



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	46811420
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

Friday to Monday 23rd – 26th Sept:

Camp-out at Torrington – Kris & Margaret Carnell

Wednesday 28th September: *Dinosaur Trail* with Kris Carnell

**Deadline for next newsletter
7th October**

**Please note early date as the outing
is a week early**

A Personal Tribute to Peter Kerr



The recent passing of Peter Kerr, long-time member of the Nats, has left many of us reeling. Being Warwick residents, Narelle Crawford, Peter and I have been on innumerable walks, though failing joints had seen our number of excursions diminish in recent years.

Peter's skills as a bushman left Narelle and I in awe at his ability to negotiate impenetrable rainforest. He always found his goal, with rarely any margin of error. Only once did we doubt his skill. We had scaled the two summits of Mt Double Top at the head of the Swanfels Valley, only to be confronted by a tangle of undergrowth, and no apparent route back to our car. Peter went ahead into the mire as Narelle and I gave each other worrying looks as we wondered if we would be sleeping in our own beds that night. I can remember Peter disappearing, his presence marked only by the thrashing of forest thwarting his ability to forge a path. He eventually backtracked, emerging with blood spots and his trusty pair of

secateurs in hand. It always amazed me how those secateurs could be whipped from somewhere like a gunslinger swinging his six shooter from a holster. After a few well-placed snips, the forest would capitulate and a new path would be forged through the forest. I can only imagine what National Parks' thoughts on that process would be! Anyway, we need not have doubted Peter's ability to find the way back. With the sun low in the sky, he guided us through trackless country to suddenly have the car located as despair was creeping upon me.

In addition to his exception skills of navigation, Peter could speak on a wide range of subjects. He was an avid reader who acquired an impressive knowledge on many aspects of the wilderness that he loved, and which defined his character.

The accompanying photo was taken when Peter and I did the Overland Track in Tasmania in 2010. After each person had had their shower, it was incumbent on them to pump fresh water into the

holding tank beneath the roof, as the water pressure to the shower was gravity fed. This cheesy grin on Peter's face as he manipulated the pump is one that I will now treasure.

I was born with a disability that has affected my breathing. The consequence of this is that I struggle to keep up with walkers scaling steep slopes. This never prevented Peter from inviting me on some tough walks. He accommodated my special needs and never once showed any annoyance or frustration at my apparent belligerence in maintaining the pace. It is testament to the character that was Peter Kerr.

In farewelling Peter, I will remember him for his wealth of knowledge, his exceptional bush skills, his friendship and most of all his integrity. I feel privileged to have been counted as one of his friends.
David Wilson



David Wilson and Kris Carnell being presented with Peter's stick by his sister Ann Donovan.

Several Nats members, including Joan Stevenson, a former member now living in Toowoomba, were able to attend Peter's funeral on 7th September. Our sympathy goes to his sister, Ann and her children. Ann presented the Nats club with Peter's walking stick, as a memento. We have yet to decide how it will be used.

Margaret Carnell



Nats members after Peter's funeral

Pre-Outing Report – Torrington Camp-out – 23rd – 26th September 2016

Leaders: Kris and Margaret Carnell
Phone (07)46835268

We will be camping at the Blatherarm Camping Area in the Torrington National Park. The turnoff to the camping area is 10 kilometres north of Torrington on the Silent Grove Road. There is a fee of \$6.00 per night per person. There is some water in a tank and the creek but we would suggest you bring your own drinking water. The road to the camping area is rough in parts but suitable for 2WD vehicles.

There are several ways to get to Torrington. If you have a conventional car or a caravan the best way is to go to Deepwater and turn onto the Stannum Road and follow the signs that say "Torrington". There are more picturesque routes via Pyes Creek Road, Woodside Road and Silent Grove Road, mainly dirt road. It takes approximately 2 hours to drive from Stanthorpe to Torrington.

Although the camp-out will start on Friday 23rd September, Saturday and Sunday will both have walks suitable for day visitors, which will start at 10.00am.

The Saturday walks are on *Glen Eden*. For this walk we will have to sign an indemnity form. Details of *Glen Eden* were in the last magazine. In the morning Aki and Margie will meet us and guide us on a walk through their property. In the afternoon we will look at the swamp and mound springs, provided there has not been too much rain. The swamp is full at the moment so you will get wet feet. Margie and Aki suggested gum boots, but I don't find them at all comfortable for walking. **Please bring extra shoes.** If it's too wet we will go on an alternative walk.

