

I.
THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST CLUB.
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.
OF

THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

P.O.Box 154
 STANTHORPE Q.4380.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1977-1978.

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 Mr. Brian Mc. Donagh.
 Mr. Maurice Passmore.
 Mr. Ian Jackson.
 Mr. Errol Walker.
 Mrs. Jean Harslett
 Mr. Tom Chapman.
 Mrs. Irene Chapman.
 Mr. Frank Wilkinson.

MEETINGS. 4th. WEDNESDAY of each MONTH at the C.W.A. Rooms at 8 p.m.

OUTINGS Each SUNDAY PRECEDING the FOURTH WEDNESDAY.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single \$2.00

Family \$3.00

PROGRAMME.

DECEMBER

Christmas BBQ. at Northern end of Storm King Dam.
 (Ed. note This was cancelled, marred by rain.)

JANUARY

No Outing No Meeting.

FEBRUARY OUTING.

Place "The Sign Board".

Date Sunday 19th. February (Details Feb. Bulletin)
Leader MR. Errol Walker.

FEBRUARY
MEETING

At the time of going to press we have not heard from the invited speaker. In the Feb. issue details will be given.

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES. At the meeting held, Wednesday, November 23rd.

Present 17 Apologies 4.

The President extended a welcome to all present
MINUTES. It was moved by Mrs. Wilkinson and seconded by Mr. Thompson that the minutes as per the November magazine be taken as read. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE Inward correspondence was received from:- National Park and Wildlife Service, 3 Press statements and No.2 of National Parks Central Queensland, Wild life Management of Australia (from the Congress on the Role of Management in Conservation of Wildlife.). Magazines:- N.P.A. News Vol.47, No8.

The Darling Downs Naturalist, Nov., Outward was forwarded to:-

4QS., MR. L. Cockburn. It was moved by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Walker that the inward correspondence be adopted and the outward endorsed. Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT. Mrs. D. Archer moved that the credit of \$123.68 be accepted and the following accounts be passed for payment:- Magazine Postage \$6.17., Rent C.W.A. \$4.00., Rover Scouts for Duplicating Magazine Oct. and Nov. \$6.00.

OUTING REPORT. Mr. Butler reported an attendance of 25 to the property of Mr. J.O'Donnell where they investigated Mr. Tom Mynch's mine. Following a bar-b-que tea hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Butler, spot light for night life commenced. Those present were fortunate to observe two gliders.

NEXT MEETING. As final arrangements for the Christmas break-up could not be finalized it was agreed that members would be advised through 4QS. and a notice to be placed in the Border Post.

FEBRUARY OUTING. The proposed February outing will be to the 'Sign Board' under the leadership of Mr. Errol Walker, who will also probably be the guest speaker, for the monthly meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS. It was agreed upon that the next Granite Belt Naturalist be published in January rather than December.

Arrangements for the Christmas break-up, to be held on 18th. are to be advertised in the Border Post and 4QS.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40p.m. and was followed by an entertaining and enlightening slide programme by Mr. & Mrs. Wilkinson on their European holiday.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME.

Outings Evening Programmes.
FEB. 'Sign Board'.. Errol Walker..... Mr. Harden or Mr. E. Walker.
MAR. Boonoo Boonoo Falls. Tom Chapman... Mr. Chris Cameron. (if possible)
APRIL Pikedale Don Lightfoot..... Mr. Ian Jackson, On South Aust.

PROGRAMME Cont.

May. Girraween Robin Mc.Cosker..... To be arranged.

June. Goomburra(long weekend campout

Janet and Colin Hockings) " " " "

GREETINGS. Greetings for the Festive Season and Good Wishes for the New Year come across the seas from Canada from President and Treasurer Dot also from Secretary Janet who we hope is enjoying some canoeing.

Here is an interesting and thought provoking article from Dore Mc.Cosker and hopefully some other observer may provide further information. Thank you Dore.

AESOP'S FABLES ?.

For many years we have watched swamp harriers(*Haliaeetus spheerulus*) circling above us . They were particularly welcome in the grape season, because most other birds vanish when they see a hawk overhead.

Often I have heard one while feeding on rabbits call its mate to share the meal. The high pitched whistle must carry a great distance, and it is fascinating to hear the answering faint and far away and getting louder and louder as the bird travels with tremendous speed so that it will not be late to dinner.

Last year the persistent call of the young made me take time off to try to find it and I came to the rock where the birds had been feeding on small animals and cray fish.

In July one of these birds landed on the ground not far from the house and a fox came out from a nearby blackberry bush and approached it. The two sparred for a while in a not very energetic way but moved off when they saw me, and I wondered if they could possibly hunt together. I am more curious than ever after witnessing almost the same thing only a couple of weeks ago. Can anyone add any information ?

UNIQUE PELICAN STORY.

by Jean Harslett.

