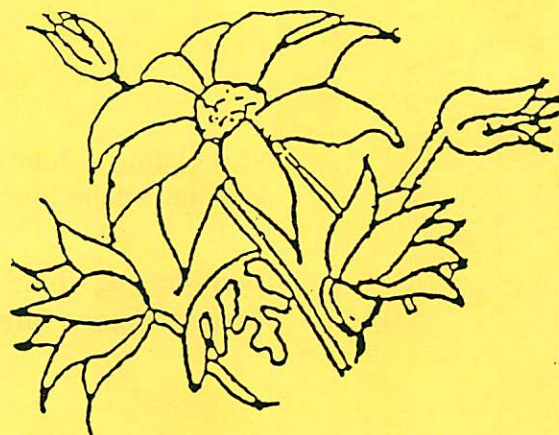


JUNE 2000
Vol 320

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.

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:	4 th <u>Wednesday</u> of each Month at QCWA Rooms at 7.30pm.
Outings:	The <u>Sunday</u> preceding the 4 th Wednesday of each Month.
Subscriptions:	Single \$15.00 Family \$25.00 per annum July to June.
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 June 25th Outing to Davies Ridge on the Main Range with Leaders Alan and Diane Jones - **Meet at Jones' Property at Emu Vale at 9.00am.**

Next Meeting June 28th Slide Program by Jean Harslett. **7.30pm** at the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe. **PLEASE NOTE NEW START TIME.**

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

9th July 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 24th May, 2000

Opening: The meeting opened at 8.06pm with President, Desley McDonagh, welcoming members and special guest, Peter Sparshott from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Attendance: There were 21 present at the meeting and 5 apologies as per the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The previous minutes incorrectly recorded that Cath and Vern Sullivan were to assess the feasibility of distributing the Club Newsletter to members around Stanthorpe. They said that as members said this had been unsuccessful in the past, it was not worthwhile pursuing. The amended minutes were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Cath Sullivan, seconded by Margaret Carnell. Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes:

1. Auditor for the Club

Desley had been in contact with Trevor Smith of United Taxation at Applethorpe who indicated he would be willing to audit the Club's books.

2. Weekday Outings

Desley said she would organise a suitable time and outing for the first of these.

3. Save the Bilby Fund

\$22 had been collected at the last meeting and further contributions could be made at the meeting.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

1. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club - *Darling Downs Naturalist* - May 2000
2. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint* - May 2000
3. Qld Naturalists Club - *QNC News*
4. Francesca Laura - change of address
5. Bookman Press - *Australian Organisations and Leaders*
6. Confederation of Australian Sport - GST for sporting and recreation groups
7. Vince Allen - change of address
8. Australia Post - reminder about post box rental bill
9. Senator Andrew Bartlett - electromagnetic radiation
10. Brisbane City Mission - request for donation
11. Department of Natural Resources - River Reach projects
12. Diana Holley - return of newsletter

Outwards Correspondence:

1. Community service announcements for outings and meetings

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Geoff Meredith. Carried.

Financial Statement for the period 26/4/00 to 24/5/00:

Balance as at 26/4/2000

\$ 92.66

Receipts:

Subscriptions	12.00
Room rent collection	15.00
Save the Bilby Fund	22.00
	<u>49.00</u>

49.00
\$141.66

Expenditure:

Room rent	10.00
Magazine postage (April)	32.00
Samson Total Technology	11.05
Australia Post - PO box rental	48.35
Rob Mc Cosker (stamps)	4.95
Govt tax (May)	<u>0.30</u>

\$ 106.65

106.65
\$ 35.01

Balance as at 24/5/2000 is \$35.01

*Acc Recn 100.00
100.00
100.00*

*24/5 35.01
65
11.45
1.75
22.00
46
100.66
12.50
100.00
2.10
50.00
50.00
100.00*

Accounts for payment:

Room rent 12.50

This report was received and adopted on the motion of Julia Brown, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried. To assist with the Club's low cash reserves, it was agreed that memberships could be paid early.

Outing Report:

Roger Logan reported on the 4-WD trip with South West Safari Tours to the Boonoo Boonoo area which 39 people went on in 11 vehicles.

Pre-outing Report:

Alan and Dianne Jones will be leading the next outing to Emu Creek and The Steamers on 24 June. The 23 July outing will now be led by David Wilson and Narelle Crawford.

Next Meeting:

The guest speaker at the next meeting will be Jean Harslett.

General Business:

1. Vern Sullivan queried whether those members who attended meetings should be the only ones who contributed to the room rental, especially now that the membership subscriptions were being increased. Desley said that the Management Committee would investigate this.
2. Millie Marsden asked whether the time of the meetings could be shifted to 7.30pm instead of 8pm. This was agreed to on the motion of Millie Marsden, seconded by Vern Sullivan.
3. Millie Marsden read out a poem, *The Bilby's Lament*.

