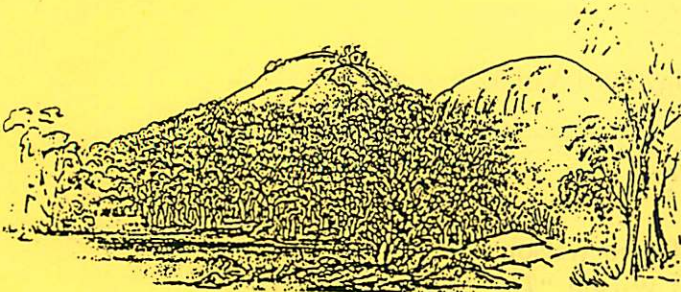



MAY 2001
Vol. 329



THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



The Librarian, Field Nats
PO Box 24
SEVERNLEA Q 4352

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: 4th Wednesday of each Month at QCWA Rooms at 7.30pm.
Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4th 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.

Coming Up

Next Outing: May 20th Mt Mitchell led by David Wilson

Next Meeting : May 23rd Program by David Wilson *"The Power of the Air Above Us"*.

Exhibition Wildlife Paintings: June 1st to July 3rd at Gallery

Mail contributions to The Newsletter Editor, PO Box 33 SEVERNLEA Q 4352
e-mail orana@halenet.com.au

Deadline for next newsletter Monday 11th June 2001

Are any members interested in receiving their magazines by email rather than a hard copy? If so, please contact the editor on the above email address and we will attempt to arrange it

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 the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 25 April, 2001.

Opening: The meeting opened at 7.37pm with President, Desley McDonagh, welcoming members.

Attendance: There were 16 present at the meeting and 4 apologies as per the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the last meeting, held on 28 March, 2001 were amended to record the minute's silence held for the Carnell family and the fact that Herb and Esme Colley also showed slides of Western Australia. They were then received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Dave Bright, seconded by Esme Colley. Carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

1. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club – information re frog workshop on 28 April
2. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint* - April
3. Chinchilla Field Naturalists - *Urimbirra* – April
4. Murrumbidgee Field Nats – *Murrumbidgee Naturalist*- April
5. Uni of Southern Qld Library – remove them from mailing list
6. Association Management - journal

Outwards Correspondence:

1. Community service announcements for outings and meetings

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Col Hockings, seconded by Margaret Carnell. Carried.

Financial Statement for the period from 28/3/01 to 25/4/01:

Balance as at 28/3/2001		\$ 239.06
<u>Receipts:</u>		
Subscriptions	25.00	
Room rent collection	5.40	
	30.40	<u>30.40</u>
		\$ 269.46
<u>Expenditure:</u>		
Room rent	10.00	
Magazine postage	32.00	
Govt tax (April)	<u>1.50</u>	
	<u>\$ 43.50</u>	<u>43.50</u>
		<u>\$225.96</u>

Balance as at 28/4/2001 is \$225.96

This report was received on the motion of Julia Brown, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

Accounts for payment:

Room rent	10.00
Magazine postage	32.00
Samson Total Technology	41.47

These accounts for payment were approved on the motion of Julia Brown, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

Liz Bourne queried what had happened to the Camera Club's reimbursement of half the cost of the post office box rental. Kris Carnell will investigate this.

Outing Report:

Rob McCosker reported on his trip to Mt Norman in Girraween National Park on 22 April. A good time was had by all despite the sometimes cloudy and rainy conditions.

Pre-outing Reports:

The next week day outing will be on Friday, 1 June. Desley suggested that those attending this outing should determine the venue for the July one.

The 5-7 May campout will be to Lanaki near Tabulum, led by Kris and Margaret Carnell. The Carnells are uncertain whether they will now be going on the Friday night or not and suggested people intending to go should contact them first.

The outing to Mt Mitchell on 20 May will be led by the Warwick members, with members of the Fassifern Field Naturalists also coming along.

