

The Granite Belt Naturalist



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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 – 2025/2026

President	Robyn Murray	0488515311
Vice-presidents	Martyn Vries	
Secretary	John Salini	0400805236
Treasurer	Lyn Collins	0428810156
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	0427835268
Publicity Officer		
Librarian	Rob McCosker	0410024383.

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 18th March: *Birds Nests* with Rob and Trish McCosker

Sunday 22nd March: *Pyramids Road Winery* with Martin and Alison

Deadline for next newsletter
6th April 2026

Meeting Wednesday 18th March

Rob and Tris McCosker will be presenting the program this month, as they have swapped with David Wilson who will now be doing the program in May. Rob has provided this information about the program.

Trish and I will be talking about Bird Nests from our back yard. We will have a small collection of nests for people to look at and perhaps help identify and we will give a few comments and anecdotes about them. We will welcome comments from members as well.

Pre-outing report - Sunday 22/03/2026 – Pyramids Road Winery

Martin & Alison

The plan is to travel from Weeroona Park Stanthorpe at 9:30AM directly to “Pyramids Road Wines” at 25 Wyberba Lane Wyberba QLD 4382 [approx.. 250m left off Pyramids Rd after turning left towards Girraween NP at the T-junction Balancing Heart/Right and Girraween NP/Left]. Some people probably will drive directly to Wyberba and others can carpool from Weeroona as required. The aim is to all meet up at the winery at 10:00AM.

We will meet Warren and Sue Smith, the PRW owners at the cellar door where we park our cars and Warren will tell us some stories about the history of PRW and the art of winemaking and show us around the wine making centre of PRW. Weather depending, we might be able to have a closer look at the vineyards.



Meet The Winemaker

Meet Warren, the winemaker when you visit the cellar door at Pyramids Road Wines. He is well known for sharing a tale or two. With a deep love of his craft, his passion and enthusiasm for viticulture and winemaking is evident. He may even show you a few samples from the unfinished wines in barrel.

After the talk and tour of the Winery we have invited Dr. Anthony Rice (“Ant”), who is a passionate Entomologist, who happens to live across the road from the PRW. (We are awaiting confirmation he is able to attend....).

For those not sure, an Entomologist is a scientist specializing in the study of insects, a branch of zoology that covers their classification, life cycles, ecology, and behaviour. They work in research, agriculture, forensics, or conservation to understand how insects interact with the environment and humans.

Ant has very passionate views on the balancing of farming and managing flora/fauna in an organic sustainable manner (Integrated Pest Management). For example, in this Podcast he talks about insects and IPM:

<https://lowerblackwood.libsyn.com/talkin-using-bugs-for-managing-bugs>



Presenter spotlight
Anthony Rice
From backyard to business...

Home Grown NORFOLK ISLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

And no, Warren and Ant are not related....

After this we drive to the Day Use Area at the Junction in Girraween NP to have Lunch/ afternoon tea. After that we all travel back home.

Indicative Timetable:

9:30AM Depart Weeroona Park for Wyberba – Pyramids Road Wines PRW)
10:00AM: Arrival at PRW (some will travel directly from home)
10:00 – 11:00AM: Tour and talk about PRW and history by Warren (the Winemaker)
11:00 – 12:00AM: Talk about sustainable farming and managing flora/fauna by Ant (the anthropologist)
12:00 – 12:15PM: drive to the Junction Day Use Area for lunch
12:15-13:30PM: Lunch at the Junction Day Use Area
13:30PM: travel back home.

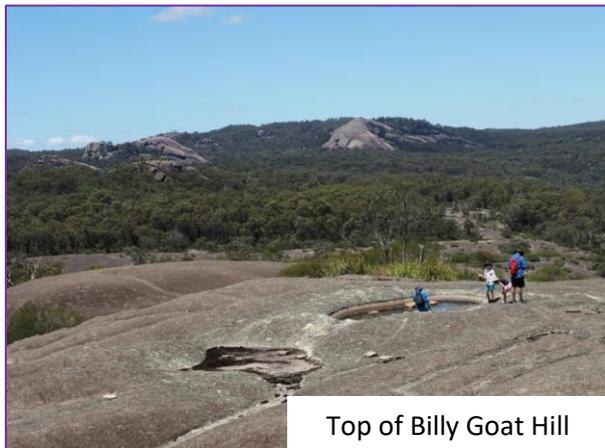
February Outing Report to Billy Goat Hill 22.2.26

After leaving Weeroona Park at about 9.00am we met up with Peter at the Mt Norman Road turnoff and our group of 9 people continued to the Paling Yard Creek crossing to stop for morning tea. The waterhole attracted the attention of the children and Isabelle discovered an unusual ball of moss attached to a stick submerged near the water's edge. After lifting it out of the water some of the moss broke off to reveal mud inside but we have no idea what it was or how it was formed. The creek was not running in the current dry conditions but there was still plenty of water in the waterhole. We continued along the road, disturbing a small mob of about a dozen Eastern Grey kangaroos and stopped near the start of the track to climb the hill. The steady breeze and part cloudy conditions made for a pleasant climb to the top and we were grateful that we didn't have the heat and humidity of previous days.



