



The Granite Belt Naturalist



Mail Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, Stanthorpe Qld. 4380
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Please send contributions to the magazine to editorsfnc@gmail.com

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



The Pyramids, Girraween National Park

Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of each month at
Uniting Church, Small Hall, 113 High Street
Stanthorpe at 7.30pm

Outings: The Sunday following the 3rd Wednesday
of each month

Subs: Single \$20.00, Family \$30.00 per annum, July
to June

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2023/2024

President	Leon McCosker	46811737
Vice-presidents	Holly Patti	
	Robyn Murray	0488515311
Secretary	John Salini	0400805236
Treasurer	Lynette Haselgrove	0409006063
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	0427835268
Publicity Officer	Theresa Clifford	0413008602
Librarian	Rob McCosker	46835371

Stanthorpe Field Naturalists is a group member of
Granite Borders Landcare.



Management Committee: President, Vice-
Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer

SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS
ON NATS OUTINGS

1. Flat, well-formed track, no steps, 5km or less. Clearly signposted. Suitable for wheelchairs with assistance.
2. Formed track. May have gentle hills and some steps. Clearly signposted. No experience required
3. Formed track, some obstacles, 20km or less. May have short steep hills and many steps. Some experience recommended.
4. Rough Track. May be long and very steep with few directional signs. For experienced bushwalkers.
5. Unformed track. Likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. For very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills.

Coming Up

Wednesday 21st February: *Western Australia* by Gunter Maywald

Sunday 25th February: Koreelah National Park and Queen Mary's Falls with Leon and Kerrie McCosker

Deadline for next newsletter
9th March 2024

Please Note: Meetings will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from now on and the outing will be on the Sunday following.

Pre-Outing Report – Driving outing to Koreelah National Park and Queen Mary Falls.
Sunday 25th February

Leaders: Leon and Kerrie McCosker



Overlooking the waterfall into Koreelah Gorge

Meet at Weeroona Park at **8.30 am** to carpool, it will be a reasonably long day, driving more than 200 km, including approximately 20 km of gravel road, through lovely green countryside. We drive along Amosfield Road to Liston, here we will inspect the Liston Cobb and Co. and Collectables Museum.

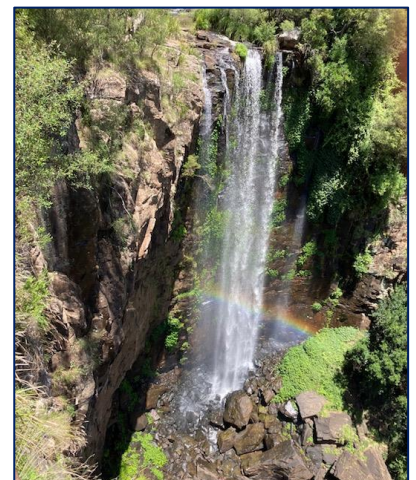
The Museum contains a replica Cobb & Co coach built by John Burton at the age of 88, He also designed and constructed the shed with the help of volunteers, to house the coach and collectables which are clearly named. There are several information panels within the building.

Follow the Mount Lindesay Rd to Legume, turning right. At Old Koreelah, turn left into White Swamp Rd, travel for approximately 10 kms, turn left into Koreelah National Park. We drive to

the day use Falls Picnic area, over-looking the falls and gorge in Koreelah Creek, this is a good spot for lunch.

Koreelah National Park area is 5266 hectares with Wilsons Peak at 1231 metres.

After lunch drive back onto White Swamp Rd, turn left into Head Gate Rd. At the tee junction turn left into Spring Creek Rd. We can stop to see the Moss Gardens and views of Wilsons Peak, a 10-minute walk. Further on to Carr's Lookout, arriving at Queen Mary's Falls for afternoon tea. Members can walk to the falls or drive back to Stanthorpe.



Queen Mary's Falls

Outing Report – Mole River Arsenic Mine and Mole Station Native Nursery

Field Nats met David and Sarah Caldwell at their Mole Station campground where we had morning tea and David gave some history of their 2915-hectare Mole Station property, where they run sheep and cattle.

After morning tea David took us to the security fenced arsenic mine. The mine covers approximately 30 acres with some shafts dug to 120 ft to the arsenopyrite ore. The ore was transported to the crusher to be broken into smaller particles and fed into roasting kilns and fine ore into a mechanical furnace for firing. The resulting arsenic fumes were then cooled and condensed in a set of 66 chambers where they were sublimed onto the interior brickwork as arsenic pentoxide powder. This was bagged by hand to be sent away.