As Margie suffers from multiple allergies they have asked that people refrain from wearing perfume, after-shave, strongly scented soap and deodorants.



Old Mystery Face

On Sunday morning, we will go to Ugly Corner Falls named by the tin miners around 1900 who were not impressed by the solid rock faces at this "ugly corner" on Blather Creek. There should be a good flow of water over the falls. The walk is 3km return. In the afternoon we will go on the Mystery Face walk which is a 2.6km loop. There should be a variety of wildflowers in bloom at this time of year.

Both day's walks will start at 10.00am and finish in time for day visitors to return home in reasonable time. If you have any queries, please ring on 46835268 or email oranakm@bigpond.com.

Outing Report to Bill Goebel's house 21st August 2016



It was a spectacular day for our outing, following the heavy frost in the early morning, the weather was clear and mild - just the sort of day to confirm our reasons for living in Stanthorpe. After the usual departure from Weeroona park we called in to the Girraween N P Office to check that the gate was unlocked and the Ranger on duty kindly offered to go ahead to make sure. We headed on to Bill's house after first checking for Michael, who was to meet us there. At the house we had morning tea then started up the fire trail but still no Michael.

The history of the National Park goes back to 1930 when the Bald Rock Creek N P was acquired from vacant Crown Land following several submissions and much lobbying from Dr Spencer Roberts. Dr Roberts, a GP, had seen beautiful Lyrebird feathers mounted in his patients' homes and with the help of local naturalist Alec Gemmel, Jean Harslett's father, came to the area looking for feathers. He became interested also in the common wombats in

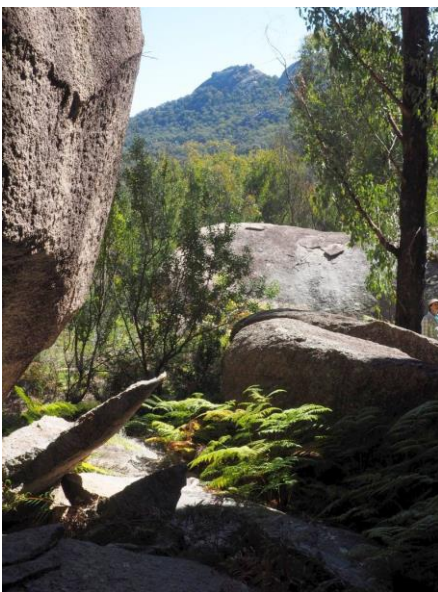


the area and was convinced that the preservation of their habitat was vital for the survival of these two animals. A separate area, the Castle Rock N P was acquired in 1932 and the two were known as the Wyberba National Park until 1966 when the purchase of Napier Gunn's property joined the two and it was named Girraween N P. Bill grew up on the property in a small house not far from the one he built, so Bill's involvement with the N P began at an early age. He used his truck to ferry campers from the Railway station at Wallangarra to the park as well as taking groups of local children, myself included, to places such as Bald Rock and the Undercliff Falls. Bill began employment at Girraween a couple of days after the first Park Ranger, Tom Ryan, arrived on 14th February 1966. Bill worked at the Park until his retirement and then continued with volunteer work for many years. It was his wish that his property be handed over to the National Park when he passed away, and that his remains be interred at a spot he had chosen on his former property. We visited Bill's grave and felt privileged to do so and pass on our respects.



Jewel Beetle on *A. adunca*

We continued along the fire trail which climbed steadily, and steep at times, until we reached the small creek flowing over a granite shelf. The water was quite turbid, no doubt due to the activity of feral pigs wallowing in the swamps upstream, but we saw several tadpoles and frogs were calling around the pools. The trail continued to the timber and stone gates on Pyramid Road which were built by Ken Taylor for the entrance to his proposed "Yooralla" Resort which never came to fruition and the land was purchased for the National Park. We retraced our steps to the creek and found a suitable spot for lunch. We were not there long before Michael arrived, saying he had walked along two other fire trails before finding us. That made a total of 12 members on the outing.



After lunch we headed back along the track for some distance then clambered off to the right to investigate the boulder field on the ridge to the east. As well as the natural sculptures of the giant tors, we found some



Possum's Nest

interesting 'caves' and what looked like a possum nest quite high in the crack between two rocks where I would have expected to see a Lyrebirds nest. We made our way back down to the track and after reaching the clearing the suggestion was made to explore the boulders on the ridge to the south, but only four people took up the challenge while the rest returned to the cars. The climb proved to be well worth the effort as we saw towering

rock formations above deep ferny chasms. We continued to the next gully, and were surprised to find running water, then made our way back to the cars for a 3.30pm smoko.

