

# The Granite Belt Naturalist



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### 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:* 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at Uniting Church, Small Hall, 113 High Street Stanthorpe at 7.30pm

*Outings:* The Sunday following the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month

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



*The Pyramids, Girraween National Park*

### CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2024/2025

President	Holly Patti	0421288216
Vice-presidents	Robyn Murray	0488515311
	Kris Carnell	0407165031
Secretary	John Salini	0400805236
Treasurer	Lyn Collins	0428810156
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	0427835268
Publicity Officer	Holly Patti	0421288216
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 20<sup>th</sup> November: *Frog I.D* with Holly Patti

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November: *Eriostemon Peak* with Holly Patti

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December: Break-up. There will be an email in December to confirm details.

**Deadline for next newsletter  
10<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

[Pre-Outing Report: Eriostemon Peak, Girraween 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024](#)

**Approx 5km return**

**Holly Patti: 0421 288 216**

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9 am and depart south on the highway to Girraween National Park (approx. 27mins/35kms away). Park at the main picnic ground car park on Pyramids Road.



Flannel Flower flowering.

We will head off on the track that passes through the old campground and comes out onto the Junction Track. We walk down the junction track for about ten minutes to "Citrus Corner" where some Boronia were just finishing flowering. Just past this point we cross the creek and head up a slab I have nicknamed "the road" as that's exactly what it looks like. There are beautiful areas of Flannel Flower in full flower and lots of different coloured bottle brush



The Road

At the top of this slab are some concentric circles on the granite which appear to have been made by someone placing rocks on the slab which then hindered the lichen growth underneath.

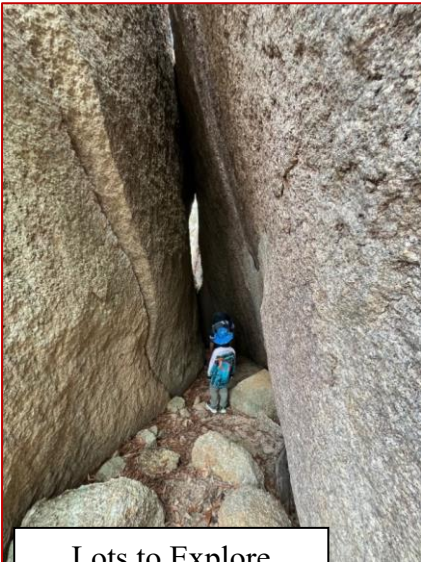


Aliens?

From the top of this slab we bear off to the right and head up through the vegetation to the top of Eriostemon Peak. There is no trail and the terrain is boulders, leaf litter and sparse low scrub. Hiking poles are helpful on any loose leaf litter but it was pretty easy going.

There are lot of interesting boulder caves and passages to explore. Towards the top are a lot of big square wombat poos. There are several great spots to see the pyramid & second pyramid on

the way up at an angle not often seen.



Lots to Explore

The Eriostemon (*Eriostemon australasius?*) began towards the top with quite a few bushes just before the top. Half of the bushes were flowering with the other half with buds soon to open. Hopefully there will still be some in flower in a month when we go.

There is not much view from the very top so we could have lunch heading down as there are a few shady slabs with better views.