Specimens:

1. Desley had a series of photos from the trip to Boonoo Boonoo and the one to Crows Nest.
2. Margaret Carnell had some specimens from her garden of *Hakea laurina* and *Hakea petiolaris*. She reported that the primitive fern seen on the Boonoo Boonoo trip was *Pyrrosia rupestris*. Helen Hartmann said that she thought the other fern seen was also a species of *Pyrrosia*.
3. Rob McCosker had a pile of feathers from some sort of owl, the remains from a fox kill, and a tray of seeds from a piccabeen palm, some with their red fruit coat, and some without, since they had been part of a pigeon's diet.
4. Col Hockings reported seeing a Pratincole at the Applethorpe School last week, which is most unusual being such a distance from its normal desert habitat.
5. Mario Pennisi had a bandy bandy snake from Dalcouth in a bottle.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Peter Sparshott from the Nature Search program of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in Toowoomba then gave a very interesting and informative talk on this program and the Woodland Birds project of Birds Australia.

Coming Attractions

June	25 th	Outing to Emu Vale / Steamers - Leaders Alan and Diane Jones
	28 th	Meeting - Slide Program by Jean Harslett
July	23 rd	Outing - Kinnanes Falls - Leader David Wilson
	26 th	Meeting - Slide Program on Norfolk Island by David Wilson

Report on Outing to N.S.W. and places East of Stanthorpe

With Baldwin's South West Safaris

Sunday the 21st of May was the coldest morning for the year so far at minus one degree with a white frost and clear skies. There were nine vehicles which set off in convoy along Sugarloaf Road and two more joined up along the way, to follow one of the routes of Steve and Debbie Baldwin's South West Safari Tours.

A total of 36 people proceeded down Mt Lindsay Road to Harrigans Lane and then to the Boonoo Boonoo River crossing where we all stopped to look at the cascades, pools and the sturdy bridge. Someone pointed out a turtle about 2 m down a round hole which was about 2 m across. (The hole not the turtle). There was no way for it to get out and no way to rescue it as the water looked a bit chilly and there wasn't an easy way to get in and out of the hole.

We soon got into the 'swing' of opening and closing a variety of gates. Steve said there were 27 of them but I doubt if anyone counted. Not far along was a Wedge tailed eagle which sat very conveniently beside the road after flying up from a carcass. We continued on past Boorook homestead which we saw in the distance and then to the site of Main Camp, where we stopped for morning tea. This was the camp near a gold mining area, and we stopped at the site of the pub, though there was little sign of it left, except for some squared off beams. Steve said a friend with a metal detector found more than 70 silver coins from about the 1860's in one small spot where the bar was but Steve could only find nails around the area. Margaret spotted some tiny staghorns and also a primitive type of fern growing there.

Further along we came to the Golden Age mining site. This was where gold and silver were processed alongside the Cataract River. There were some brick and stone-work constructions and various pieces of large iron objects not readily identifiable. There were the remains of a furnace and two large stone-work tanks.

We took a side trip to see Cataract Gorge where most of us climbed down, with the aid of a rope, to a very large rock which overhangs the gorge. We had been there several minutes when a rock wallaby frantically bounded out from under the rock and along the edge of the cliff. Near here we also saw some Red tailed black cockatoos. We had lunch at a special spot where Steve brings visitors to camp, and he had made a special trip a few days earlier to mow the area. Very tidy! There was a pool near here with small fish in it - not big enough for fish and chips. At the lunch spot a brown pigeon sat very conveniently in a wild tobacco bush eating fruit while it waited for someone to take the camera out of their pocket.

From here to the Rivertree Road was a maze of tracks through which Steve easily navigated. There were a great many petty faced and red necked wallabies and eastern grey kangaroos. In the lead vehicle we must have seen several hundred of them, but my son Peter, in a different vehicle only saw one. Along the grassy bits there were dozens of cows with cute little calves, which stood in the middle of the road until they were told to 'moove'.

Barbeques and veal steaks were mentioned. Some people saw a snake which was striped black and white, and was thought to be a Bandi bandi. There were some steep bits in the road, which would be impossible to negotiate after a bit of rain, that gave the drivers something to think about. There were some great views from the ridges across vast areas of forests with hardly a sign of habitation by people.

Please pass on the brochure from South West Safaris that was in your last newsletter to interested parties. A special thankyou to Steve for taking us on his tag-along tour. Hope to see the visitors come along to more of our gatherings.

Roger Logan.

