



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 and post it to members



Meetings 4th Wednesday of each month at QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe, at 7.30pm

Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each month (Saturday outings as pre-arranged)

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

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2013/2014

President	Rob McCosker	46835371
Vice-presidents	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Jeff Campbell	
Secretary	Halina Kruger	46835206
Treasurer	Leslie Saunders	
Newsletter Editor	K & M. Carnell	46835268
Publicity Officer	Errol Walker	46812008
Librarian	Trish McCosker	46835371

The Club thanks the Queensland Country Credit Union for their donation that enabled us to buy a printer.

The Club acknowledges the support of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund in the purchase of a data projector.

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 walking, road or track
2. Road or track, gentle hills
3. Track, some hilly sections
4. Track, some steep sections
5. Cross country, easy open forest, gentle slopes
6. Track, steep sections common, with steps
7. Cross country, some hills, some thick undergrowth
8. Cross country, steep sections with scrambles over rocks, etc., and some thick undergrowth
9. Cross country, steep, hilly, rough, thick undergrowth
10. Mountain climbing, hard going, higher level of fitness or plenty of time required

Coming Up

Sunday 20th March: McIntyre State Forest with Peter Haselgrove
Wednesday 23rd March: SW Greenland with Jeff Campbell
23rd & 24th April: Camp-out at Yarraman with Rob McCosker. Please let Rob know if you will be attending.

**Deadline for next newsletter
11th April 2016**

Pre-Outing Report to McIntyre State Forest 20th March 2016

Leader: Peter Haselgrove

McIntyre State Forest is a smallish reserve situated in hilly country, NE of Terrica Station, alongside Spring Creek Road. The area is cypress/ ironbark /box woodland with a wattle understory.

Access is via an easy 4WD track, narrow in a few places so there is the possibility of branches brushing along vehicles.

Be ready to leave Weeroona Park by 9am. We can car pool here into 4WD's or at the entrance to the forest. If anyone does not want to go into Stanthorpe they can meet us at the entrance. But you must be there BEFORE 10am.

It takes about one hour from Stanthorpe to the entrance on good bitumen and good dirt roads. Morning tea will be just inside the entrance. This will be mostly a driving day with frequent stops to wander around particular areas. After lunch we'll finish our trip with an easy walk to the top of a hill on the southern boundary with views across the surrounding country. We return along the same track back to the entrance.

If you have a UHF radio it might be useful on the day.



**Stanthorpe Field Nats Outing report for 21st Feb. 2016
TENTERFIELD HISTORY & LANDSCAPES
attendance 26 including 3 local guides**

Leader - Errol Walker

The day dawned a little cloudy but other than a few spots of rain on the windscreen while driving along the Mt Lindsay Rd the rest of the day was clear and mild.

The first stop on the Mt Lindsay Rd was the site of the World War 2 tank traps which created much interest. (See further information below gleaned from the Internet.)

A quick stop was made at the memorial plaque to the pilots who died in the F111 plane crash in 1987. Morning tea was enjoyed at Market Square Park next to historic Delorine, a heritage listed house built in 1870. Here we met up with Kris & Margaret Carnell and visitor for the day Imogen Riley.

Two local men, Mr Barry Brooks and Mr Wayne Wilcox, then welcomed us to a locked bird habitat environmental area of approx. 2 acres some 20 minutes north west of Tenterfield. Mr Wilcox expressed pleasant surprise at the large numbers attending our club outing. He gave us a briefing on how the area was obtained from the government and showed us the irrigation system for the many labelled trees and experimental grasses planted to attract a variety of birds.

Noted bird photographers have often visited this area to capture bird breeding habits. An offer was made to our club for members to visit this area on a private basis for photography and study. (I can supply contact details)

We drove for another half an hour around the scenic Granite Drive with one brief stop to photograph a panorama of dramatic landscape before driving the top of Mt. Mackenzie. Here we had lunch with a view and the opportunity to photograph ground orchids around the picnic area. The view from Mt. Mackenzie



is truly spectacular with Mt. Norman and Wellington Rock clearly visible.



Chiloglottis sp

Mr Barry Brooks had invited us to explore a high ridge on and above his property south east of Tenterfield. He had made the 4WD track accessible to "shiny" 4WD's and the rough 20 minute drive to the top was the scenic highlight of the day. Barry had requested the company of Mr Neville Smith who used to work with the NSW Forestry Department. His knowledge and description of the local timbers and history bought the landscape alive. This

vantage point gave us a view across to Wellington Rock and down on to Bluff Rock which is a highway landmark south of Tenterfield.