The main use of arsenic in the 1920s to 1930 was for prickly pear control and when cactoblastis was introduced the demand fell away and the mine closed in 1938.

David was thanked for giving up his time to show us through the relics of the mine and giving the history.

We went down to the Mole Station Native Nursery where Sarah showed us around the nursery, she showed us two *xanthorrhoea glauca* which she had grown from seed. A few bought some plants. Sarah showed us a lovely area beside a large water hole in the Mole River to enjoy our lunch and observe the bird life. – *Leon McCosker*



Arsenic pentoxide cooling chambers



Lunch near Mole River



Relics of the ore crusher



Xanthorrhoea glauca in the background

Bird List Mole River 24 November 2023

1 Australasian Darter, 2 Nankeen Kestrel, 3 Masked Lapwing, 4 Red-winged Parrot, 5 Laughing Kookaburra, 6 Forest Kingfisher, 7 Rainbow Bee-eater, 8 Dollarbird, 9 Superb Fairy-wren, 10 White-browed Scrubwren, 11 Striated Pardalote, 12 Brown Honeyeater, 13 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, 14 Rufous Whistler, 15 Grey Shrike-thrush, 16 Australasian Figbird, 17 Dusky Woodswallow, 18 Grey Butcherbird, 19 Willie Wagtail, 20 Magpie-Lark, 21 Welcome Swallow, 22 Eastern Yellow Robin, 23 Striped Honeyeater, 24 Pied Currawong. – *Peter Haselgrove*

Break up Report 10th December 2023

John Salini



Walking up the Fire Track

The annual break up outing was held at my small farm on the western side of Emu Swamp Road about 1.5km south of Glover Corner. After not hearing the members arriving early, I was surprised to be greeted by about 10 members already accommodated on the main deck; we enjoyed a cuppa before setting off up the fire track through the middle of the property.

We visited a couple of water holes on the creek line. The creek running through the centre of the property is Emu Gully Creek and it runs in to the Severn River about a kilometre

after crossing Emu Swamp Road through the 4ha Water Reserve adjacent to my southern boundary. Although the creek was not flowing after the dry Autumn/Winter months, the waterholes contained water.

Pig damage was evident at most dry sections of the creek. I explained that the western side of the creek was largely bushland (classified as 'Remnant Vegetation' on SDRC maps) and was one of the factors in my decision to buy the place; there are a couple of functional paddocks at the northern end that have been sown to pasture several times.

After returning to the farmhouse, we enjoyed a late afternoon dinner with the BBQ; some members were fully self-sufficient with food, which eased my workload.

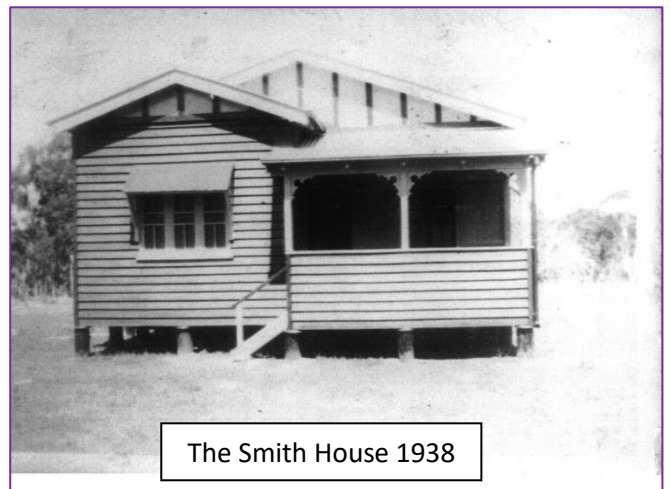


John Salini pointing out something of interest



Dinner on the Deck

The farmhouse is one of three 'Smith' houses in the immediate district; Scott and Vicki Williams own one on Collins Road about 2km north of my place and Lachlan and Frances Grassick own the third Smith house on Mt Stirling Road about 2km NE of my place. Frances Grassick was Frances Smith before she married Lachlan and hence, still lives in her family home! "They came to a Plateau" (The Stanthorpe Saga) mentions how a large clan of Smiths (the original Smith had 8 sons and a daughter) settled and grew orchards in the district from Lyra to Glen Aplin in the late 1800s/early 1900s.



The Smith House 1938

Tom Fittock gave me a 1938 photograph of my house when it was known as the Smith house.....a classic, small, three roomed cottage with no landscaping around it; this was extended to the north (right hand side) by Ian Kerr (1968?) and then extended to the west to more than double its size by Tom and Patricia Fittock in the 1990s. I have made significant additions to the exterior and interior since I bought the place in January 2004 and especially once I retired in 2009 and spent more time here.