Peter Andrewartha is looking for someone to lead his trip to Moogerah Dam on 24 June.

General Business:

1. Working Bee at Heritage Park

Five people attended this and weeded and mulched the bottom garden. Desley requested further volunteers to assist for a couple of hours on Saturday 28 April. Margaret Carnell said the watering system did not appear to be working. Desley said the sign had been vandalised and needed to be replaced and re-laminated. It would also need covering with perspex. Rob McCosker will organise this.

2. Fundraising Raffle

Members had contributed quite a lot to the basket of goodies but more was still needed. Rob McCosker is still to locate the club banner. Liz will make up a sign to advertise who the raffle is in aid of. The raffle will be drawn on 31 May and the winner announced in the "Border Post".

Robyn Riley and Helen Hartmann have very generously donated \$20 to the club in lieu of being able to help with the raffle. The Carnells are co-ordinating the roster of volunteers to sell tickets in town at various locations.

3. Outing with Queensland Naturalists Club

Liz has been in contact with the QNC's outings officer, David Hangar, and suggested that Sunday 21 October would be a suitable time. As many of their members are likely to want to come for the weekend, Liz has offered them camping on her property. She had also suggested to them that Amiens State Forest would be an interesting new area for them to explore.

Specimens:

1. Desley had various prints taken on trips to Arcot Station, Finney's Falls, Boonoo Boonoo and of a kurrajong tree at Sailor Jack. Also pamphlets on Maleny and Kenilworth.
2. Patience had a newspaper article on owls plus photos taken by David Fleay. She mentioned that at the beginning of June, the Stanthorpe Art Gallery would have an exhibition of paintings by David Fleay's mother.
3. Kris Carnell had a bandy bandy snake in a bottle and grubs on a November lily.
4. Rob McCosker had numerous pupae of large moths, some of which had emerged.
5. Joan Stevenson had photos taken on the Finney's Falls outing.
6. Liz Bourne reported seeing a group of glossy black cockatoos feeding in casuarinas at "The Cascades". Rob McCosker said they had also been reported from the Basket Swamp area in Boonoo State Forest.
7. Rod Hutchin said he had seen a black-eared cuckoo.

Next Meeting:

There will be a presentation by the Warwick members.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm

Desley then showed members a very interesting collection of slides taken at various locations in Queensland and at Port Moresby.

Exhibition at Art Gallery

An exhibition at the Stanthorpe Art Gallery that should interest Field Naturalist members, is a collection of paintings by Maude Glover-Fleay (1869-1965) who was the mother of David Fleay who had the Wildlife Park at Burleigh on the Gold Coast. Maude was always very interested in wildlife, and apart from the usual portraits and landscapes that most artists of that period painted, she painted possums, gliders and many other Australian animals, especially nocturnal ones.

This is a very interesting display and I hope that Field Nats members will all try to see it. This exhibition runs from June 1st to July 3rd. The Gallery hours are 10.00am to 4.0pm weekdays, and 1.00pm to 4.00pm Saturdays, and Sundays 10.00am to 1.00pm.

Patience James

May Outing – Mt Mitchell

The May outing will be to the summit of Mt Mitchell at Cunningham's Gap. Mt Mitchell is the southern peak that guards the pass to the Darling Downs from Brisbane. Our walk will take us up the civilised, National Park's constructed trail, through sections of rainforest and open forest. Many views of the surrounding mountains and farming areas are achieved during the ascent. Lunch will be at the summit of the East Peak with panoramic views across Spicer's Gap and the Scenic Rim

The summit trail is just over 5km in length. Although much of the trail is reasonably easy, there is a constant uphill grade to the summit. A vertical ascent of 400m is achieved in just over 5km. Most of the track would be graded at about 4, but the last half kilometre involves negotiating a considerable number of stairs and would be a grade 6.

Departure Time from Weeroona Park is at 8:00am on Sunday 20 May. Warwick and Stanthorpe members will then meet at Victoria Park, Warwick, for a 9:00am departure. (This park is on the New England Hwy, immediately past the hospital.)

