

FEBRUARY 1999  
Vol 306



# THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



Monthly Newsletter of the  
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club

## 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.

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Meetings: 4th Wednesday of each Month at QCWA Rooms at 8.00pm.  
Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each Month.  
Subscriptions: Single \$8.00 Family \$15.00 per annum July to June.  
Rent : Donation per family per meeting.  
Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc., P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe Q  
4380.



## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 1998 - 99

President	Roger Logan	07 46 812493
Vice-Presidents	Desley McDonagh	07 46 813074
	Millie Marsden	07 46 811593
Secretary	Liz Bourne	07 46 836374
Treasurer	Julia Brown	07 46 814540
Newsletter Editor	Robin McCosker	07 46 835371
Magazine Committee	Wendy & Neil Donges, Julie Beddow	
Publicity Officer	Patience James	07 46 811853
Learning For Pleasure	Mary Walters	07 46 835306
Librarian	Trish McCosker	07 46 835371
Management Committee	President , Vice-Presidents , Secretary , Treasurer	

## COMING UP

Next Outing February 21<sup>st</sup> " Boston Cliffs " Liston Leader - Irma Rickard - meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am or CWA Park at Liston at 9.30am.

Next Meeting February 24<sup>th</sup> Slide Program - South-West Queensland - by Millie Marsden. 8.00pm at the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe.

## DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

9th March 1999

Send contributions to The Newsletter Editor, P O Box 24, Severnlea Q4352 or leave with Mrs Dore McCosker, 58 Railway St., Stanthorpe.

## 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.



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC.**  
**held in Q.C.W.A. Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on 25th November, 1998**

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 8.07pm with Vice President, Millie Marsden, welcoming members and visitors, including both Peter Zandbergs and Lincoln McPhee. She also passed on the apologies of the President, Roger Logan, who was in hospital.

**Attendance:** There were 18 present at the meeting and 8 apologies as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 28th October, 1998 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Kris Carnell, seconded by Errol Walker. Carried.

**Correspondence:**

- Inwards:**
1. Information on Little Hollow and Bimbimbi - host farm SW of Chinchilla
  2. Stanthorpe Shire Council - invitation to Christmas function
  3. Dept. of Environment and Heritage - grants to conservation organisations
  4. Samson Total Technology - invoices for \$21.47 and \$22.22
  5. Hewan Gibson, David Wilson, Frank Wilkinson - membership renewal
  6. Euro-Asia Legends Hotel - conference facilities
  7. Border Rivers Catchment Management Association newsletter
  8. Qld. Naturalists Club - *QNC News*, Nov/Dec '98
  9. Asia Pacific Incentives & Meeting Expo - information
  10. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint* - Nov/Dec '98
  11. Who's Who in Business in Australia - invitation to purchase
  12. Copyright Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd. - invitation to purchase copies of Vol. 4 of Keith Williams' *Native Plants of Queensland*
  13. Stanthorpe Shire Council - call for nominations for Australia Day awards
  14. Dept of Environment and Heritage - Annual Report of Env. Protection Act
  15. interNationalpark Tours - trips for 1999
  16. Chinchilla Field Naturalist Club - *Urimbirra*

**Outwards:**

1. Community service announcements for outing and meeting

This correspondence was received on the motion of Desley McDonagh, seconded by Patience James. Carried.

**Business Arising from the Correspondence:**

1. "Native Plants of Queensland"

Millie suggested that it would be a good idea if the club purchased a copy of Keith Williams' book for the club library so that it could be taken on outings and be available for borrowing by members who may not be able to afford to purchase a copy themselves. This was agreed to on the motion of Kris Carnell, seconded by Vern Sullivan. Carried.

2. Stanthorpe Shire Council Christmas function

It was agreed that Roger Logan and Liz Bourne would represent the club at this function.