I look forward to our meetings and outings during 2024.

Congratulations to Liz Bourne
For being awarded the Medal of the Order Of
Australia (OAM) for services to orienteering and
conservation and the environment

**Minutes of Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc
Date 22nd November 2023**

Meeting opened: 1932h

Attendance & Apologies: As per Attendance Book, 10 attendees.

Minutes of the previous meeting: - Any amendments?.....

Confirmed John

Seconded Rob

Carried

Business arising from the minutes:

Correspondence: read as per correspondence book

Moved John

Seconded Kris

Carried

Financial Report: Previous Balance: **\$2,889.39**
Subscriptions: October \$60.00
Petty Cash deposited into account:

Balance at 30 October 2023

\$2,949.39

Moved: Lyn

Seconded Trish.

Carried

Note about who needs to be paid for the Meeting Hall?

General Business Arising:

Next year, 2024, Meetings will be held on 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Outing Report: *Mallee Ridge* Saturday, 28th October, led by Rob McCosker
The Park was closed and the outing was cancelled.

Pre-Outing Report: Rob McCosker Mole River Arsenic Mine and Nursery (on Friday, 24th November).

Speaker & Topic: *Gibraltar Range* with Kris Carnell

Presentation: Kris presented a lovely slide show about visiting this park area over many years.

Specimens: -

Next Meeting: Sunday 10th December – Breakup BBQ *Salileo's Farm* hosted by John Salini.

Next Outing: Friday, 24th November: *Mole River Arsenic Mine and Nursery* led by Leon and Kerry McCosker. Meet at Weeroona Park 0800h and travel to the campground on Mole River

Meeting Close: 1956h

Spottings



Blue Tongue Lizard

Around New Year I found two reptile scats in the garage. I knew they belonged to a reptile because my son-in-law had a pet python. I was hoping they belonged to a blue tongue and when I raised the garage door to get better light, it came from its hiding place and headed for the doorway. We managed to shepherd it out the side door so it didn't end up hiding in a different spot in the garage. I think it is the lighter coloured one that was in the back yard a few months ago. *Margaret Carnell*

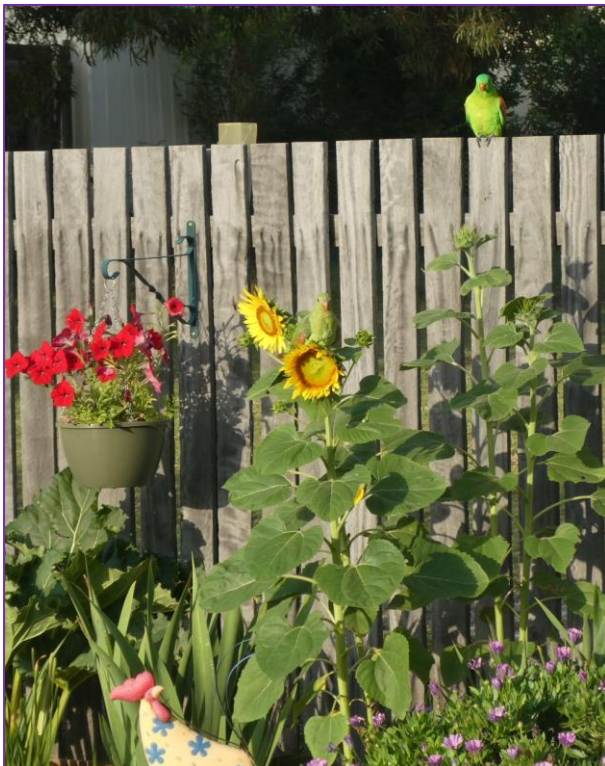


Left: This bronze wing pigeon decided the strainer of the tank at the Severnlea Uniting Church would be the ideal place to build its nest. We have not been drinking the water because of algae, so now we have a bit more pollution to add. I'm wondering what will happen when it rains.

Photo by *Russell Carnell*



The first two photos of this spider were taken on 13th January. The one on the left shows the underside, and the middle one is the top. The one on the right was taken on 31st January when it has added some fluffed up silk to its web. I have not been able to identify it.



I was very excited to see two Red Winged Parrots on the fence early in the morning. Then one of them flew down and started pulling petals off a newly opened sunflower. That one is a bit hard to see as the photo was taken through the window a fair distance away. It blends nicely with the foliage. I expected them to be back but they haven't been and the sunflowers are still growing. – *M Carnell*