

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

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



The Pyramids, Girraween National Park

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2023/2024

President	Leon McCosker	46811737
Vice-presidents	Holly Patti	
	Robyn Murray	0488515311
Secretary	John Salini	0400805236
Treasurer (acting)	Lyn Collins	
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 15th May: *Central Australia* with David Wilson

Sunday 12th May or Monday 13th May: *Astronomical Viewing* with John Salini

**Deadline for next newsletter
11th June 2024**



**Pre-Outing Report – Sunday 12th or Monday 13th May
Leader: John Salini**

Night Sky, Salileo's Farm, 146 Emu Swamp Road, Glen Aplin.,

Unfortunately, no planets are visible in the evening at this time of year.

We should be able to view the targets listed below within an hour or so, assuming the sky is clear; passing clouds will not prevent us from viewing these targets.

If the forecast is bad, then I propose we try on Monday night. The current forecast says it should be 'mostly sunny' on Monday and Tuesday. Fingers crossed.

Targets;

Comet 12P Pons-Brooke, low in the western horizon – binoculars

Crescent Moon in the NW sky

Orion Nebula (near Southern Cross)

Jewel Box Cluster (within Southern Cross)

Tarantula Nebula (part of the Large Magellanic Cloud)

Let me know if intend coming along. Best to arrive around sunset; we can have a cuppa before we start observing an hour later....

I'll have a couple of small telescopes available for viewing, bring binoculars if you have them.

See you Sunday (or Monday) evening.

Ciao ciao

John Salini

Please check your emails to see if the outing has to be postponed.

Outing Report – Basket Swamp – 28th May 2024



Nats at creek crossing – J Salini

The outing was postponed until the 28th because of rain and we were a little uneasy about the weather when we woke up. However, it was clear when we met at Weeroona Park. There were eleven Nats in the group and we travelled via Amosfield Road to Mt Lindesay Road.

It was very lush and green and there were some very fine looking cattle in the paddocks although it became drier with smaller trees from the Bald Rock turnoff to Basket Swamp turnoff. Some of the trees were obviously regrowth. On the way we noticed the

Banksia integrifolia were flowering well and admired the blue/grey foliage of some New England Peppermint trees near Bookookarara Creek.

As we drove into the picnic area at Basket Swamp a shower came scudding from the East. It soon eased and we were able to have smoko sitting at the table beside the fire that some campers had lit. Sue heard black cockatoos as we drove in and we heard a Fan-tailed Cuckoo calling. The *Banksias* we saw on the pre-outing were still blooming and there was a clump of fungus at the base of some trees. One was white with white gills and the other was buff coloured with darker gills. There was brown at the base of the stem and surrounds which I thought might be from the spores. A couple of pretty yellow and orange mushrooms were nearby as well as a yellow coral type fungus. Then someone noticed a leathery looking deep purple mushroom with orange gills, growing right beside a piece of dead wood. The weather conditions were obviously just right for them.



Phylotta phyllicoides – J Salini



Eastern Yellow Robin – K Carnell

We walked down the road to the creek crossing admiring the ferns and the seed pods on the *Leptospermum* and then went off road botanising our way towards the waterhole. The bark on some of the mallee trees was beautiful. There were not a lot of flowers to be seen but we did see *Trachymene incisa* (wild carrot), *Goodenia hederacea*, *Goodenia bellidifolia* and a *Brachyscombe* (I'm not sure which one). A yellow pea that was just starting to come out created a lot of interest. I think it was *Phylotta phyllicoides* and there was a prickly white heath in bloom. The fungus in the swamp area was a small yellow domed toadstool. No one was able to reach any conclusion about what had made the "diggings", although yabby was mentioned.

As we made our way back to the picnic area another shower came across and it was almost enough to wet us. As we had lunch we were



Timbarra Trig-J Salini

visited by a pair of Eastern Yellow Robins, a Spotted Pardalote and a New Holland Honeyeater. We also saw a Golden Whistler in a tree a little further from the table.

After lunch we drove to Timbarra Trig which has different vegetation from the swamp, as you would expect. As I stepped out of the vehicle I almost trod on a *Podalepis jaceoides*. There was quite a lot of *Acacia ulicifolia* (Prickly Moses) beneath the trees and some *Isotoma anethifolia* on the rocks. The tall bushes we walked through with yellow pea flowers appearing were not *Gompholobium* as I thought. I'm pretty sure they were *Pultenaea flexilis*. On our way back down the track we noticed a couple of the bushes were infested with hairy caterpillars. Amongst the boulders some healthy looking *Stylidium laricifolium* (tree trigger plants) were thriving. There was a deep pink toadstool pushing its way through the leaf litter, as well as another coral fungus.

There were picturesque views to the south-east and as a light shower drifted across the landscape, a rainbow appeared. The shower was brief and didn't interfere with our exploration of the boulders. At one time there was a ladder to the top of the trig and there is still a pole at the top and a cement anchor block at the bottom. Although it was still early in the afternoon we finished the outing at the trig and made our way home individually.