We will have morning tea at the National Park's picnic area, 1.5km past the garage at Fischer Park. Members of the Fassifern Valley Field Naturalists' Club will be meeting us here and will be joining us for the walk to the summit.

As alternatives to the strenuous walk to the summit, we can take a short 1.5km circuit to the Fassifern Valley Lookout, starting from Cunningham's gap; or a Rainforest Walk of 3km return between the picnic area and Cunningham's Gap.

David Wilson
4661 2839
wildav@flexi.net.au

April 22nd Outing report - Mt Norman Area

There is nothing like a Nats outing to break a long dry spell, but in spite of the drizzly morning 12 intrepid bushwalkers gathered at the Mt Norman parking area for morning tea. The road had recently been graded to this point from the Wallangarra end, which made the going very easy, particularly as the shower of rain overnight had settled the dust. One group came by 4WD from the Pyramids Road end, and assured us that the road is quite rough and unsuitable for cars.

The misty rain had stopped and the sky was beginning to clear as we left the Mt Norman track to scramble through the very wet undergrowth to the start of the granite slabs. We avoided the steeper section of granite because of the wet moss and lichen by going through the timbered section to the right until the slope was more gradual. Pausing at the first level area to catch our breath, we were denied the usually spectacular view of Mt Norman as it was shrouded in cloud.

Continuing on to Mallee Ridge we passed a group of Wallangarra White Gums and saw Mallee Gums in blossom. Of great interest on the way to the top of the ridge were the

numerous dykes in the surface rock and the extraordinary shapes of weathered rock, the remnants of a very large dyke. The weather had cleared sufficiently for those who made it to the top, via a couple of shaky forked sticks leaning against the rock, for some wonderful views of Mt Norman, Bald Rock, South and West Bald Rock and the Pyramids. After putting entries in the visitors book kept there, we found a sheltered spot from the wind amongst some boulders, where we had lunch. We briefly explored some of the boulders and gorges between them before shouldering packs to return, as the sky was again darkening, and a shower could be seen over Wallangarra. Light rain fell for most of the return trip, but cleared when we arrived at the car park.

April is certainly not a good time of year for wildflowers and we saw only 10 species in bloom, however the damp conditions were ideal for the large bush slug to come out to feed. One wonders how these sticky wet creatures survive the dry spells. For those who have not seen them, they are up to 3 times larger than garden slugs, about 75mm long and 20mm wide, a light beige colour all over except for a red stripe running from the tail up the centre of the back to a red triangle at the head, with a breathing hole inside the triangle. We saw several of them, some in the wet bush beside the Mt Norman track, and some where we had lunch at the top of Mallee Ridge.

Rob McCosker - Leader.

Outing to Lanakai 5th - 7th May

On Saturday 5th May, Kris and I set out for "Lanakai" with two of our grandchildren, Erin and Caitlin on board. Our first stop was to investigate the train at Wallangarra, where we saw an "olden day car" which stopped to do some running repairs. As we proceeded towards Tenterfield we saw several more of these vehicles, which was quite exciting.

After stopping in Tenterfield to buy marshmallows to toast we had a snack and proceeded towards "Lanakai", arriving at around 11.00am, to be greeted by Joan and Harry who had set up camp on Friday evening, and Lorna and Dave. By the time we had set up camp Karole and Mario arrived, followed by Trish, Rob and Sue and Peter who came from Warwick and saw a dingo on the way. The girls were very taken with the fairy parasols growing in the grass near the shower block. I think they might have been *Chlorophyllum molybdites* which are poisonous. Near the toilets there was a brown fungus with white gills with a large bite taken out of it.

