



# *The Granite Belt Naturalist*



**Mail Address:** Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, Stanthorpe Qld. 4380  
**fieldnats@granitenet.com.au**

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 - 2019/2020**

President	Jeff Campbell	46811420
Vice-presidents	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Peter Haselgrove	46837255
Secretary	Rob McCosker	46835371
Treasurer	Gunter Maywald	46810674
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	46835268
Publicity Officer	Jeff Campbell	46812008
Librarian	Laura Maywald	46810674

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 19<sup>th</sup> July:** To Leslie Dam and Back via the Back Roads with Kris & Margaret Carnell

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July:** AGM & *Remember Last Year* in the Small Hall at the Uniting Church, 113 High St. Stanthorpe. **No Supper**

**Deadline for next newsletter  
7<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

**Pre-Outing Report – 19<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – Leslie Dam and Back by the Back Roads**

**Leaders: Kris & Margaret Carnell**



Iron Pot Creek

We will meet as usual at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to Dalveen via Old Warwick Road, then turn into Sorrento Road. A fair bit of the road is gravel, narrow in parts but not rutted. We will travel along Sorrento Road until we meet Rabbit Fence Road and go through the gate onto Palgrove Road. From Dalveen to here you can see the change from Granite to Traprock and back to Granite and notice the change in vegetation. In one place there were a lot of Angophoras and then at Palgrove stands of Iron Bark and Spotted Gum.

A short distance down Granite Hills Road we come to Iron Pot Creek where we will stop for smoko. It is a lovely spot at the crossing and we watched a family of Pacific Black Ducks and a Willie Wagtail as we had our cuppa on the pre-outing. There were also other bird calls.

After smoke we travel to the top end of Leslie Dam where we cross Sandy Creek, then turn into the reserve where we will explore the creek and its environs. As we drove into the reserve we disturbed a Wedge-tailed Eagle. At 12.00 to 12.30 we will leave the reserve to go to the picnic area at Leslie Dam where there are toilets. We will have lunch and have a look around before heading for home.

We will go into Warwick and turn onto the New England Highway at the lights. The return journey to Dalveen will be via Connolly Dam Road, Blacks Road (or Blakes Road) and the Old Stanthorpe Road. On the pre-outing we saw 17 bird species and heard a few more.

A couple of things to be aware of: There is to be no car-pooling. Bring your own sanitiser and maintain social distancing. Bring a chair so we can spread out. There are toilets at Dalveen and Leslie Dam.



### Outing Report – June

*The June outing to Blue Mountain was postponed because of inclement weather. It will take place later in the year.*

#### Tree Pear Problems



Tree Pear

Many years ago an Italian neighbour of ours planted some tree pear for domestic use. We think they were a type of Velvet Pear. It is not the same tree pear that is beside the road in the Braeside area, having a larger fruit of a different colour. There were many instances of these tree pears being planted in the district including in the town area. The fruit is considered a delicacy and I can tell you from experience that chilled and eaten with ice cream they are delicious.

When the neighbouring property was sold the new owner didn't manage the tree pears in the same way. Unfortunately one year there was a tremendous crop of fruit which wasn't harvested. The crows and currawongs had a field day and seed was spread into the bush. When we sold a small block of land in 2008 I spent some time digging out small plants. There were some plants that came up on the home block. In most cases the cactoblastis grub kept them in check but in some cases the tree pear got away. It appears as though the grubs damage the tree pear but unlike the common prickly pear all the tree pear plants aren't killed.

In May I decided that it was time to make a determined effort to get rid of as many plants as possible. About 5 car trailer loads were taken to the Stanthorpe tip for disposal. I have no doubt that there are more plants yet to be discovered. Even yesterday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, I found a plant about half a metre high that was growing in amongst an exocarpus bush. It is only 100 metres or so from the house and destined for the fire this afternoon. We must have walked past it scores of times without noticing it. Large plants were broken down to manageable bits with an axe. All except two plants were completely removed. Those two were growing amongst rocks and were in danger of breaking off when I tried to pull them out with the tractor. I have poisoned their stumps with Tordon so we'll see what happens next. I tried cutting a stump up with a chainsaw and on the third cut ran the chain off the bar wrecking the chain, so only one cut before removing the bar to clean. The fibrous pith of the stump combined with grit and the chain oil seems to cause the problem.



Carrying pear on a garden fork

It's been an interesting exercise and a timely reminder that I shouldn't have put off removing a feral weed.

Kris Carnell

**Right:** Damage from cactoblastus  
**Far Right:** Cactoblastus caterpillars





# Spottings



**Above:** At the beginning of June Kris went outside early in the morning and found this bat on the ground, breathing but not moving. As we approached it moved its ears to try to locate us I guess. We picked it up and put it on a timber rack in the shed so it would be safe. Several hours later when we went to check on it , it was nowhere to be found. We think it was stunned and recovered. Unfortunately the photo of its face was out of focus.

**Below:** Very large witchetty grubs in a hickory wattle root at *Orana*.







**Above:** Fan-tailed Cuckoo  
There were two of these calling in the back yard at the beginning of June

**Right:** Longicorne Beetle  
**Below:** Red-wattle Bird feeding in red hot pokers



Verraux Tree Frog – found in a stack of outdoor chairs.

