



The Granite Belt Naturalist



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Web site <https://mysd.com.au/fieldnats/>

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 - 2017/2018

President	Jeff Campbell	46811420
Vice-presidents	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Halina Kruger	0427835206
Secretary	Rob McCosker	46835371
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.

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 22nd July: Amiens State Forest
with Jeanie Wylie

Wednesday 25th July: *Remember Last
Year* followed by supper

**Deadline for next newsletter
9th August 2018**

**A.G.M. – Remember Last Year
Wednesday 26th July
Please bring a plate of food to share.**

Pre-outing Report -Amiens State Forest – 25th July 2018

Leader: Jeanie Wylie

We will leave Weeroona Park, Stanthorpe at 9.00am and travel to the State Forest. We will pass Amiens State School at approximately 9.15am if anyone wants to join us there. When we arrive we will have morning tea at the cars then carry lunch on the walk. We will park on a State Forest track, only about 300metres from the road, so no rough driving.

The walk is along various tracks and roads, mostly easy going with one steep (downwards) section over rock. There can be some gravel here that is easy to slide on.

The plan is to visit two old home sites (some remains at both). The walk is about 8 kilometres. People can drop off at several points and we can pick them up on a loop walk. The tracks are mostly in bush, not pine trees, so maybe some flowers will be out. There are some good views and we can have lunch at one of those high points.

I will do a pre-outing close to the trip to ensure the area has not been burnt.



Nats making their way through
Bolivia wattle on Bluff Rock



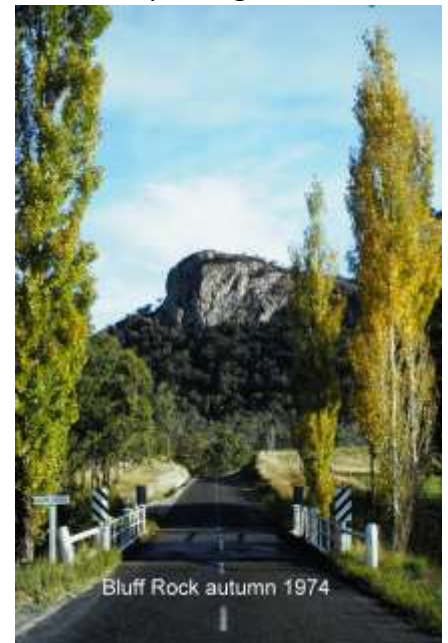
Bluff Rock from the carpark

Outing Report - Bluff Rock 24th June 2018

The perfect winter weather attracted 16 people to attend the outing to Bluff Rock. We left Weeroona Park at about 9.00am in four vehicles and arranged to pick up our guide for the day, Peter Reid, in Tenterfield before continuing to the Bluff Rock Rest Stop for morning tea. While we were there Peter

gave an outline of the area's history including the story of the massacre of members of the local aboriginal tribe by the station hands from a nearby station in retaliation for the spearing of a shepherd. A plaque has been placed at the rest stop detailing accounts of the massacre and there is also a notice board with other historical information about the area.

We drove down the highway a little and turned right into Bluff Creek Road then turned off after crossing the old railway track and drove across the paddock to stop near the base of the rock. As we set off up the hill we passed a well decomposed carcass of a fox which probably died from 1080 poison. There were some Caley's ironbark trees on this northern slope and a little further on as we headed east along the granite slopes, we came into the Bolivia wattle which seems to have taken over the vegetation on the top of the rock. On a previous trip to Bolivia National Park we had seen these wattles looking luxurious with their golden blossoms but on this trip they looked very dry with no flowers to be seen. The leaves (phyllodes) are a dull grey because they are covered with hairs



Peter flying his drone

similar to the Wyberba wattle, but where the leaves drop from the flattened stem a sharp spike is left, almost like a thorn, which drew blood on a few of us as we made our way through them. While we were having lunch Peter entertained us with a surprise demonstration of his drone which he pulled out of his backpack and after seeing the video he took, it's no wonder drones are so popular.

After returning to the cars we went back to the highway and headed further south a few kilometres to Cottesbrook Road not far past the Bluff River bridge. Peter then guided us past a farm house and through paddocks to the railway bridge across the river. This bridge is similar to the one at Sunnyside next to the highway, but much longer and in much better condition, and we were able to walk across it to inspect its construction and marvel at the effort required when it was built so long ago. Sadly with no maintenance it will quickly deteriorate also.

I managed to find the report from our previous Nats trip to Bluff Rock and was surprised to find that I was the leader on that trip also. It was held on the 19th September 1992 and attracted 34 people and also had fine weather. Interestingly several members walked to the top of the rocky hill to the south before going to the top of Bluff Rock where people had an extended lunch hour enjoying the scenery. It was dry at that time also however about a dozen wildflowers were seen. On our trip this month we saw no wildflowers and few birds.

I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to Peter Reid for taking us on this outing.

Rob McCosker



Cottesbrook Bridge



Nats walking on top of Cottesbrook bridge



Sunnyside Bridge

As you can see from these photos the Cottesbrook Bridge is in better condition than the Sunnyside one. The photos don't show how long the Cottesbrook Bridge is but you can see that it has long poles on top of the brick pillars.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 27th June 2018**

Meeting opened: 7.35pm

Attendance: 10, Apologies 5 as per attendance sheet

Minutes of the previous meeting:

confirmed by Lesley Saunders seconded by Margaret Carnell Carried

Business arising from the minutes: nil

Correspondence: as per folder

moved Rob McCosker seconded Gunter Maywald Carried

Financial Report: No transactions so Balance \$1317.87 as of last meeting, moved financial report be accepted Lesley Saunders, seconded Trish McCosker Carried

Outing Reports: Rob McCosker reported that 17 people attended the outing to Bluff Rock and the Bluff River railway bridge south of Tenterfield.