**Financial Statement for the period 28/10/98 to 25/11/98:**

Balance as at 28/10/98 \$ 861.72

Receipts:

Subscriptions	115.00	
Room rent collection	<u>10.80</u>	
	<u>125.80</u>	<u>125.80</u>
		<u>\$ 987.52</u>

Expenditure:

Room rent	10.00	
Magazine postage	37.00	
Govt. tax (Nov)	<u>.90</u>	
	<u>47.90</u>	<u>47.90</u>
		<u>\$ 939.62</u>

Balance as at 25/11/98 is \$ 939.62

Accounts for payment:

Room rent	10.00
Magazine postage	37.00
Samson Total Technology	43.65
Julia Brown (receipt books)	3.20

### Outing Report:

Kris Carnell reported on the trip he led to the Tooloom area on the 22nd November which was attended by 19 members.

### Specimens:

1. Kris Carnell had a map of the forestry areas of north-eastern New South Wales.
2. Brian McDonagh brought in an orchid, *Cymbidium canaliculatum*, that he had found on his property and transplanted. It had had 18 blooms on the one plant this year.
3. Margaret Carnell had an unidentified vine.
4. Liz Bourne brought in an egg, possibly from a brown snake, that had been found on her parent's property at The Summit.

### General Business:

1. Errol Walker announced a trip he is organising to Norfolk Island next Easter and said he would need 10 participants to enable people to get the group discounted fare of \$940. Anyone interested should contact him for details.
2. Information about a bushfoods and botanical stroll at a property near Maryvale has been received
3. Brian McDonagh asked members if they knew if black snakes ate cicadas as he had seen one with its head down a cicada's hole.
4. Millie reported that Fred Simpson was now out of hospital and in the Murwillimbah Rehabilitation Centre. The Club passed on the best wishes of the members for his speedy recovery.

### Presentation:

Desley McDonagh gave a very interesting slide presentation on the Discovery Coast, around Agnes Water and The Town of 1770, north of Bundaberg, including some from the early days before there was much development of the area.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm.

## Report on Outing to Tooloom 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1998

The November outing was a pleasant day driving between different destinations in the Tooloom area. We assembled at Weeroona Park and travelled firstly to the Tooloom National Park, collecting Nats members at Liston and Legume. There are two short walks at the park. One is a circuit through the rainforest, and although only 500metres long, it gives a good representation of the rainforest with some of the more significant trees identified. The other walk is up to the Tooloom lookout, where you can look down the Koreelah Creek valley. There was considerable discussion as to whether we could see Bald Rock or not. Looking at the Tenterfield Forestry Map it appears possible, as the Koreelah Creek and the Boonoo Boonoo River valleys are very close where they join the Clarence River.

We looked at some berries on a rainforest tree, but were unable to identify it. We could however, identify lobelia, cranesbill geranium, crows nest fern, doodia fern, walking-stick palms, giant maiden hair (*Adiantum formosum*), darling pea (*Swainsona galegifolia*), bugle flower (*Ajuga*), purple and white violets, buttercups (*Ranunculus*) and wild raspberries.

The next stop was the Tooloom Falls where we wandered around for a short time. There was only a small flow in the creek. We watched a kingfisher upstream of the bridge for some time, and saw bluebells (*Wahlenbergia*), pimelia, dianella, a purple lily with three petals we think is a *Murdannia gramminea*, and senecio. There was also quite a lot of discussion about a water plant with white flowers, which we thought was *Myniophyllum*, and a coral tree (*Erythrina*).

The Tooloom area has a number of places that are significant to the Giddabal tribe. One legend tells of Dirrangun, a clever old woman who argued with her son-in-law and created Tooloom Creek and the Clarence River. Another story describes the journey of a young woman who fell in love with a handsome warrior and followed him from Murwillumbah to the top of Crown Mountain. Edinburgh Castle is believed by the Giddabal people to be the home of two mythological bulls who warn of disaster. ( I wonder how old this legend is, seeing bulls are not native to Australia).

After the Falls we moved on to the forestry picnic and camping area at Urbenville. An interpretative centre has been erected which details National Parks and Forests of the area. After lunch we drove a short distance down the Tabulam Road to the Yabba Rest Area. The flooded gum forest here is quite spectacular and some Nats walked along a short track to the Red Cedar tree, which had orchids and ferns growing in its branches.