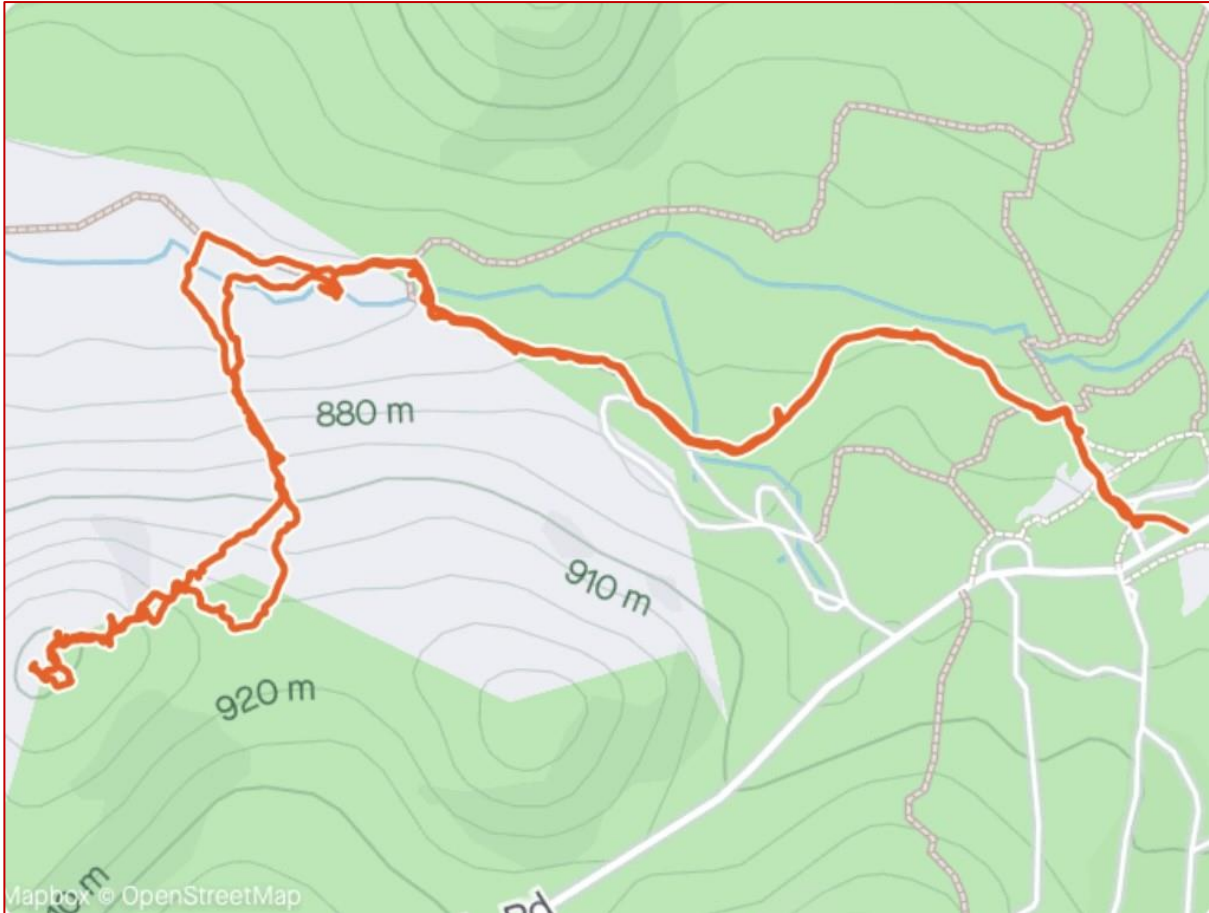
The walk to the top was 2.5km and took us just over an hour but it may take us longer on the day exploring and checking out the rocks/plants.

Total elevation gain was 143ms, with the summit a height of 960ms



Pink Wax Flower





**Plants:** Many *Melaleuca* species (bottlebrush) red green and yellow. *Leptospermum*, *Hibbertia*, *Brachyscome*, Dogwood *Jacksonia scoparia*, White Kunzea *Kunzea bracteolata*, Nodding Blue Lily *Stypandra glauca*, Compact Wire Lily *Laxmannia compacta*, Flannel Flower *Actinotus helianthi*, Long Leaf Wax Flower *Philothea myoporoides*, Queen of the Bush *Pimelea linifolia*, Pepper and Salt *Spyridium scortechinii*, *Zieria* sp., Mountain Dampiera *Dampiera purpurea*, Tall Trigger Plant *Stylidium laricifolium*, Grass Trigger Plant *S graminifolium*, *Wahlenbergia* sp., *Boronia* sp., Pale Fruited Cherry *Exocarpos strictus*, *Prostanthera* sp., Match Heads *Comesperma retusum*, Thread Leaved Hop Bush *Dodonaea falcata*, Pink Wax Flower *Eriostemon australasius*.