Waterhole in Palingyard Creek

We walked on to the large gnamma or rock hole to look for Clam shrimps and saw many as well as mosquito larvae. The water was only a couple of centimetres deep, and the Shrimp were all pairing or mate guarding, that is male and female swimming together, I assume to ensure successful mating for subsequent egg laying. The eggs can withstand lengthy dry spells and even frost, then hatch out when the next rain event comes. When I did the pre-outing trip in October last year the gnamma was nearly



Top of Billy Goat Hill

full, perhaps about 200mm deep and there were many small Clam shrimps and tadpoles present. These Clam shrimps are called *Paralimnadia urukhai* and there are about 15 species of *Paralimnadia* and some 75 species of Clam shrimp in Australia.

After enjoying the views of all the surrounding peaks, especially with clear air and lack of haze, we moved on to a more shady and protected spot for lunch, and then made our way back to the cars. We continued along Mt Norman Road to stop at another high view point where we could look back to Billy Goat Hill, then we continued to the Mt Norman parking area for an early smoko before heading home.



Purple Loosestrife

Plant List: *Purple loosestrife Lythrum salicaria, Trailing lobelia Lobelia andrewsii, Cough bush Cassinia quinquefaria, Wandering jew Commelina diffusa, Wild turnip Trachymene incisa subsp. Incisa, Keraudrenia Seringia hillii, Stuarts daisy Brachyscome stuartii, Yellow rush-lily Tricoryne elatior, White burr daisy Calotis dentex, Golden everlasting Xerochrysum bracteatum.*

Bird list – unfortunately birds were scarce, we saw a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles and a small flock of Brown Thornbills. Another sighting was of a large Turtle crossing the Eukey Road which we hoped was a sign of imminent rain.

Rob McCosker.

**Minutes of SFN February 2026 Meeting - Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc
Date: Wednesday 18th February 2026**

Kris Carnell chaired the meeting in the absence of both the President Robyn Murray and Vice-president Martin Vries; meeting opened at 7.30pm.

Attendance: Twelve in attendance as per the attendance book, including a visitor, Robert Lang.

Apologies: Robyn Murray, Alison and Martin Vries

Minutes; Kris referred members to the Minutes of the previous (November 2025) meeting. John moved that the Minutes be accepted; seconded Margaret, Carried.

Amendments; None

Business Arising from the Minutes; None

Treasurer’s Report;

Balance as at 19/11/2025	\$2,868.69
Income	Nil
Expenses – Room Rental 5 months	\$125.00
Current Balance CommBank Acc at 18/02/2026	\$2,743.69

Lyn moved that her Treasurers Report be accepted, seconded by Leon – Carried.

Correspondence: John noted emails forwarded to members over the Christmas/New Year period. He noted reminders from QWaLC to renew SFN Registration for 2026, which includes insurance cover. John would process the QWaLC form before the weekend.

Kris noted a post on Facebook suggesting that Lock Wilson’s photo in the newsletter might be a moth instead of a Native Bee.....consensus was that it is a Native Bee due to the presence of wings.

Lyn noted that Paul Revie from the Quoll Society sent a thank you for the SFN donation at the November meeting. Motion that correspondence be accepted; Moved Kris, Seconded Rob - carried.

Outing Report for December Breakup: Martin Vries wrote a detailed report on the breakup event at the Vries' home next door to Heavenly Chocolate.

Pre-outing Report: Rob McCosker referred members to his Billy Goat Hill article in the newsletter; those attending to meet at Weeroona Park at 0900h.

New Business Arising: - None

Specimens: - Rob reported a Ring Tail Possum in a pipe and Trish observed 3 koalas on their property.

Speaker & Topic: John Salini – *China Solar Eclipse, July 2009.*

John showed photos of the observing area before, during and after the eclipse; despite missing totality due to clouds, the area was covered in darkness for about 5 minutes. He reminded those attending that there is a Total Solar Eclipse over western Qld, NSW and Sydney on the 22nd July 2028.

Next Meeting: Rob McCosker – *Bird Nests.*

Meeting Closed: 7:50pm

Spottings



Top Left: Gnamma **Top Right:** Clam Shrimp
Bottom Left: Mystery Moss – all from Billy Goat Hill Outing
Bottom Right: Coot on nest on Quart Pot Creek (look for white face)