At this point three members left to return via Tabulam and Tenterfield. The rest of us backtracked to Urbenville and then travelled home via Woodenbong and Legume.

**Bird list for the Tooloom Outing**

willy wagtail	peaceful dove	chough
maggie	noisy miner	satin bower bird
golden whistler	shrike thrush (call)	whip bird (call)
cat bird (call)	pigeon	crow
kookooburra	dollar bird	white cockatoo
pheasant coucal	swallow	nankeen kestrel
bar shouldered dove	crested pigeon	pee wee
butcher bird	kingfisher	galah
double bar finch	Richards pippit	black cockatoo
blue faced honeyeater	currawong	bronze-wing pigeon
masked plover	yellow rumped thornbill	

**Plants of interest on the Tooloom Outing**

wild rice	white everlasting	shivery grass
wattle (fern leaf)	yellow everlasting	dandelion
evening primrose	wild hollyhock	grey everlasting
silky oak	old man's beard	mistletoe
lobelia	cranesbill geranium	crows nest fern
doodia fern (red tips)	walking stick palm	giant maidenhair
darling pea (Swainsona)	bugle flower (Ajuga)	violet (purple and white)
buttercup	wild raspberry	bluebell (Wahlenbergia)
pimelia	dianella	coral tree (Erythrina)
senecio	myniophyllum (water plant, white flower)	
purple lily (Murdannia gramineae)		

Leaders : Kris and Margaret Carnell

**OUTING REPORT - "Brooklands" 24th January, 1999**

Despite a rather steamy summer's day, 33 people (ranging in age from 16 months to 78) participated in this outing to the Aspinall's property, "*Brooklands*", on the Old Stanthorpe - Warwick road, just north of Dalveen. After smoko in the shade of some lovely old trees which marked the site of a former Cobb and Co. changing station, we set off to follow Rosenthal Creek downstream. This proved a fairly pleasant stroll through the bush with lots of wallabies and wallaroos about and quite a few callistemons still in flower. Negotiating the fences was a bit of a challenge at times but we all made it through with our clothes and limbs intact. As hoped, the local wedge tailed eagles put on a good display with at least eight soaring above us at one stage. After about two hours of walking, we reached a steeper gorge section of the creek known locally as "The Goat Hole" where lunch was had beside a small pool. Some enjoyed a swim here until the resident leeches attacked them. After lunch, there was time to try out the swimming holes further downstream or scramble up to a rocky lookout above the gorge. A short, steep scramble brought us up out of the creek and then it was a fairly gentle stroll across the paddocks to the railway line where we visited the site of the former Cherry Gully railway station. By some element of good luck, we managed to make it back to the cars and have a late smoko before the anticipated rain came down. My thanks to the Aspinalls for allowing us access to their property and to all participants for contributing to a very enjoyable outing.

*Liz Bourne - Trip Leader*



The following article was supplied by Nicci Thompson in response to a suggestion from Roger that we do a survey of birds on our outings to include in the Bird Atlas Project. I will bring the Kit on the next outing so anyone interested can see what is required, and take part, if they wish. Editor.

## **Atlas of Australian Birds Project**

**This is an invitation to join us on the Atlas Project. It is fun and it will help our birds.**

Since the completion of the original Atlas Project (conducted between 1977 and 1981) in which many land holders were involved there have been many changes to habitats across the country. At least 10 million hectares of native vegetation have been cleared throughout Australia. The changes brought about by this, together with the effectiveness of re-vegetation projects, need to be monitored. Birds are considered to be good indicators of the health of the environment and so we have the new Atlas Project and an opportunity for many volunteers to be involved.

The New Atlas project, which has been funded by Environment Australia's Bushcare and Wetlands Programs, will run for four years (1998 to 2002). It aims to:

- Collect information on the distribution and abundance of Australia's bird species.
- Involve the community in the conservation and monitoring of birds.
- Identify important bird areas.