Before leaving for our afternoon walk to the Creek Pool, Karole lit the donkey to heat the water for showers later. Our walk was marred a little by the number of leeches which obviously found us very attractive, but the pool was a lovely spot, with quite a good flow of water. There were a number of different fungi growing along the way, but very few flowers. One very pretty fungus was a coral fungus which was a delicate pink, with a hint of apricot. Most of us were so busy looking out for leeches that we walked right past, but Trish spotted it. Nearby, there were two different greenhood orchids (*petrostylus* sp).

As we walked along beside the track where there was quite a lot of lantana, Erin found a beautiful nest decorated with lichen and moss, on the ground. Rob identified it as a yellow robin's nest. It has been taken to Kindy for "show and tell". Near the top of the ridge where

the camping ground is located, we spotted a cream fungus, with a yellowish colour in the centre, growing on a stump. This is *Omphalotus nidiformis* and is a common luminescent fungus. After dinner that night Kris took Erin and Caitlin to check if it glowed in the dark, and great was the excitement when it did, so the rest of us had to have a look as well. Caitlin turned the spotlight she was carrying on a large eucalypt, and there making its way up the trunk was a dark tree snake. We watched it for some minutes before leaving it to its own devices.

During the night some rain fell from a storm, but the morning was fine so we visited the site of the old dairy before going to the rainforest reserve. There is a short walk at the reserve where we saw a couple of large strangler figs and heard a number of elusive birds. We proceeded from there to the garden at "Lanakai" where we spent an hour or two admiring the lush growth and the plants which we can't grow here. Lyn and Jim Wright, our hosts, have a number of pheasants, ducks, peacocks and other fowl. They kindly gave the girls some feathers from the golden pheasants and peacocks, and the gardeners among us cuttings of anything we fancied. We drove to the top of a hill beside the house to admire the 360 degree view, and right behind our vehicle was a clump of purple fungus. We saw three or four wedgetailed eagles and another raptor which we didn't identify.

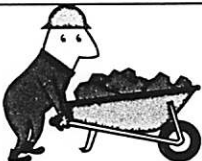
Lunch was eaten at Paddys Flat where photos had to be taken of everyone on the bridge, to compare with the photo taken there many years ago. Caitlin and Erin were determined to have a swim, so I went in as far as my knees, and Dave took Caitlin out to where it was deeper. He and Sue assured us it was lovely once you got in. Before heading back to camp we looked at the old graveyard beside the grid where there are three graves dating to the 1800s. After dinner that night we sat around the campfire waiting for the damper to cook and watching the lightning in the storm which went around to the south east of us. Earlier, as the sun was setting the thunderheads were lit up with glowing orange light.

Although there were a lot of flowers on the *Banksia integrifolia* beside the camping ground there were not a lot of birds around. There were however, little wattle birds, superb blue wrens and both yellow tailed and glossy black cockatoos.

Monday dawned fine so we travelled to the site of some ancient grass trees growing on a volcanic outcrop on another part of the property. We wondered if the trees took root as some soil was deposited amongst the rocks, or if the trees were there and then the soil eroded away. We had morning tea there then headed back to camp to pack up.

This campout was a very relaxed affair, without a lot of strenuous activity. Kris and I would like to thank all the honorary aunties, uncles and grandparents for making Erin and Caitlin so welcome, and helping with babysitting.

Margaret Carnell



*Many thanks to all the people who helped to do the maintenance
at Heritage Park at the two working bees.*

WANTED

Volunteer to lead the outing planned for June 24th

As Peter Andrewarthur is travelling to far and interesting places.

he will be unable to lead the outing to **Moogerah and Back**

If you would like the pleasure of leading this outing, or have a suitable alternative
please contact Kris on 46835268.



RAFFLE NEWS

Donations were received at our last meeting for the club raffle of a hamper of goodies.

Thank you to the people who have offered to sell tickets in the street or at the plaza, starting on May 10th The raffle will be drawn at 3.00pm on 31st May.

We have no volunteers to sell tickets on Thursday 17th May outside the Independent Grocer. If you can help on that day, please contact Kris Carnell on 46835268.