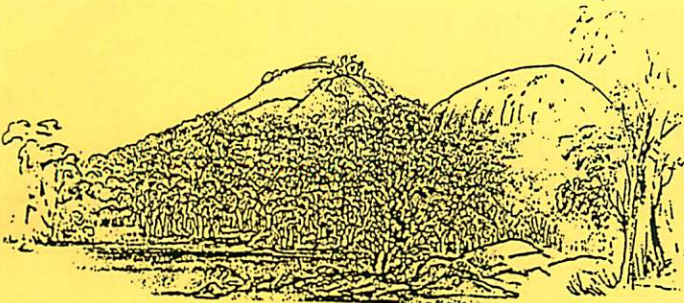
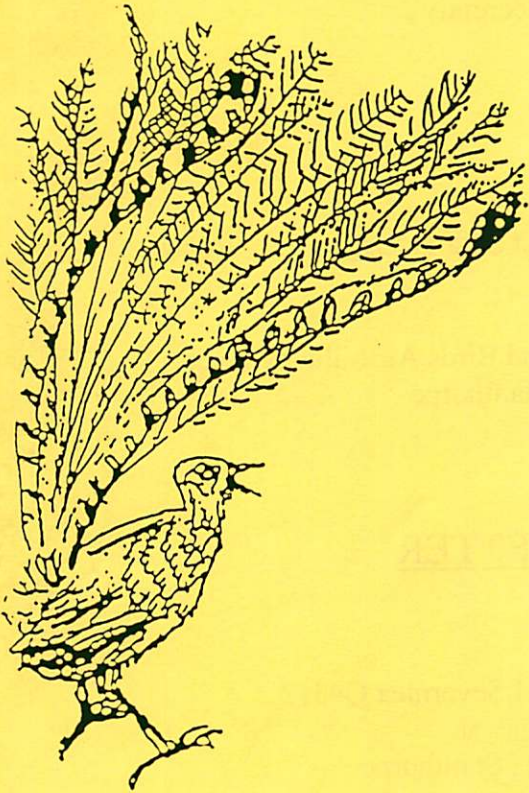


MAY 2000

Vol 319



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.

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 1999 - 2000

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

COMING UP

Next Outing May 21st Outing with Baldwin's South West Safaris Organiser - Roger Logan **Meet at Weeroona Park at 8.00am.**

Next Meeting May 24th Talk on Naturesearch Program and Birds Australia by Peter Sparshott. 8.00pm at the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

11th June 2000

Mail contributions to The Newsletter Editor, P O Box 24, Severnlea Q4352
Fax to 4683 5371, e-mail robinmcc@halenet.com.au
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 26th April, 2000

Opening: The meeting opened at 8.05pm with President, Desley McDonagh, welcoming members.

Attendance: There were 22 present at the meeting and 3 apologies as per the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The financial statement in the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 22nd March need to be amended from a subscription of \$8.90 to read \$8. The amended minutes were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Patience James, seconded by Rod Hutchin. Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes:

1. Auditor for the Club

Desley said that the Committee were still investigating alternatives.

2. Weekday Outings

Desley said she had received some response to her article in the last newsletter and will arrange a suitable date. It will probably be an afternoon.

3. Save the Bilby Fund

An article was in the last newsletter and donations could also be made at the meeting.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

1. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club - *Darling Downs Naturalist* - April 2000
2. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint* - March 2000
3. H.D. Gibson; Val Fawcett - re membership renewal
4. Chinchilla Field Nats. - *Urimbirra* - Vol 34 No 3
5. Qld Museum Library; National Library - re receipt of newsletter
6. Directory of Aust. Associations - update of listing
7. Menzies Hotel - circular
8. Snowball Enterprises - badges and other promotional material
9. Australia Post - post box rental bill
10. Samson Total Technology - invoices for \$5 and \$6.05
11. U3A - Warwick - newsletter

Outwards Correspondence:

1. Community service announcements for outings and meetings
2. Reminder letters to members who had not renewed their membership for 99/00
3. Letters to libraries re continuing to get our newsletter

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Jean Harslett. Carried.