The data will be used to:

- Compare the current distribution and abundance of birds to the previous Atlas.
- Assess the value of tree planting and re-vegetation programs to birds.
- Monitor long-term changes in habitat and the effect of these changes on birds.
- Help to establish sustainable land-use systems.

### **How do you get involved?**

- You can contact Birds Australia directly or your local Regional Organiser. A Network of Regional Organisers has been set up to provide Atlas kits, blank data sheets and advice on how to Atlas, and should be your first point of contact if you have a question regarding the project.

### **What Skills and Equipment will you need?**

Anyone with a pair of binoculars, a field guide and an interest in birds can take part in the Atlas. All you need to do is make a list of the birds you see when you're out and about and then fill out an Atlas Record Form. You can make a bird list for your garden, your property, your favourite waterhole or local patch of scrub. You can do Atlas surveys while on holidays or when travelling. When you decide to register as an Atlasser you will receive a kit that explains in detail the different types of surveys that you can choose to do. It's very flexible.

### **Keeping in touch**

Birds Australia will produce a quarterly Atlas newsletter which will keep you informed of the progress of the project, give you preliminary results, and identify areas of Australia that are under-visited. If you send in a *Record Form* in the preceding 12 months you will automatically receive the newsletter.

The Regional Organiser for southern inland Queensland is:

**Nicci Thompson**

**Address:** 21 Welcombe Avenue, Toowoomba, 4350

**Phone:** 07 4634 3074

**Email:** artamus@ozemail.com.au

## A BIT OF A MIX UP

Lately there has been an abundance of hungry young Kookaburras calling their screechy scratchy calls all around my place. Early one morning my attuned ear (ha) caught a rather higher pitched call, which I did not recognize, so I investigated!

Perched in an apple-gum tree in my backyard I noticed what I thought was a juvenile cuckoo. Out with my binoculars and bird book and upon looking and reading I found that it was not a cuckoo but a juvenile Common Koel. Some folk call this bird the "Rain or Storm bird". With all the lovely rain of late these birds, as well as the Channel-billed cuckoo, have been singing their stuff all over the district. I unfortunately have never had the pleasure to observe either of these birds, however I hear them all the time around my property.

The unusual side to this story was that while I was observing the young Koel I noticed a Red wattle bird fluttering around nearby, collecting the Spotted Katydid (a type of grasshopper) and feeding these to the Koel. I thought this highly unusual, so I read up a bit more about these birds. It seems that the Common Koel, being related to the cuckoo, is classed as a parasitic bird, it lays its eggs in a host's nest. When the young hatch it ejects from the nest anything that it comes into contact with, which includes any other nestlings and eggs. My Dad always said, "only the tough survive!"

The most surprising thing to me was, and still is, the fact that the Koel is an insectivorous bird and the Red wattlebird is a nectarivorous bird (honey-eater), however the book does state that honey-eaters are not rigid in their eating habits, and that seasonal availability has an influence on their menu/diet.

I don't know if this mixture is unusual to anyone else, but I found it amazing and I thought I would share it with you.

Karol Stica.

(Many thanks for this article, Karol, and may I add that the Koel and Red wattlebird, as well as many other honeyeaters are fruit eaters, the White mulberry tree in my garden being a particular delicacy for them. I have noticed also that there have been many more Koels visiting this year than ever before, and I wonder if this is due to a more abundant season, following years of drought. Editor.)

### **Coming Attractions**

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| FEBRUARY | 21 <sup>st</sup> Outing to "Boston Cliffs" with Irma Rickard.  |
|          | 24 <sup>th</sup> Meeting program - slides of a trip to South-West Queensland, including Eulo, Yowah and Dinnevar Lakes, with Millie Marsden. |
| MARCH    | 20/21 <sup>st</sup> Campout at Hodgsonvale - Leader Millie Marsden   |
|          | 24 <sup>th</sup> Meeting program - Vanuatu with David Wilson   |

