



# *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 – 2017/2018**

President	Jeff Campbell	46811420
Vice-presidents	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Gunther Maywald	
Secretary	Rob McCosker	46835371
Treasurer		
Newsletter Editor	K & M. Carnell	46835268
Publicity Officer	Jeff Campbell	46812008
Librarian	Laura Maywald	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 23<sup>rd</sup> September: "Mt Patti"  
with Holly Patti

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September: Central  
Australia – Rob and Trish McCosker

**Deadline for next newsletter  
10<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

**Pre outing report "Mt Patti" 23rd September 2018**

**Leader: Holly Patti 0421288216**

We will meet at Weerona Park at 9am and then drive to our property "Mt Patti" a short 5 minute trip away (plenty of parking). Our property is 21 acres and backs on to the Mt Banca Conservation Reserve. Mt Banca, which we have nicknamed "Mt Patti" is I estimate to be about 915 metres above sea level, and about 100 metres higher than the Stanthorpe township.

Carry morning tea and lunch, and from the cars we will walk a short distance up a grassy slope to the saddle of the Mt Banca Ridge. At this time last year this area was very wet due to short amount of sun received here, and there were masses of green hood orchids (*Pteryostylis nutans* and *curta*). I walk this track most weekends and it is currently very, very dry with no sign of the orchids yet.

From the saddle we will continue up a short, steep, rough track of rocks, loose leaf litter and some slabs. You may like to bring hiking poles if you need. On the way to the summit there is an open slab with views to the south west. There are several fig trees growing on rocks around this area. There are limited views from the actual summit but a short walk to the east takes us to a small rock slab with a spectacular view over the town. This would be a lovely place for morning tea. The walk to here from the cars is only around 25 minutes but I expect us to arrive there about 10:30 after sightseeing on the way up. There is a little track leading to the underside of the lookout rock which shows just how much of the lookout slab is actually precariously overhanging. I have several times seen a Spotted Quail Thrush in this area.

We will return to the saddle via the same track with options of exploring the boulders on the way down. There are several *Dockrillia linguiformis* (Tongue Orchid) on the rocks on Mt Patti, which hopefully will be in flower. From the saddle we can visit the ridge to the south west. There is no made track but it is a short distance with good views. Long pants/gaiters and gloves would be handy as it can be scrubby and there is a fair bit of prickly blackthorn. This would be a suitable place for lunch. I visited this area late last year and towards the edge of the ridge there was a large natural bee hive in an old tree.

Return will be back to the saddle then a short walk through open forest to the cars. I have often seen Wonga Pigeon and Rose Robin in this area. Currently the wattle and snowbush is coming into flower and I have seen lots of *Hovea graniticola*. Hopefully we receive some rain before the walk and see a lot more wildflowers and orchids.

I estimate this walk to be a grade 8, with the overall distance travelled appropriately 2.5 kms in total.

**Outing Report Peak to Creek 19<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

Seven Members took part in the Peak to Creek outing on August 19<sup>th</sup>. The day was clear, cool and very windy. We travelled to the northern end of Mount Norman via Sugarloaf Road and Breens Lane. About half way along Breens Lane we stopped on the top of a hill to view a flood mitigation gauge. After some facetious remarks about making arks, we agreed that it was a rain gauge but where the information is transmitted to it didn't say. Later information is that the data is fed into the national weather monitoring and natural disaster warning system. Locally the system will increase the warning time for residents in flood prone areas.



View of Mt Norman



Paling Yard Creek

A short distance along Mount Norman Road we left Jeff's vehicle at the northern access point of the walking track and continued along to our morning tea spot at Paling Yard Creek. We found a sunny sheltered area near the creek and noticed that there were quite a number of birds around and it would be a good spot to go to just bird watch. We then drove along Mt Norman Road to the day use area to start our walk.

The peak to creek walk is a pleasant walk along a fire trail that is a designated shared bike/walking track. The first section of the walk is along the Mt Norman track and then it veers off to the right. For most of the walk we were sheltered from the strong wind by the trees and there were enough open areas to get good views of Mt Norman and the Eye of the Needle. The wattle was blooming well with 4 or 5 different species flowering. There wasn't much else out in the way of wildflowers as the drought is taking its toll. Our lunch spot was another sheltered spot in the sun so very pleasant.