Bird list for May Outing

Wedgetail
Parrot
Finches ...?
Red tailed black cockatoo
Kookaburra
Tree creeper
Richards pipet
Brown cuckoo-dove
Noisy miner
Chicken
Galah

Brown hawk
Willy wagtail
Red and white tailed hilux
Eastern rosella
Red browed finch
Black duck
Sitellas
Fairy wren
Grey fantail
Peewee
King parrot

Magpie
Choughs
Crimson rosella
Bell miners
Currawong
Rainbow lorikeet
Grey butcherbird
Satin bowerbird
Banded wapwings
Wood duck
Crow

Lewin's honeyeater
Grey shrike-thrush

Swallow
Crested pigeon

Yellow robin

Many thanks to Dave Bright for compiling this list - although perhaps we had to be on the outing to appreciate a couple of the strange birds included on the list!

ORCHID BONANZA

During the outing on May 21st we walked out to a rocky viewpoint above the Cataract River where there were a number of orchids, some in bloom, some in bud, and some we recognised by their leaves. Kris discovered a helmet orchid *Corybas hispidus* flowering very close to the path, while some more of us were exclaiming over pixie caps *Acianthus fornicatus*. Col discovered a greenhood, *Pterostylis longifolia* in bloom, and Narelle thought another greenhood in bud was a *Pterostylis nutans*.

There were *Dendrobium kingianum*, *linguiforme* and *speciosum* plants on the rocks, as well as *Bulbophyllum exiguum* and *shepherdii*. We admired the dainty yellow flowers of *Liparis reflexa*, several clumps of which were clinging to the rocks. A climbing orchid *Erythrorchis cassythoides* (formerly *Galeola cassythoides*) was making its leafless way up a tree beside the path.

At Morgan's Creek, where we stopped for lunch there were a number of *Dendrobium linguiforme* plants on the casuarina trees, and the best specimen of a *Spiranthes sinensis* that I have ever seen. It was growing in quite long grass, and the bright pink flowers spiralled for several inches up the stem. As we drove along the track after lunch I was fortunate enough to see a Hyacinth orchid, *Dipodium punctatum*, in bloom in the gravel of a cutting. That brought the total to thirteen, six of which were in bloom.

Thanks to Narelle who identified the orchids, and provided me with a list.

Margaret Carnell.

Birds at "Orana"

A few days ago when I went for a walk early in the morning, I came across a number of birds in an area of a few square metres, near the creek on our property. Firstly, I heard the yellow rumped thornbills, and stopped to watch them for a minute. With them there were a couple of speckled warblers, which I had not seen around our place for a long time. While I was standing there I noticed a treecreeper going up the trunk of a yellow jacket tree. It had a distinctly white throat, and I think it was a white throated treecreeper, but as I didn't have a field guide with me it was a bit hard to identify it positively after I got home. There was a white eared honeyeater feeding in a melichrus plant, and an eastern spinebill in a blackthorn nearby.

I have heard wrens quite often further downstream, near a couple of rock pools, and think from their call that they may be variegated wrens, rather than superb blue. As they are not in breeding plumage it's not possible for me to tell. In the same area, a couple of weeks ago, there were about a dozen white winged choughs, which scolded me, then followed me for a short distance. Kris later saw about forty of them at his aunt's place across the road.

In the orchard there are flocks of crested pigeons, bronzewings, eastern rosellas and crimson rosellas, feeding on grass seeds. This morning I saw four peaceful doves at Mum's place over the road. There are the usual magpies, kookaburras and pee wees round the house, as well as flocks of double bars, which use the birdbath regularly, spinebills and mistletoe birds. We also saw a pair of robin red breasts a couple of weeks ago.

Margaret Carnell

Management Committee Meeting

PLEASE NOTE - Members of the Committee are requested to attend a meeting to be held prior to the next Monthly Meeting, that is - 7.00pm 28th June.

As you may have read in the minutes, and if you take a close look at the front cover, you will see some changes.

- Meeting time has been moved to 7.30pm from 8.00pm.
-
- Subscriptions have been increased to \$15.00 Single and \$25.00 Family per annum July to June.
-
- Room Rent will be covered by Subscriptions - no need for a Donation per family per meeting.

Another early - **8.00am start** from Stanthorpe to meet at our front gate at 9.00am. We are the third wet creek crossing on the Emu Creek Road, about 8 km from the Emu Vale School.

From here we travel about 9 km to the Mill Flat where we can have smoko before heading up the road through State Forest and private land. The road has a few creek crossings which are shallow but some lower cars might bottom out, so those with 4WD or higher clearance cars can help transport others the last couple of kms. The walk, which should take about 40 to 50 minutes, follows an old dozer track most of the way, through open forest - graded about 6. The rest of the way is a little steeper, following a defined rocky track with a drop-off on the southern side and a gradual slope on the northern side - this I rate at 7. There are two lookouts which give excellent views of the Steamer Range and Conns Plain in the background.

Another hours walk will bring you out on the Main Range, where the track heads north to Lower Panorama Point about another hour away, and south to Mt Steamer and Lizard Point also about an hour or more away. I don't think we would have time to see these as the daylight hours are a bit short this time of year. We can do these walks in spring or summer.

Alan Jones
Phone 4664 8347