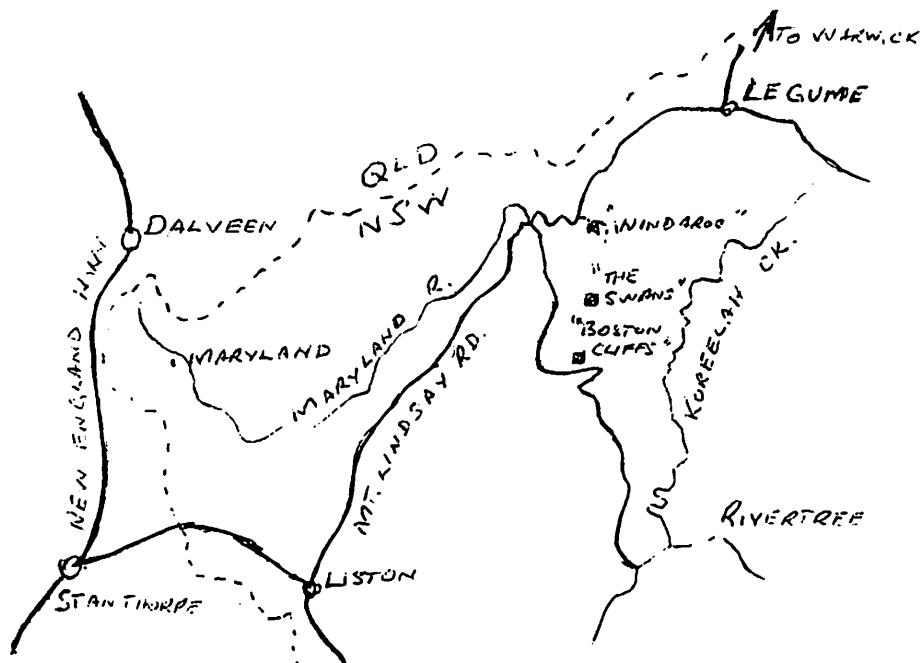
## FEBRUARY OUTING

"Boston Cliffs" Liston February 21<sup>st</sup>. Meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am or CWA Park Liston at 9.30am, or at the Maryland River Bridge for morning tea at about 10.00am.

Mrs. Irma Rickard's father took up the property "Boston Cliffs" in the late 1800's. The tenacity of our pioneering settlers will be evident to visitors when they see this rugged and remote area, and consider that one of the conditions placed upon Mr. Sydney Bonner was to have the property fenced within six months. The Maryland River forms part of the boundary as it winds its way between sheer 200m rocky cliffs, and in other places rocky outcrops on ridge tops form the boundary. Years ago the land was more open than its present ironbark, gum and box forest with a thick understory of hickory wattle, dogwood and lantana.

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and drive to Liston to meet Mrs. Rickard at the CWA Park at 9.30am, before continuing north along the Mt. Lindsay Road for about 25km, (about 20km south of Legume for those travelling from Warwick) then stop for morning tea at the Maryland River bridge. We then continue north and turn right into the large white painted gateway "Windaroo". This is the first property on the right after crossing the Maryland River Bridge. We continue through this property to the next property "The Swans", which is where we will have to park conventional cars as the rest of the track is suitable to high clearance vehicles only. The track takes us past the original Sydney Bonner homesite and on to the top of the cliffs. We will be having lunch here at the vehicles, after which the energetic members will be able to explore the creek and ridge to the east, and there will be plenty of scope for birdwatching etc for others less energetic, so bring a pencil, notebook, binoculars and Bird Field Guide. We will have afternoon tea at the vehicles at about 4.00pm before returning home.

Leaders for the outing - Rob McCosker Ph 4683 5371 and Mrs. Irma Rickard Ph 4686 1222.



### Forthcoming Activities planned by Reciprocal Clubs

SGAP Warwick

Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club

Outing 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. to Yangan School Garden - meet at 1.30pm at Yangan School. Also visit nearby Stephens' garden. Contact Darell 4664 8218  
Weekend Camp 13-14<sup>th</sup> Feb. Springbrook NP. Night Walk 27<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
Contact Garron 4633 2013