The walk comes out into flatter country not long before a junction of two tracks. At this point it was decided that the car drivers would walk to where we had left Jeff's vehicle and Rob would lead the rest of the members back to our morning tea spot. After a couple of false starts both lots got on the right tracks. The car drivers then went in Jeff's vehicle to the Mt Norman day use area to pick up the other vehicles and returned to Paling Yard Creek to meet up and have another cuppa. We then returned to Stanthorpe our own way.



Acacia latisepala

As we were unable to do a pre outing because of a controlled burn, I wasn't sure how long the walk was. It turned out longer than I thought at a bit over 8 km. Also if anyone is thinking of doing the walk I would suggest you either finish at the paling Yard Creek entrance or link up with the Underground Creek track to finish on Pyramids Road as both would be more picturesque than the alternative route.

*Kris Carnell*

### Birds etc from Peak to Creek outing

Firetail finch, Spotted Pardalote, Dusky Woodswallow, Welcome Swallow, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, White-naped Honeyeater, Grey Shrike-thrush, Superb Fairy-wren, White-browed Scrubwren, Wedgetail Eagle, Kookaburra, Eastern Rosella, Crimson Rosella, Red Wattlebird, Willy Wagtail, Grey Fantail, Eastern Spinebill, Yellow robin, Treecreeper, New Holland Honeyeater, White Winged Chough, Yellow Tailed Cockatoo, Currawong, Magpie.

Eastern kangaroos, Red-necked wallabies, 10 feral pigs, Red-bellied black snake.

The Mistletoes we saw near Mt Norman were Drooping Mistletoe *Amyema pendula* which was being hyperparasitised by Golden Mistletoe *Notothixos subaureus*.

### What Scat is That?



When Kris was pruning the roses he came upon this scat hanging on a twig. The twig was through the circle on the right of the scat. It has fur in it and is shiny black. We looked in *Scats, Tracks and Other Traces* by Barbara Triggs and the closest we could see was a Brush-tailed Phascogale but we thought the scat might be too long. It is about 6mm in diameter.

Does anyone have any idea what animal made it?

### Honeyeaters at Orana

This year for the first time we have had a flock of brown-headed honeyeaters coming to our bird bath. They are far too timid to get a photo although one morning when they didn't realize I was there I was able to watch them for some minutes. Of course I didn't have the camera with me. They were trilling softly, something like superb fairy wrens but lower pitched. As they trilled they raised the feathers on their heads. The bird books don't mention trilling. They say they chirp or go breet-breet but these were definitely trilling. I'm thinking they have come because of the dry weather.

At the same time there were three silvereyes drinking and we have the regular yellow-faced honeyeaters, white-eared honeyeaters, eastern spinebills and red wattle birds. As well there have been white-naped honeyeaters which come from time to time. I thought they were usually here a bit later in the year but I'm not sure.

*Margaret Carnell*

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

**Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2018**

**Meeting opened:** 7.36pm

**Attendance:** 16 Apologies 1 as per attendance sheet

**Minutes of the previous meeting:**

confirmed by R McCosker seconded by T McCosker Carried

**Business arising from the minutes:** nil

**Correspondence:** as per folder

moved R McCosker seconded G Maywald Carried

**Financial Report:** nil

**Outing Reports:** Kris Carnell reported that in spite of the dire weather warnings 7 members enjoyed the 8km walk from the Mt Norman carpark to Mt Norman Road with Wallangarra wattle giving a nice display on the mountain slopes.

**Pre-outings:** Holly Patti is leading the next outing to Mt Banca leaving Weeroona Park at 9.00am

**General Business:** Ian Milinivitch advised that the Rare Wildflower Consortium will be launching their Stanthorpe Flora Book at Jeanette Davis's property 312 Sundown Road Ballandean on 15<sup>th</sup> September and Field Nats are welcome to attend. Further info on the RWC website.

Ian also advised that due to the drought the Wildflower walk planned for Foxbar Falls, Amiens has been cancelled.

Members sightings – Ian Milinivitch saw a road kill Quoll on Kingston Road

- Peter Haselgrove had a mangled Kookaburra in his garage which he took away but it was inexplicably back the next day.

- Margaret Carnell saw Brown-headed Honeyeaters at their place for the first time.

**Specimens:** Kris had a map from Girraween NP showing the Creek to Peak track.

Jeff showed the tail feathers of a Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo and Superb Lyrebird.

Graham had the front foot, presumably from a wallaby, found on the last outing.

**Next Meeting:** 26<sup>th</sup> September Rob and Trish McCosker will present Central Australia

**Meeting closed:** 7.55pm

**Presentation:** Kris and Margaret Carnell showed pictures from their recent trip to the Flinders Ranges.