	Mr. Tom Chapman
	Mr. Frank Wilkinson

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MEETINGS 4th. Wednesday of each month in the C.W.A. Rooms at 8 pm.OUTINGS EACH SUNDAY PRECEEDING THE FOURTH WEDNESDAYANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single \$2.00

Family \$3.00

ProgrammeOCTOBER OUTING

Place Rivertree Depart Weeroona Park 9.30am. SHARP  
Date Sunday 23rd. October 1977. Leaders Mr. and Mrs. Marsden

OCTOBER MEETING. Illustrated lecture by Miss Desley Mc. Donagh  
the subject being Wild Flowers of Western  
Australia.

Date. Wednesday 26th. October at 8p.m. C.W.A. Rooms.

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES HELD Wednesday September 28th. 1977.

Present 23 Apologies 4

Minutes. The President extended a welcome to all present.

It was moved by Tom Chapman and seconded by Harry  
Stevenson that the minutes as per the September magazine  
be taken as read. Carried.



Correspondence. Inward correspondence was received from. = Department of National Parks and Wild Life Service; Publicity brochures and Press Statements; Australian Post and Mr. Ross Tait; Magazines from Darling Downs, Sept Urimbirra Vol. 11 No. 8; National Parks Association News Vol. 47 No. 6; Down Under Vol. 16 No. 4.;

Outward. Was forwarded to Mr. L. Jeffrey, Border Post and the Stanthorpe Shire Council (re demise of Mugga Gums in High Street) 4QS; Mr. Diery; Mr. Tait; Mr. Harden and Mr. Gordon Brown. It was moved by Mr. Curr and seconded by Mr. Mc. Donagh that the inward be adopted and the outward endorsed.  
Carried.

Financial Statement Mrs. D. Archer moved that the credit balance of \$83.88 be accepted and the account of \$6 to the Rover Scouts for bulliten printing be passed for payment. Seconded by Mr. H. Stevenson. Carried.

Outing Report Mr. T. Archer reported on the day outing to the Yetman area, led by Mr. L. Jeffrey. Apart from the dry conditions occasioned by the drought a variety of wildflowers were observed. Mrs. J. Stevenson exhibited specimens collected at the outing and it was pleasing to note the interest taken in them at the close of the meeting.

Next Outing. This will be held on October 23rd. and will be a to Rivertree.

Next Meeting Miss Desley Mc. Donagh will give the programme on wildflowers of West Australia.

Business Arrangements for the Storm King Dam Campout on 7th. to 9th. October were finalized and it was suggested that members of the executive contact those not present at the meeting to remind them of this coming event. Due to the concern of the increasing problem of feral pigs within the Girraween National Park, it was moved by Colin Hockings and seconded by Tom Chapman that letters be sent to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife and to our Local Member.

Thanks were extended to Tom Chapman for packing and dispatching wild flowers of the Stanthorpe District to the S.G.A.P. Flower Show held in Brisbane recently. Requests were received for publishing a proposed yearly programme in the magazine; and also the possibility of using two staples in the magazine.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.15pm. to be followed by a talk on "Reptiles" by Mr. Paul Grimshaw.  
Janet Hockings Hon. Sec.

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING. The holding of the September meeting at Wyberba in the recently opened Information Centre gave members a chance to view this handsome new building which is an excellent addition to our local National Park. Built of local materials it is not only very artistic, but functional and fitting for its environment. I unfortunately was not present but Mr. Colin Hockings gave me a short report. The venue for our last meeting was the recently opened Information Centre at the Girraween National Park. On display at the centre are many interesting brochures and



# Report on the Annual Campout.

The weekend of 7th. to 9th. of October was the occasion of our Storm King Campout when Naturalist Clubs from all over South-East Queensland were invited to join us in sharing our interest in common. The fellowship gained and the opportunity to meet other members was much enjoyed by our members and we hope that all the visitors went away feeling something had been gained too. Unfortunately we had to welcome them to a very drought effected district, but of course this was no stranger to them either, who are suffering similiar or worse conditions in their home surroundings. We wish you all some change in the weather pattern soon.

Some eighty persons participated in the camp with a very good contingent from the Queensland Naturalist Club (Brisbane) Some arrived on Friday night, followed by the remainder throughout Saturday morning. Dot Archer provided some music for a sing-song around the piano on the Friday night as entertainment for the first arrivals.