Financial Statement for the period 22/3/2000 to 26/4/00:

Balance as at 22/3/2000 \$ 119.66

Receipts:

Subscriptions	8.00	
Room rent collection	<u>8.50</u>	
	16.50	<u>16.50</u>
		\$136.16

Expenditure:

Room rent	10.00	
Magazine postage (Feb)	32.00	
Govt tax (April 2000)	<u>1.50</u>	
	\$ 43.50	<u>43.50</u>
		\$ 92.66

Balance as at 26/4/2000 is \$92.66

Accounts for payment:

Room rent	10.00
Magazine postage	32.00

Samson Total Technology	11.05
Australia Post - PO box rental	48.35
Rob McCosker - postage	4.95

This report was received and adopted on the motion of Julia Brown, seconded by Patience James. Carried.

Outing Report:

Jean Harslett and Rob McCosker reported on the outing to Stanthorpe State Forest on 16 April which was organised by Mel and Judith Jurgensen.

Pre-outing Report:

Desley outlined what was planned for the campout over the long weekend to the Crows Nest area and Roger spoke about the 4WD outing on 21 May to the Boonoo Boonoo area being led by Steve and Debbie Baldwin.

Next Meeting:

The guest speaker at the next meeting will be Peter Sparshott from NatureSearch in Toowoomba.

General Business:

1. Membership Fee Increase

Desley spoke on the need to increase the membership fees for 2000/2001 as outlined in her article in the last newsletter. The Committee has proposed that the fees be increased from \$8 to \$12 for a single and from \$15 to \$20 for a family membership. A motion to this effect was moved by Millie Marsden and seconded by Peter Andrewartha. Members raised a number of issues about how the Club could reduce its costs such as having the newsletter available for collection at a central point; e-mailing it and even whether the newsletter served any purpose. Kris Carnell suggested that the fees should even be higher, such as \$15 for a single and \$25 for a family and an amendment to this effect was moved by Brian McDonagh and seconded by Rod Hutchin. This amended motion was then carried.

Vern and Kath Sullivan will investigate the feasibility of distributing the newsletter around Stanthorpe.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Tom Archer then entertained members with a nostalgic presentation of slides taken on previous Club trips.

Coming Attractions

May	21 st	Outing in conjunction with Baldwin's 4WD Safaris Please Note - 8.00am Start
	24 th	Meeting - Talk on Naturesearch Program and Birds Australia Survey by Peter Sparshott.
June	25 th	Outing to Emu Vale / Steamers - Leaders Alan and Diane Jones
	28 th	Meeting - Slide Program by Jean Harslett

April Outing Report - Stanthorpe State Forest

A party of fourteen took part in the day's activities on Sunday 16th April. An apology was received from Bob Harslett who was holding the fort at the museum.

The party set out on the gently sloping forest track which led down into the valley from the Happy Valley side of the State forest. Morning tea was taken on a rocky outcrop overlooking the creek - dry, of course. The party moved north and decided that those who wished would scale the rocky hillside to the west while the others would occupy themselves birdwatching or exploring the forest. About half the party scrambled up the hill between and over the huge rocks, many covered with large patches of tongue orchids. Various species of flora were noted and, after reaching the summit of the ridge, a more gentle slope to the south was chosen for the descent to the valley.

A relaxing lunch was enjoyed when the groups met up.

The trek homewards was an easy walk around the southern border of the forest. Some chose to stay on the track while the rest walked through the bush, enjoying the varied terrain and the differing flora.

The weather was quite warm and with no cooling showers eventuating, the party arrived back at the starting point feeling quite unseasonably warm.

Mel and Judith Jurgenson

Bird list from the outing :-

Crimson rosella
Little lorikeet
Eastern spinebill
White browed scrub wren

Eastern rosella
Wedge tailed eagle
Spotted pardalote
Noisy friar bird

King parrot
Grey thrush
Superb blue wren

Plant list :-

Plectranthus
Banksia integrifolia
Wahlenbergia

Staghorn
Bursaria
Isotoma anethifolia

Haresfoot fern
Trachymene incisa
Helichrysum

Olearia ramosissima - the first few flowers open on the lovely Blue Mountain Daisy.

Report on Crow's Nest Campout Trip 29th April - 1st May

Considering the behavior of the weather we had an excellent weekend in the Crow's Nest area.

Four Nats were present Friday night and three day visitors came on Saturday including a very welcome Geoff Walker. Good to see you Geoff! Seven other campers arrived on Saturday. I'm very appreciative of the people who braved the weather to come and I'm told they enjoyed themselves. I did anyway! A number of us visited the second-hand shop there, which was an education in itself!