**Birds:** Superb Fairy Wren, Cicada Bird, Rufous Whistler, Noisy Friarbird, Yellow Tufted Honeyeater, Kookaburra, Grey Shrike Thrush, Satin Bower Bird, Potted Pardalote, Currawong, Crimson Rosella, Sacred Kingfisher



Wombat poo

Outing Report – Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2024



It was a pleasant day for walking when 11 Nats met for the postponed walk in the Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve. First of all an apology. I understood that the Nature Reserve had been upgraded to a National Park but that is not correct. On the website it is still a Nature Reserve under the control of the National Parks.

We met for morning tea at the truck stop near the top of Bolivia Hill. The first thing we saw when we started walking was a poppy (Opium ?) but the natives soon started appearing. A ground orchid was at the start of

the track (*microtis?*) There were lots of *Jacksonia* and *Leptospermum* out along all the tracks we took. After a short distance we came to a small creek and veered off the track to look at the Bolivia Wattle trees. *Acacia pycnostachya*. This acacia is listed as vulnerable by N.S.W. Nat. Parks. When we did the pre-outing it was in heavy bud but on the walk it had finished flowering and there were lots of seed pods on the trees.

The next stop was the ruins of the old sheep station buildings and sheep yards. Of particular interest was the number of Bolivia Hill callistemon plants with lots of flowers. We then continued along the Chile trail at Nats pace, botanising as we went, until we came to the T junction where the Chile trail turns south and the Patagonia trail starts travelling north. There was a considerable drop off a short distance in front of us and also the high tension electricity wires and poles. At this stage it was lunch time so we found a shady spot for a break.



Bolivia Hill Callistemon

After lunch we walked along the Chile trail for a while walking parallel to the drop off. We could see that the track went down into the gorge and, realizing that if we went downhill we would have to come back up again, we turned around for a leisurely walk back to the vehicles. On one *Leptospermum* tree on the way back we saw lots of case moths. As we crossed the abandoned northern railway line on the edge of the reserve we marvelled at the amount of rock needed to build the line and



Case Moth Cocoons

wondered where it was quarried as we were nearly

on the top of the hill. We then had an early afternoon tea and made our separate ways home.



Railway Embankment with tea-tree

Since the outing I have found some more information about reserve which is elsewhere in the magazine.

Thanks to Holly for compiling the bird list.

My hearing is no good at all but I understand that members had some trouble identifying the birds because of the noise of the cicadas.

*Kris Carnell*

**Birds:** Rufous Whistler, Eastern Spinebill, Silvereeye, White Eared Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Yellow Faced Honeyeater, Spotted Pardalote, White Throated Treecreeper, Varied Triller, Red Wing Parrot, White Throated Gerygone, Kingfisher sp.

**Plant List in order of viewing:** Opium poppy (introduced), *Dianella revoluta*, *Lomandra multiflora*, *Wahlenbergia* sp., *Calotis dentex* (white burr daisy), *Isotoma fluviatilis* (swamp isotoma), *Leucochrysum albicans albicans* (Hoary sunray), *Leptospermum* (tea tree) possibly 3 species, *hibbertia* sp., *Jacksonia scoparia*, (dogwood), *Acacia* sp seed pods, *Acacia pycnostachya*, *Banksia integrifolia* seed cone, *Oxalis corniculata* (introduced), *Callistemon* sp (Bolivia Hill Callistemon), *Solanum ditrichum*, *Solanum amblymerum*, *Eucalyptus melliodora* (Yellow Box), *Pimelea* sp., *Ozothamnus diosmifolius* (Sago Bush), Shrub with a small yellow flower maybe *Maytenus silvestris*, *Stackhousia viminea*, *Tricoryne elatior* (Yellow rush lily).