On Saturday morning parties left from Storm King Dam for the Aztec Temple and Underground area from 8 am. onwards and were led respectively by Jean Harslett, Colin and Janet Hockings, Harry and Joan Stevenson and Tom Archer who brought up the stragglers. At the Aztec Temple Bill Goebel assisted (several Brisbane members expressed pleasure at seeing Mrs. Goebel present one said our 'veterian naturalist') Messrs. Robin Mc.Cosker and Cec Curr took the ambitious trip to Mount Norman. Their return to camp was so late we were about to set out after them, and we wonder what the Mc.Cosker ladies were thinking. However the American Rotary Exchange Student guest of the Chinchilla Club was greatly excited by her experience and I'm sure will carry a great tale of her only mountain climbing experience so far in Australia. Back home she is interested in this type of activity, so it is partically nice she was able to take part in this walk. Thank you fellows.

The evening programme included one given by Warwick visitor Mr. Gordon Brown. It was an illustrated lecture on the stars and constellations. It opened up quite a new world to many and also a very colourful one when one sees the stars and their gases as seen through telescopes. He had two telescopes with him for those who wished to do some practical viewing.

Mr. Denise Rees, bulletin editor of the Queensland Naturalist Club, (poor fellow !!) introduced us to Tryon Island on the Barrier Reef, and also introduced us to many fascinating marine creatures of gay and intricate patterns. Mr. Roy Hando of the Chinchilla Club had also prepared a programme but as the evening was getting late, he very graciously declined to present it. We were sorry not to see it Roy, but it was probably a thoughtful decision in view of another full day to follow.

Mr. Denise Rees and Mr. Roy Hando of Queensland and Chinchilla Nats. Clubs respectively expressed thanks to the host club of Stanthorpe, and a cup of tea was enjoyed.

On Sunday the eager members left at 8am. again, for Jolly's Falls Tom Archer and Maurice Passmore led groups about the falls area And Mr. David Hockings one further afield to the adjacent hill. David's outstanding Botanical knowledge would have made that walk interesting

A visit was then made to the Biltmore Cellars and I'm sure the Zangatta family extended their usual warm welcome. Such is the



with information on National Parks throughout the state. Guest speaker for the evening was Girraween Park Ranger Mr. Paul Grimshaw who spoke on "Reptiles". Paul discussed the evolution of our present day reptiles from dinosaurs and referred to the three groups into which reptiles are divided. This was followed by slides of representatives of the class, both common and rare, to be found in the district, and in particular those in Girraween National Park. They included the rare Golden Crown Snake (*Cacophis squamulosus*) found in the Park and also by Mr. John Van Klaveren at Broadwater Creek.

September Outing Mr. Brian Mc. Donagh has kindly selected and written from the outing, notes on the 'Bird of the Month' and the 'Flower of the month'. Brian also provided a list of things noted on the outing.

'Flower of the Month'. This has to be *Utricularia*, the bladderwort. We stopped just outside Texas to see the springs of water running beside the road and a few bladderwort plants with very large flowers were growing in the water. The bladderwort of which there are thirty-four species in Australia are a carnivorous plant with small bladder-like traps under water. The main victims would be tiny aquatic insects. It was about the only plant we saw not suffering from moisture stress. These plants are also found in the Granite Belt in similar moist situations.

'Bird of the Month' We selected the White-necked Heron. The specimen viewed was disturbed from feeding in the water-table of the road. A stately long legged bird with a distinctive long white neck. Like other herons it flies with its neck folded and its head quite close to the body. Their food includes fish, molluscs, frogs and aquatic insects. Rather a shy bird they nest in colonies in trees which are standing in swamps. They prefer the open country, but are regularly seen in this district. (It has recently been written that the white-necked heron, during the floods in South-east Australia in 1974 this species underwent a population explosion, and their white heads are to be seen popping up much more frequently. Bob and I saw great numbers of them nesting and curious chicks peering over to look at us, in the flooded Channel country in 1975 and to a lesser degree in the same area in 1976.....Editor)

Brian's lists for the outing are as follows:- Trees on Texas-Yetman trip.

Narrow-leaved Ironbark	Boxes 3 species
Silver-leaved Ironbark	Gums 2 species
Mugga Ironbark	Cypress pines 2 species
Angophora intermedia	Currajong
Angophora lanceolata	Wilga.
Causaurinas 4 species	

Wildflower list:-

Acacias 9 species; Woody pear; *Grevillea* 1 species; *Leptospermum flavescens*; Heaths 3 species; *Hardenbergia*; Flannel flowers; *Hibbertia* sp.; *Lomandra* sp.; *Swainsonia* sp.; *Indigofera australis*; *Callistemon*; *Helichrysum* 2 species; *Persoonia* 2 species; Wonga vine.

Bird List

Galah; Sulphur-crested Cockatoo; Quarrion; Crested pigeon; Magpie; Pee-wee; Double-bar Finch; White-necked heron; Large Egret; Little leatherhead; Nankeen kestrel; Rufous Whistler male and female. (Thank you Brian for the full report)



field and breadth of interest that the Naturalists can ~~they~~ add yet another facet, that of the arts and tastes of the vigneron!! Lunch was partaken of at Donnelly's Castle, a picnic area erected by the local Lions Club. The large boulders and varied channels are always a delight for the youngest members of the party to explore, and the others enjoyed the shady surroundings to have lunch, bid their freinds farewell and depart for their widespread habitats, surely the correct phraseology for Nats!) Thank you for coming we enjoyed your fellowship.