Saturday afternoon we walked to the Koonan Lookout in the Crow's Nest Falls National Park. There was no water over the falls -one member considered this false advertising - but there was some in the creek and a couple of very nice pools. Rain held off until we reached the Lookout but we had to wear raincoats on the return walk, except for one person who forgot his and got very wet. There are sign of a good spring for wildflowers, with occasional flowers out on Calistemon viminalis, Melichrus and Correa. Several acacia and pomaderris will be very good in season.

Sunday morning, since visiting Ravensbourne was unwise due to the weather, we chose to do Monday's walk through Hartmann Park, which has the most unusual direction signs that I have ever seen. Once again we were spared from getting wet on this walk. Banksia collina was magnificent, and in Millie's words "lighted our way". Banksia integrifolia was also there in bloom, and in spring this little park should be a mass of pink Stylidium graminifolium (grass trigger plant) - it was everywhere. We saw a few very small flannel flower blooms as well as Leucopogon, prickly moses (Acacia verticillata), pink Pimelea and Chloanthos in bloom.

After the walk around Hartmann Park it rained again and it was decided that this would be the official end of the campout, though four people stayed on at the caravan park. Patience and I did a quick trip up to Yarraman after lunch while Millie and Rene examined the dams around Toowoomba

The Crow's Nest Caravan Park is a delight, well maintained with excellent amenities and special touches such as "super" shower mats and flowers in cabins and vans. When we arrived we were told to put the kettle on and expect a surprise in about 10 minutes. After this time, the owner/manager came over with a warm muffin each. (Don't tell anyone, but the people in the ensuite cabin were given a home-made chocolate each as well!). Some of us had very good experiences with very pleasant, helpful and polite people in Crow's Nest as well. It is a very special community.

Even though the weather wasn't wonderful, we managed to have an enjoyable weekend. "We must come back in Spring" - the Torrington Chorus was again sung. Thanks to those who came along and made the weekend and its planning well worth while.

Desley McDonagh.

Sunday 30th Ravensbourne National Park - report by Rob McCosker.

As we had a prior commitment of a birthday party for our grand-children in Toowoomba on the Saturday, which became a barbecue between showers in the back yard, we stayed the night with them and drove to Beutel's Lookout next morning to meet up with the Nats at 9.00am. The weather was fine but overcast when we left Toowoomba but by the time we arrived at the Lookout we were in thick cloud with a howling easterly blowing the mist horizontally. By 9.30am we decided that we were the only ones silly enough to be out in such weather, as no other Nats members turned up, and we set off on the Cedar - block Walk. After only a few paces down the track it was like being in another world, with no wind or mist, just the occasional drip from the foliage canopy high above. The huge Sydney Blue gums had small waterfalls trickling down their trunks, which seemed to glow in the soft light, while the pale green leaves of the Stinging trees provided a contrast. Another contrast was the vivid green and white lichens on some trees.

After completing this circuit we drove back to the main picnic area and had morning tea before setting off for the Caves. One highlight for this walk was no doubt the forest of Piccabeen palms along Palm Creek. The track has been cleverly constructed to meander extensively through this forest to provide the visitor with views both from above and from beneath these palms. There were bunches of bright red berries on some trees as well as scattered along the track - obviously dropped by feeding birds. Baby trees were seen emerging from the thick mulch along the track side, assuring the future of this palm forest. Another highlight was the fungi - what better conditions could we get to see the variety of fungi. As we neared the caves, which are a series of sandstone overhangs, the vegetation changed from rainforest to open eucalypt forest, so I was rather surprised to see a number of piccabeen palm seeds scattered along the track. The only trees overhead were gum trees, but the puzzle was solved when we disturbed some White headed pigeons, six of them altogether, which must come here to roost after a feed in the rainforest.

Our return from the caves was via the Palm Creek Circuit, where we disturbed a scrub turkey, which had been scratching along the edge of the track. We followed the sound of its slow, powerful wing beats as it sought refuge high in the tree tops, where we saw it perched rather inelegantly. Although our leader, seven year old Mitchell, was getting a little tired we coaxed him to take the Rainforest Circuit which was a little further but gave us the opportunity of seeing where local and travelling aboriginal people had dug for yams. We reached the picnic area at about 12.30pm with the weather still misty and the tables and seats very damp, so we returned to Toowoomba for lunch after a most enjoyable morning, with the lushness of the rainforest providing a welcome relief from the drought conditions of Stanthorpe.

Bird list compiled by Desley.