*There doesn't appear to be any recent management plan for Bolivia Hill Nature reserve so I have copied some information from the 2011 document.*

**BOLIVIA HILL NATURE RESERVE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT** December, 2011

Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve covers an area of approximately 1,782 hectares, 48 kilometres south of Tenterfield on the eastern side of the New England Highway. It was gazetted in 2000 as part of the National Reserve System program to contribute to representation at bioregional and subregional levels, and to conserve important remnant vegetation having a particularly high floristic diversity including species that are endemic or highly restricted to the area and threatened species.

Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve is known to contain 52 regionally significant species and seven threatened species including one previously undescribed species, *Eucalyptus boliviana*.

Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve was once part of Bolivia Station and non-Aboriginal people have occupied the land now gazetted as the reserve since the 1830s. In the 1900s much of Bolivia Station was subdivided into smaller farm blocks including Clifferna, The Shinnies and Gallipoli Stations. Primary uses of the Bolivia area were sheep grazing with some crop farming on the flatter country. Crop farming met with little success, as the land was not fertile enough to sustain agricultural crops. The remnants of this long agricultural history of the area within the planning area are the ruins of homestead sites and shearing sheds at both Bolivia Hill and Clifferna Stations, as well as internal fencing and a sheep dip site near the shearing shed at Bolivia Hill Station.

The Bolivia Hill shearing shed, in the southern portion of the reserve, was built in the 1940s, with the homestead built shortly after. The only remains of the homestead itself are some stairs and the brick outline of the home. The shearing shed has been restored to enable visitor access.

The Clifferna shearing shed, in the northern section of the reserve, was built at about the same time as the Bolivia Hill shearing shed. However, there is now little left of the Clifferna homestead and shearing shed except for a couple of fruit trees. It is now being managed as a ruin. *(These are the ruins we saw).*

In Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve there are two distinct disturbed areas. Thirty-six hectares were cleared in the southern area for agriculture and introduced whisky grass now dominates this disturbed portion of the reserve. Natural regeneration is very slow due to the high density of whisky grass. In the north of the reserve, approximately 500 hectares or almost one third of the reserve has been disturbed through tree poisoning which occurred under private ownership. Within this area, natural regeneration has occurred in some places as tea tree (*Leptospermum brevipes*) monocultures. In recent years, exotic perennial grasses such as coolatai grass and whisky grass have been spreading into the area.

*The fact that so much was poisoned probably explains why there were just isolated large trees. They would have been left as shade trees for the sheep. I didn't notice that there was any coolatai or whiskey grass but I wasn't looking for them. The leptospermum (3 species?) is providing good cover but other native trees are becoming established. It still doesn't explain why there is that cleared area near the T junction with just grass cover.*

**Table 2. Threatened plant species recorded in the planning area**

Common name	Scientific name	Status	Reserve
<b>Trees</b>			
Bolivia stringybark	<i>Eucalyptus boliviana</i>	Vulnerable*	Bolivia Hill NR
<b>Shrubs</b>			
Bolivia wattle	<i>Acacia pycnostachya</i>	Vulnerable**	Bluff River NR Bolivia Hill NR
Bolivia Hill boronia	<i>Boronia boliviensis</i>	Endangered*	Bolivia Hill NR
Bolivia homoranthus	<i>Homoranthus croftianus</i>	Endangered*	Bolivia Hill NR
Bolivia Hill pimelea	<i>Pimelea venosa</i>	Endangered**	Bolivia Hill NR
<b>Herbaceous</b>			
Creeping tick-trefoil	<i>Desmodium campylocaulon</i>	Endangered*	Bolivia Hill NR
Austral toadflax	<i>Thesium australe</i>	Vulnerable**	Bolivia Hill NR

\* Status under TSC Act.