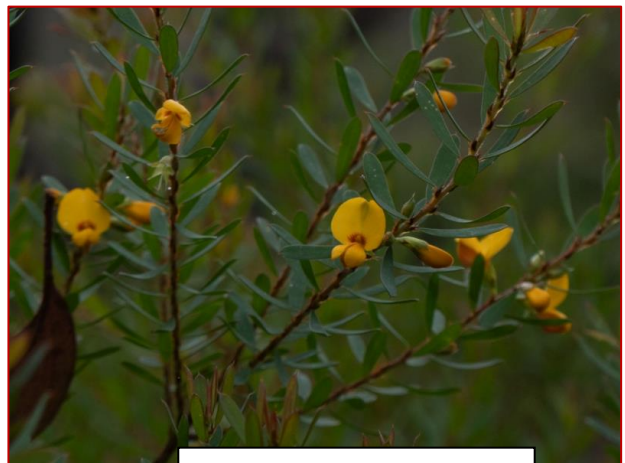
Looking through a rainbow from Timbarra Trig. - K Carnell

Margaret Carnell

Bird List Thanks to Peter Haselgrove
Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Golden Whistler, Brown Thornbill, Welcome Swallow, Eastern Yellow Robin, New Holland Honeyeater, White-eared Honeyeater, Spotted Pardalote, Grey Shrike thrush, Crimson Rosella, Grey Fantail.



Caterpillars – M Carnell



Pultenaea flexilis J Salini



Fungi at Basket Swamp –
K & M Carnell

Minutes of Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.

Date: 17th April 2024

Meeting opened: 7:35 pm

Attendance and Apologies: Twelve people attended, as per Attendance Book

Minutes of previous meeting: March Minutes were included in the Newsletter.

Moved: Kris Seconded: Holly Carried

Business arising from the Minutes: Leon noted that Lyn paid the Post Office Box account.

Correspondence: Leon noted emails received via the SFN gmail account. He also sent out a Landcare email to members.

Moved: John Seconded: Rob Carried

Financial Report: Our bank balance is \$2,901.39; there is an outstanding cheque for \$154 to come out of this total.

Moved: Lyn Seconded: Holly Carried

General Business arising: Granite Borders Landcare e-newsletter

There was a discussion about sending the club newsletter in Word format so Landcare can take what sections they want out of it. There is a 'screen shot' method of selecting parts of a pdf newsletter that can then be used by them.

Holly asked if we now have insurance; this was confirmed.

Outing Report: Rob McCosker reported on the outing to **Morgan's Gully**

Six members turned up; the weather improved to a sunny day. They looked at the granite cutting and bushland vegetation along the river. After lunch, we walked to the 'dyke' rock formation visible on both sides of the river. David Wilson took rock samples which were identified as granophyre.

Pre-Outing Report: 28th April – Basket Swamp National Park – Kris Carnell described the first part as easy walking; it is about an hour drive on the Mt Lindsay Road down an unsealed turnoff to the picnic area. If the creek is low, we can drive to the Basket Swamp Falls. Failing that, we can drive to Timbarra Lookout. We will leave Weeroona Park at 9:00 am, and plan to have morning tea when we arrive there.

Speaker & Topic: After being unable to connect his laptop to the projector, Graham drove home and fetched his laptop and the appropriate HDMI cable. John presented a description of his interest in the hobby of **Amateur Astronomy**, in particular, activities linked to his long-term membership of the Astronomical Association of Queensland (AAQ). Eclipse trips were described and graphical explanations of the mechanisms causing solar eclipses and transits of inner planets across the disc of the Sun, were provided. One of the driving factors for buying his property in Glen Aplin in January 2004 was to take advantage of the dark skies and eventually, build an observatory. Since then, two other AAQ club members have added their own observatories at the farm.

Specimens: John brought along a poster containing his photo of the Transit of Venus in 2008; he also

brought along a small Meade ETX90 Maksutov-Cassegrain telescope.

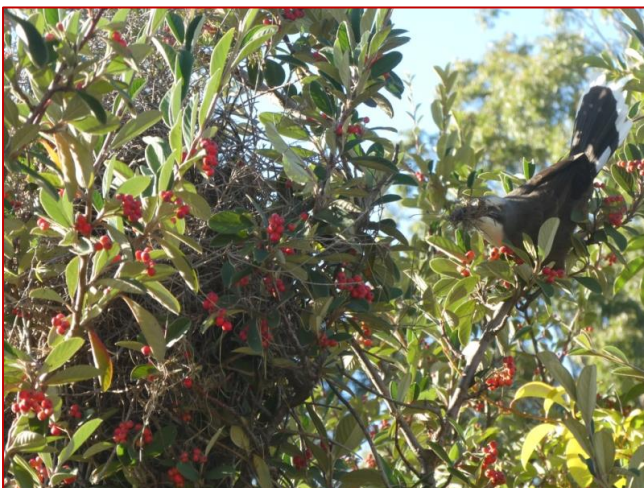
May outing: John will host a night sky viewing at his farm in May, when there is a crescent Moon and comet 12P Pons- Brooke can be viewed with binoculars in the west about an hour after sunset. He will show other features in the sky but unfortunately, none of the major planets are visible in May. Leon thanked John for his presentation.

August outing: Holly will host a spot lighting evening and suggested we meet for dinner beforehand.

Next Meeting: 15th May – David Wilson will give a presentation of his trip to Central Australia.

Meeting Closed: 8:00 pm

Spottings



Top Left: This spider was on Lock Wilson's car about a month ago.

Top Right: Grey Crowned Babbler's Nest at Severnlea Uniting Church _ G. Rayner.

Left: Grey Crowned Babbler with nesting material. – M Carnell
The birds were not disturbed by our presence.