Rob McCosker

Plant List

Acacia adunca, *A. irrorata* var. *irrorata*, *A. neriifolia*, *A. ruppii*, *A. ulicifolia* var. *ulicifolia*, *A. venulosa*, *Notelaea linearis*, *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Olearia ramosissima*, *Leucopogon melaleucoides*, *Mirbelia speciosa*, *Hovea linearis*, *H. purpurea*, *Choretrum candollei*.



Blue Mountain Daisy with beetles

Bird List

Scarlet Robin, Willie Wagtail, Grey Shrike-thrush, Spotted Pardalote, Grey Butcherbird, White-throated Treecreeper, Kookaburra, Grey Fantail, Red-browed Finch.

Through the Kitchen Window



We have been entertained over the last few weeks by the birds in our garden. We have a pair of superb blue wrens who are called Scruffy and Mrs Scruffy. When they first appeared together Scruffy was very scruffy, as you can see from the picture, with very little colour showing and feathers in all directions. Day by day his appearance improved until he now has his full plumage. He spent most of his time chasing Mrs Scruffy who would hop away mostly, then sit beside him and preen him. Kris reckoned she was a flirt. They are still

behaving in much the same way except that this morning Mrs Scruffy landed on Mr Scruffy's back and knocked him off his perch. I hope they manage to do the right thing and raise a family.

As well as the blue wrens we have a pair of white-browed scrub wrens who are very tame. They come in the front door if you leave the screen open a few inches and make themselves at home. They seem to be able to find their way out again, unlike most other birds. This morning they were investigating a double-bar's nest from last year with a view to recycling and chasing Scruffy when he flew against the window.

There is a flock of double-barred finches which comes every day to the bird bath and to feed in the grass, as well as eastern spinebills, yellow-faced honeyeaters and white-eared honeyeaters. The red wattle birds are enjoying a hakea with red flowers. A few other honeyeaters come from time to time, including the white-naped.

When it comes to parrots we have crimson rosellas, eastern rosellas and galahs.

A pretty-faced wallaby came close to the house the other day to feed on the clover growing in the "lawn". When we were working in the garden recently a pretty-faced wallaby with a joey in her pouch was browsing on the other side of the garden bed, quite unconcerned by our presence.

Margaret Carnell

Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.

Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 24th August 2016

Meeting opened: 7:35pm

Attendance: 6 Apologies 10 as per attendance sheet

Minutes of the previous meeting:

L Saunders moved K Carnell seconded carried

Business arising from the minutes: Nil

Correspondence:

H Kruger moved that the Correspondence accepted L Saunders seconded carried

Financial Report:

L Saunders moved that the financial report be accepted T McCosker seconded

Outing Reports:

R McCosker "Yooralla" Girraween National Park

Pre-outings:

K & M Carnell Campout Torrington -

Please inform K Carnell if attending either camping or day tripping. Camping fee \$6 PP

General Business:

Discussed GBLC "health check" Questionnaire

Reminder Subs are due now.

Next Meeting: 28th September

Next Month's Presentation: K & M Carnell - *Dinosaur Trail*

Meeting closed: 8:00pm

Presentation: R McCosker – Part of the Diamantina Trip taken in June 2016

Program 2016/2017

Month	Sunday Outing	Monthly Talk	Campout
October	16 th Amiens Forest with RWC Kris & Margaret Carnell	26 th Bird Photos Gloria Lancaster-Kelly	
November	20 th Mt Mitchell M.Mueller	23 rd Incredible Iceland David Wilson	
December	11 th Christmas Breakup Kris & Margaret Carnell		
February	Campout	22 nd ANN 2016 West Australia Jeff & Glynis	19 th 20 th Washpool N P J. Wylie
March	19 th Billy Goat Hill R. McCosker	22 nd Southern Highlands K.Carnell	
April	23 rd Mt Cordeaux L. Saunders	26 th Kokoda Trail L. Saunders	
May	21 st Durakai S F J.Wylie & P&L Hazelgrove	24 th Wild Scotland David Wilson	
June	25 th Boonah Area H.Kruger	28 th Around the World in 106 days E. Walker	
July	23 rd Swanfells K.Van Tilberg	26 th AGM Remember Last Year	
August	Campout	23 rd Iceland Jeff & Glynis	18-20 th Bunjalung NP Jeff & Glynis
September	24 th Goebel's R.McCosker	27 th Diamantina N P R.McCosker	