Mrs. Millie Marsden has been very good at giving us some interesting reports and this is no exception and tells of a different aspect of the Glenlyon area.

Recently we were fortunate to be part of a motorcade taking several canoeists to the far end of the Glenlyon Dam. Seven vehicles left Stanthorpe about 10am. each with canoes on top, one car had five orange kayaks atop and the whole spectacle was most colourful. We were ~~not~~ able to spot several species of wattle but were not able to stop and identify them. A delightful sight close to the Warwick Hill were several tall red flowering ironbarks ( *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* var. *rosea* ) in full bloom and a cover of red blossom on the ground. We also noticed several of the yellow blossomed forms of this species in the same area.

We left the main road at the Brockhampton Homestead and made our way on an old road for about five miles. The road had obviously not been in use very much for a long time, though I believe this road was once used to visit the Glenlyon Caves. The creek crossings got progressively worse and this gave us the opportunity of observing the various methods of driving. Eventually the obvious happened and the lead vehicle was stopped short in the middle of the crossing. However many willing hands and plenty of stones were available and very soon the crossing was negotiable, even if more stone work was necessary after each car went over. All were soon on the move again, until we reached one with a steep pull out on the far side and the lead truck was forced to add much human ballast before we could pull up the creek bank. This little steep bank proved a very interesting study of driver habits. One keen photographer got into position in the bottom of the creek and prepared to take some action shots. As one driver took the challenge of the bank stones flew in every direction and our photographer was so amazed, his mouth dropped open, but he forgot to click the shutter. One tyre was sacrificed here, but no other casualties. Forward again then a lovely sight of a whole hillside of hovea in bloom, even though it was extremely <sup>dry</sup> in the area. Over the hill and we were at our destination, and the bird life in the area was really prolific. Numbers of duck species, little pied cormorants, egrets, eastern swamp hens and parrots were seen and the delight of the day was a great flock of pelicans which came in and alighted just before sundown. A wedge-tailed eagle soared high above, and the water birds are a bonus to the area, but I wonder about progress, sure we have an influx of water birds, but we have lost the caves which were also a wonderful and unique asset to the area. Speaking of progress we noticed a building going up right on the proposed



high water line on the Brockhampton edge and surmise that this will be the water ski lodge and guest house of the future.

We marvelled at man's mastery when we later visited the dam wall and the lookout area. We were thrilled to see so many native trees and shrubs which have been planted in the picnic areas, and we visited the very pleasantly appointed Display Centre. There was one lone survivor of the grass burn off near the picnic area and this was the little white 'Early Nancy'.

On our return trip we saw many fine specimens of our black wallaroo and were pleased they were well off the road. A beautiful splash of purple as we rounded a corner proved to be Hardenbergia, or 'sarsparilla' as we commonly call it. One lone rabbit crossed our path and went merrily on its way. The daylight hours were gone and we arrived home after having spent another wonderful day in the country and having observed more of nature's wonders. One does not have to go far afield, but rather just open and merely use one's eyes.

### Bird Note

The out of control bush and forest fires of the 2nd. October which destroyed so much of the Amiens State forestry and, indeed, proved to be the most damaging fire in the history of the Queensland State soft wood forests, had some other side effects too. For several days after the fires there was an incredible furore of sound amongst our birds. Our son Alec. set our thinking going on this aspect and with further observation it became abundantly apparent that the continual noise, dissension and disagreements were caused by ever present influxes of displaced birds from the burnt out areas, fighting out territorial rights with those that felt they were the rightful rulers. It was not until the fourth or fifth day after the fires that something like peaceful relationships returned to our local and garden birds.

Since flying things were lighting fires ahead and around the people fighting I guess a good many less mobile creatures than the birds did not survive to fight for their territorial rights.

One possum which a young chap tried to help to safety showed little gratitude and scratched quite savagely.

Alec. noted that when he came to get water at a forest dam that a couple of water rats lept out of the water in apparent fear of him and into burning grass to their doom. It was also noted that the snakes were ahead of some of the more mobile animals. Were they aware of the danger earlier? Several wallabies were observed with burnt feet. A carpet snake was seen. Did it have the instinct to get beneath a granite rock slab for insulation. This particular fire was moving more rapidly than is usual and lighting ahead and thus trapping the unwary.

Consider the mosquito as an example, "He rarely gets a slap on the back until his work is done."

Yours in Nats.

Jean.