Pre-outings: Amiens/Passchendaele Forest area with Jeanie Wylie leaving from Weeroona Park at 9.00am.

General Business: Granite Borders Landcare Inc membership overdue \$60.00 It was moved by Lynette Hazelgrove and seconded by Gunter Maywald that we continue GBLC group membership for another 12 months Carried

Motion required for club subscription annual fee Single \$20.00 Family \$30.00

It was moved by Rob McCosker and seconded by Trish McCosker that fees remain the same Carried

Specimens: Two aerial views of Bluff Rock provided by Peter Reid.

Egg sacs from the Magnificent spider found by Trish, and a picture of the spider with information about it.

Next Meeting: 25th July Annual Meeting - Remember Last Year – Bring a plate to share for supper

Meeting closed: 7.55pm

Presentation: Rob and Trish presented pictures of their spectacular walk on the Larapinta Trail in the Macdonnell Ranges NT

Magnificent Spider

On the following page is a report about the magnificent spider that was supplied by Dore McCosker and printed in the newsletter in 1990. The spider is also known as the bolas spider because of the way it catches its prey. The name has been changed from *Dicrostichus magnificus* to *Ordgarius magnificus*. Coincidentally I was editor at that time as well. - Margaret

MAGNIFICENT SPIDER

At our August meeting Dore McCosker brought along an excellent specimen of the spider and egg sacs of the Magnificent Spider. The following information and illustrations come from the Australian Wonder Book of Knowledge.

"The magnificent spider (*Dicrostichus magnificus*), also called "The queen of spinners" has elaborated on the methods employed by the death's head spider. The lure is apparently similar, and the prey are again moths. The spider, how-ever, literally angles for her prey. Sluggish by day, resting upon some exposed branch, the spider fisher-woman, for it is always a female, awaits the coming of dusk. With the darkness or by the light of the moon, she spins a short thread tipped with a droplet about the size of a pin's head of highly adhesive matter; this she dangles from the foot of one of her second pair of legs. Again the moth, mysteriously drawn to its doom, appears and circles the waiting spider. But, now there is no placid waiting by the spider for its prey to enter her embrace. She becomes galvanised into activity, and whirls the droplet-tipped thread so rapidly that it becomes an indistinct blur. The droplet hits the moth, which immediately becomes fast, and is hauled in and bitten by the successful angler. If the spider is hungry, the captive is promptly eaten; or it may be suspended in a neat wrapping from some convenient twig until required. In any case, another line is prepared and fishing continues, for the night is short, and moths of the kind preferred are not always on the wing.

The spider truly deserves the name of 'magnificent' for she is milky-white in colour with two raised bosses of bright yellow or pale orange upon her abdomen, while her cephalothorax bears a coronet of orange. Her mate is an almost microscopic atom of life; he has only recently been discovered.



The Magnificent Spider prepares to whirl her line to capture an unsuspecting victim, drawn within range by some strange, invisible power.

It is not only as an angler that the magnificent spider deserves fame, but also for the pre-natal care of her young. Her egg-sacs, and there may be a bunch of up to a dozen of them, are spindle shaped and woven of a pale creamy-buff silk, which darkens with age and exposure to the weather. The external wrapping is very densely woven and has an almost papery texture. This is practically waterproof, and forms an all-weather covering. On opening the sac, the spindle is found to be filled with a soft mass of fluffy, whitish or creamy silk, which forms an insulated eiderdown for the rounded receptacle lying in its centre and containing the eggs. The whole is an extremely intricate piece of weaving, and it is for this that she has gained the title of "Queen of Spinners". The pale spiderlings emerge through holes cut in the outer silken casing."

Subscriptions and Program for 2018/19.

Subscriptions are due for the next 12 months from the end of June,

Subscriptions for 2018-2019 : Family \$30.00 – Single \$20.00

Please complete your correct name and address details below and bring or send to the Treasurer

Name (including preferred title please)

Postal Address:

Post-code **State**..... **Payment made \$**.....

Circle payment method please: **CASH** **CHEQUE** **DIRECT DEBIT**

If paying by cash at a meeting please put your money in an envelope with your name on the **outside** to make it easier for the Treasurer.

PAYMENT METHODS

1. **Present with your subs.** to the meeting **in an envelope** with your name on the outside.
2. **Post to:** Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, STANTHORPE Q 4380.
3. **By Direct Debit** to Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. BSB 064-431 Acc. 00902063

I would like to receive my magazine by **POST** **EMAIL** (please circle)

As quite a few of our members have Email we would like to have your email address if you are agreeable. Sometimes it is convenient to contact as many members as possible about a change in arrangements at short notice, and this can be a convenient way to do it.

Email address:-

The monthly newsletter is distributed electronically by email and by post.

It is also posted on the website in the Documents folder.

Names and addresses are only used for posting the magazine and are not passed on to anyone else.

The committee once again asks for your assistance to provide a wide range of outing activities and meeting programs for the coming twelve months.

Please jot down your suggestions below, and indicate if you would be prepared to lead an outing or provide a meeting program. All suggestions will be considered at a special committee meeting to be held shortly after the AGM.

Name: Outing: (Place or area, duration, time of year)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Campout: (Place, duration and dates)

Meeting subject: (Title and brief description)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Other comments and suggestions:

Thank you