It was hard to leave this beautiful location but afternoon tea was calling. We stopped to photograph ground orchids on the way down and then most of us accepted the invitation from Barry and his wife Karlyn to enjoy afternoon tea in the beautiful landscaped gardens of their property.

A big thank you to Barry Brooks for arranging the expert contacts and for all the time he spent over the last couple of months helping us put together an outing which should have had something for everyone.



Spiranthese sinensis

Thank You

I would like to thank Errol and Annette for the lovely day on Sunday. I can see that it took a lot of organising to fit this all into one day.

I particularly enjoyed the bird sanctuary. I was able to get ideas for my garden about attracting more birds. It was interesting to see that there was a mixture of native and non-native plants.

Finally, thank you to Barry and Karlyn Brooks. I was also able to get ideas for my garden and see how hard work and perseverance pays off. This was one of the most interesting gardens that I have seen.

Karyn van Tilburg

World War II Tank Traps

The World War II Tank Traps were believed at the time to be part of the 'Brisbane Line'. The road was, until the early 1950s, the New England Highway and the only all-weather road from Sydney to Brisbane. These tank traps were 1km north of a major training camp, the London Bridge Army Camp.

The site of Thunderbolt's Gully was chosen as the area either side could not be easily bypassed. The huge boulders on the hillside on the eastern side of the road were considered too much of an obstacle for the light Japanese tanks. The concrete retaining wall was to prevent them bypassing the holes left by the exploding mines in the road, which was then a narrow gravel one.

The three rows of wooden posts (1500mm in the ground - 900mm out) were to force the tanks to rise up, exposing their soft underbelly. The rockfall further from these posts was from rock blasted from higher up to make the passage more difficult. Drill holes can be seen in this fallen rock. The area, a forced funnelling of the Japanese expeditionary force, was a trap that would put them at a disadvantage, whilst well dug-in forces could hold them for some time.

The natural environment was part of the defences, and a 1km walking track has been built through the rockfall and down the gully to the Thunderbolt's Hideout track.

Meroglossa impressifrons penetrata



To date I have mostly been talking about native bees from the family *Apidae* but this month I want to move to another family called *Colletidae*. These bees are characterised as having a short tongue and generally speaking are unable to access nectar from deep tubular flowers. They can be found foraging on such flowers as Eucalyptus, Corymbia, Pea flowers, Xanthorrhoea, Banksia, Callistemon, Calytrix, Grevillea and of course many others. This family contains the largest number of bee species in Australia of over 900.

One bee from this family is one with the daunting name of *Meroglossa impressifrons penetrata* (unfortunately it doesn't have a common name). I have observed this bee doing something that the introduced honey bee has not yet worked out how to do. Of course the native bee has had around 100 million years to work it out. The trick works for Eucalypt flowers where the cap of the flower bud

(the operculum) falls off before the flower is revealed. My observation showed the bee using its mandibles to assist in the removal of the operculum from the bud of a *Eucalyptus inferor*, not a local tree but given to me by Jean Harslett and one which has a similar shape of bud to *Eucalyptus prava* which is a local tree. With some eucalypt flowers the operculum can separate from the base of the bud (dehisce) but remain on the stamens preventing access to the anthers which carry the pollen. The photo shows this bee with its mandibles under the operculum and successive photos revealed that it worked its way around the bud lifting first one side, and then another until the operculum fell off. The bee then had access to the pollen sometimes only until a honey bee chased it off. Other bee species have also been observed performing this same function.

As an aside it may be interesting to say that the word Eucalyptus was derived from the Greek words *Eu* = well and *Calyptos* = covered referring to the operculum of the flower bud. I believe this is a characteristic unique to the Eucalypt.

Marc Newman

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria st, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 24th February 2016**

Meeting opened: 7:45 pm

Attendance: 16 Apologies 1 as per attendance sheet

Minutes of the previous meeting:

L Saunders moved K Carnell seconded carried

Business arising from the minutes:

Apple and Grape display has been arranged.

Correspondence:

H Kruger moved that the correspondence be accepted J Campbell seconded

Financial Report:

L Saunders moved that the financial report be accepted

Outing Reports: 21st Feb Drive around Tenterfield E Walker

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Pre-outings: 20th March McIntyre State Forest Peter and Lynette Haselgrove

General Business:

R McCosker would like members that are going to the campout Yarraman NP 23-24th April weekend (ANZAC weekend) to please notify him.

From Murrumbidgee newsletter campout report on Friday 15Jan 16 at Griffith temperature was 45° and at Ropers Lookout the temperature was minus 2°. Hopefully we won't be seeing such a range on the Anzac weekend.

Next Meeting: 23rd March

Next Month's presentation: South West Greenland Jeff Campbell

Meeting closed: 8.02 pm

Presentation: Norway E Walker