Blue-faced honeyeater

Scrub turkey

Magpie

Kookooburra

Crested pigeon

Rufous fantail

White throated tree creeper

Yellow rumped thornbill

House sparrow

Galah

Pied butcher bird (immature)

Currawong

Pheasant coucal

Welcome swallow

Grey fantail

White browed scrub wren

Masked lapwing

Straw necked ibis

Silvereye

Crow

Peewee

Noisy miner

Willy wagtail

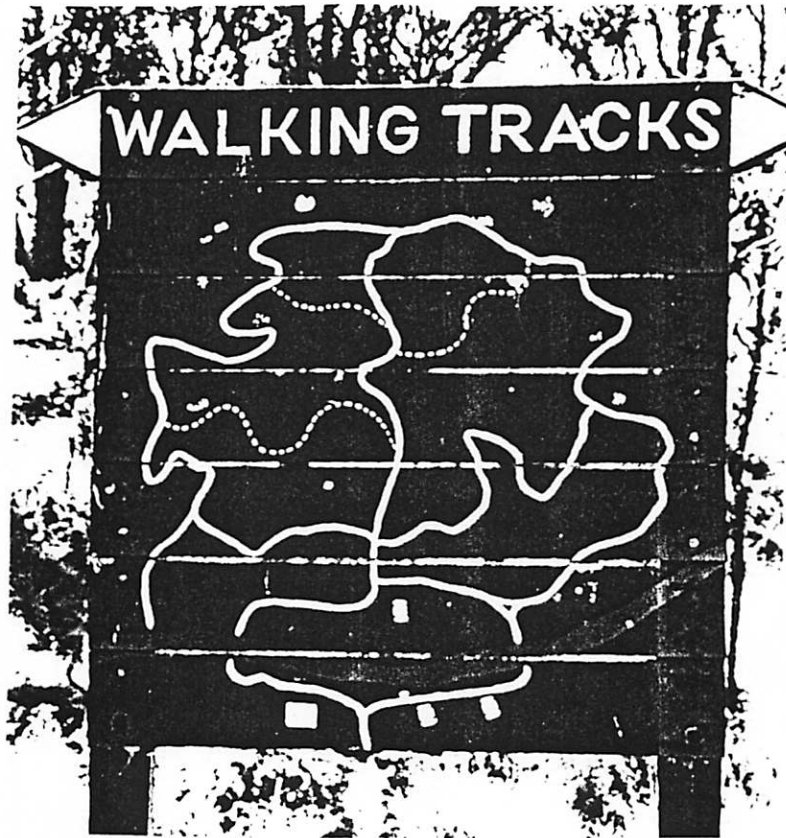
Scaly breasted lorikeet

Red browed finch

White tailed waterhen

Wood duck

Hartmann Park Walking Track Sign



Reminder for May Meeting Program - 24th May

This meeting is one not to be missed. Guest Speaker Peter Sparshott is from the Toowoomba office of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Peter is the NatureSearch Coordinator and Woodland Birds of Queensland Officer and will be able to provide the latest information on these programs. You may have heard Peter on your local ABC Radio with his sessions on birds and their calls.

Details for May Outing - 4WD Trip 21st May

Outing with Baldwin's South West Safaris. 21st May 2000. Organiser Roger Logan

This outing has been arranged as a tag-along tour with Steve and Debbie Baldwin's South West Safaris.

This will be a four wheel drive trip only, don't bring anything else. The outing will provide an opportunity to see some of the remoter parts of Northern New South Wales just over the border from Stanthorpe. Many of the tracks we will be on are on private land and we are fortunate to have a guide who has been over this area many times and has permission from the owners.

The outing will start from our usual spot near Weeroona Park at the early time of 8am sharp. Don't be late as there is lots of driving and country to cover. Steve said he hoped we would be back in Stanthorpe by 5pm. The plan is to go via Harrigan's Lane across the Boonoo Boonoo river and have smoko near Boorook. We will then drive to a vantage point near the Cataract River and also have a look at Morgan's Creek, named after the same miners who later mined at Morgan's Gully near Boonoo Boonoo Falls.

Somewhere along the way you will get to eat the lunch that you bring and we will return to Stanthorpe along the Rivertree Road.

You will need to have a full tank of juice before we set off. Those people who would like to go but don't have a four wheel drive, and those that have spare seats please talk to me and I can try to get you together.

Remember the rules for going through gates. The second car stays at the gate to shut it and tags on to the end. The lead vehicle stays in the lead. Keep the vehicle behind you in sight because if they stop unexpectedly it's you they depend on to help.

In the newsletter will be a brochure describing this and other tours which South West Safaris runs. Please give them your support and take the opportunity for a more personalised tour.