\*\* Denotes species nationally threatened under the EPBC Act.

*Below is part of the implementation plan for the reserve as it relates to the areas we have walked in.*

### 7. IMPLEMENTATION

Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Management Response	Priority*
<p><b>7.3. Visitor Use and Services</b></p> <p>The reserves are surrounded by private property, except for the western boundary of Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve which is a Travelling Stock Route (TSR). There is no public vehicle access to the planning area, therefore visitation is low.</p> <p>There are no visitor facilities or interpretive signs located in the planning area.</p> <p>There are two wells in Bolivia Hill Nature Reserve.</p>	<p>Visitor use is appropriate and ecologically sustainable.</p> <p>Visitor use and services encourage appreciation of the park's values.</p>	7.3.1. Allow low impact self-reliant recreation throughout the planning area, such as bushwalking, cycling (on management trails only), bird watching and nature observation.	Medium Ongoing
		7.3.2. Install signs and gates to assist neighbours in addressing potential trespassing issues, and to identify that cycling is allowed on management trails only.	Medium
		7.3.3. Permit public entry to the Bolivia Shearing Shed.	Medium Ongoing
		7.3.4. Install warning signpost and maintain the fences around the wells.	High Ongoing

**Minutes**  
**Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc**

**Date 16/10/2024**

**Meeting opened:** 1932h

**Attendance & Apologies:** Margaret Carnell, Lock Wilson.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** - No amendments, confirmed Rob, seconded Lyn, carried.

**Business arising from the minutes:** Lyn posted and paid (\$62) the annual return to the Office of Fair Trading.

**Correspondence:** .....John noted an email from Tenterfield Field Nats advising of their Birding outing on 23thd October, plus other club notices were forwarded to members concerning other clubs' activities and SDRC Community notices.

Moved John.....

Seconded Trish

Carried

**Financial Report:** Treasurer's Report Previous Balance: \$3,022.39 less \$62 to Office of Fair Trading, Current Balance = \$2,960.29

Moved Lyn

seconded

Leslie

Carried

**Outing Report:**

Rob and Trish reported on the Mallee Ridge outing last month; they enjoyed good weather and noted that the bush had recovered from previous bushfires.

**Pre-Outing Report:**

Kris Carnell advised that there was easy walking at Bolivia Hill N. P.; Members should look out for the Bolivia Boronia bush. The current dry spell had affected the plants and the flowering will have finished. It is about 75mins by car from Stanthorpe.

**General Business:**

Holly will send out the Members Details form and asks that they be returned to her.

Holly has drafted a form for Incident Reports from outings.

She also reminded members that it is Bird Count Week.

The Christmas Breakup Party is confirmed as 15<sup>th</sup> December at Holly Patti's house

The November speaker will be advised later; the topic is Frog ID.

Kris will update the 2024/2025 Meeting and Outing agenda on the website.

**Speaker & Topic:** - Leslie Saunders presented some maps and photos of her tour of Bhutan. Travelling was sometimes difficult, but she had services of local guides to help her move about. All photos were taken with her mobile phone.

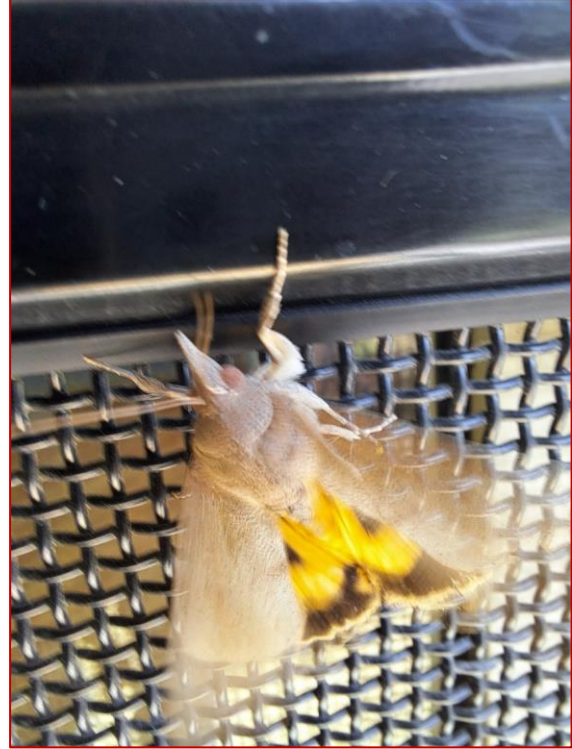
**Specimens:** An example of a Fairy Wren nest was on display.