Early in December my son Alec and Arthur Flood were returning from cricket and they found a pelican near The Summit, and it was in considerable distress. Their first thoughts were that it had been hit

PELICAN STORY Cont.. by a car or a gun shot. Alec was able to catch the pelican and the eyes were very blood shot in appearance, but there were no shooting indications or other physical damage. On closer inspection and by lowering the 'lids' of the eyes they discovered three leeches were firmly embedded in each eye. These were so deeply embedded that they required tweezers to remove them. Also several leeches were found on both the upper and under bill externally. Inside the bill on what would equal the 'roof of the mouth' there were other leeches, and these were so deeply in that quite holes appeared. They removed all the leeches and took the pelican to a nearby dam and managed to give it some fish. A few days later it was reported to appear to be reasonably happy. (It was reported to be still there nine days later, but then moved on)

The questions which are raised are:-

1. Are pelicans normally plagued by leeches ?
2. Are pelicans less likely to visit here and stay because of this pest to them ?
3. Several local observers think we have a fair leech population in our streams and this is accentuated during drought periods.
4. A letter has been sent to the very well known bird observer Mr. Cecil Cameron, and with his very wide knowledge it will be interesting to hear his comment.

ANGOPHORAS. by MR. BRIAN Mc. DONAGH.

Those of us who went to the "Mountain Park" Dalveen outing were interested in the unusual 'apple' trees seen during the afternoon.

The genus Angophora (angos, a vessel, phora bearing- in reference to the goblet like fruits) belongs to the great family of plants known as Myrtaceae, making it a first cousin to the Eucalypts and Leptospermums and so on. The difference between Angophoras and the Eucalypts is:- 1. The flowers of the Angophora have petals and sepals while the Eucalyptus are replaced by a cap.

2. The leaves of Angophora are in pairs even in the adult, while Eucalyptus the leaves of mature trees are always opposite.

Angophoras are limited to eastern Australia, being 9 species in all,

ANGOPHORAS Cont. and only one nota medium to a large tree. The shrub one *A. cordifolia* occurs in the Sydney region and its fruit are shaped rather like an apple, which is where the common name comes from (Ed. I think this is an interesting note because I had incorrectly thought it came from its distinctive light green in the field)

Four species of Apple are listed from S.E. Queensland of which we can now say three occur in the district.

Angophora intermedia (florabunda) is the common apple tree of the creek flats and forest. This is a tree of up to fifty feet, often higher with a spreading crown. The leaves are in pairs along slender twigs, narrow pointed and paler underneath, $3-4\frac{1}{2}$ " long and $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{3}{4}$ " wide. The bark is grey, flaky, soft and brittle. The flowers are arranged in large bunches at the ends of the twigs and have stalks about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, are white with fine small tooth-like sepals, five semi-circular petals and numerous long stamens. The seed capsules are cup-shaped with thin ribbed walls from $\frac{3}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " long and wide.

Angophora lanceolata (costata) the smooth barked apple occurs infrequently through the trap rock country of this district. Those who went on the Texas outing saw some beautiful stands of them between Texas and Yetman. A tree up to 60' in height with green foliage. The bark is smooth and shed each year like many eucalyptus. When young the bark is pink, but it turns grey before the next shedding. The leaves are paler on the lower surface borne in pairs along the twigs tapering to each end, $2\frac{1}{2}-5$ " long, $\frac{3}{8}-1$ " wide. The flowers are pure white and very showy, with 5 sepals, five longer semi-circular petals, and a large number of longer stamens. The seed is cup-shaped with thin walls, about $\frac{3}{8}-\frac{1}{2}$ " long and wide, sometimes with fairly prominent ribs. This tree can be confused with the spotted gum (*Euc. maculata*) but the leaves are always opposite in *Angophora* and alternate in *Eucalypts*.

The next species seems to be the one found at Dalveen. Despite valiant efforts a seed capsule was not forthcoming, but the description fits. The Broad-leaved Apple, *Angophora subvelutina* is described as a crooked spreading tree, mostly 20-40" high with grey flaky soft brittle bark, and irregular branches. The leaves are grey-green, stiff and nearly stalkless, arranged in pairs along the twigs. Heart-shaped leaves pointed 2-3" long and $\frac{3}{4}-2$ " wide. The capsules are $\frac{3}{8}$ " wide and

ANGOPHORAS Cont. wide.

This information was extracted from "The Honey Flora" by Blake and Roff. (Brain hopes you noted the pun! and the late Mr. Stan Blake author of above was Brian's uncle)

Appart from honey, shade, general aesthetic value, the only commercial use of the Angophora seems to have been for butchers blocks and bullock yokes.

NEWSLETTER SUB-COMMITTEE.

Mrs. McAllister has kindly volunteered to extend the three month period, into the full years service. Mrs. Joan Stevenson has been helping out in Mrs. Mc. Allister's absence from the district. Thank you both for doing this important job of putting together the the newsletters stapling and addressing and posting.

NOVEMBER PROGRAMME REPORT.

The members had the pleasure of seeing the pictures taken by club members Frank and Ailsa Wilkinson on their recent trip abroad to Britain and Europe. We much enjoyed the commentary which was jointly given and it had a good sprinkling of Frank's irresistible humour, and the photographs covered a number of interesting and beautiful parts. All enjoyed sharing some of Frank and Ailsa's experiences.

NOVEMBER OUTING REPORT.

Because of other interesting reports already used this one will appear in the February News letter.

ENTOMOLOGICAL JOTTINGS

Human taste can detect sweetness in a solution of one part in 200 parts mixture. Flies in one part in 40,000 mixture, and butterflies in an amazingly weak solution of one part sweetness in 300,000 parts water solution.

Yours in NATs.

them ver. Jean.