**Next Meeting:** 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Topic is Frog I.D by Holly Patti.

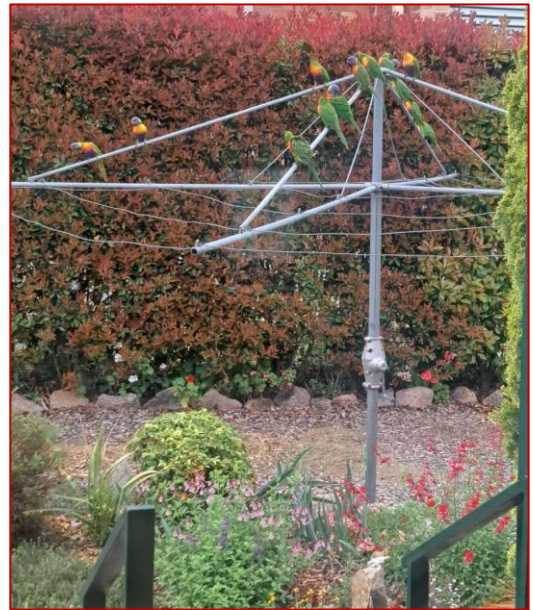
**Meeting Closed:** 1958h.



## Spottings



Does anyone know what sort of moth this? Leslie saw it on the screen.



Lesley also had other visitors to her garden.

**Above:** Two Blue Tongues. I think it's breeding season.

**Above Right:** A flock of Rainbow Lorikeets on the clothes hoist.



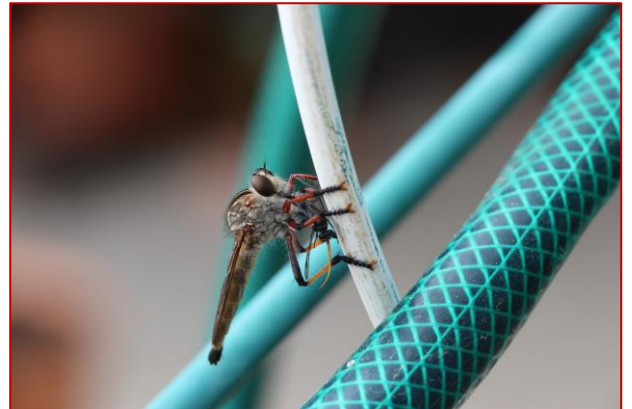
**Top Left and Right:** John came across this mass of Red Rustyhood orchids.

**Middle Left:** A very pretty yellow Praying Mantis in Lesley's garden

**Middle Right:** Also visiting Lesley were this pair of Corellas.

**Right:** A pair of Red-backed Parrots at the bird feeder in Lesley's garden.





Kris has been out in the garden with his camera.

**Top Left:** Ornge Grass Dart drinking from an irrigation dripper.

**Top Right:** A colourful fly.

**Middle Left:** The dark form of a Caper White.

**Middle Right:** A robber fly with an insect, possible a wasp. My family called them horse flies.

**Bottom Left:** I spotted these butterflies mating on a geranium leaf. I haven't been able to identify them

**Above:** Holly and her family saw Koalas when they were holidaying at the coast.