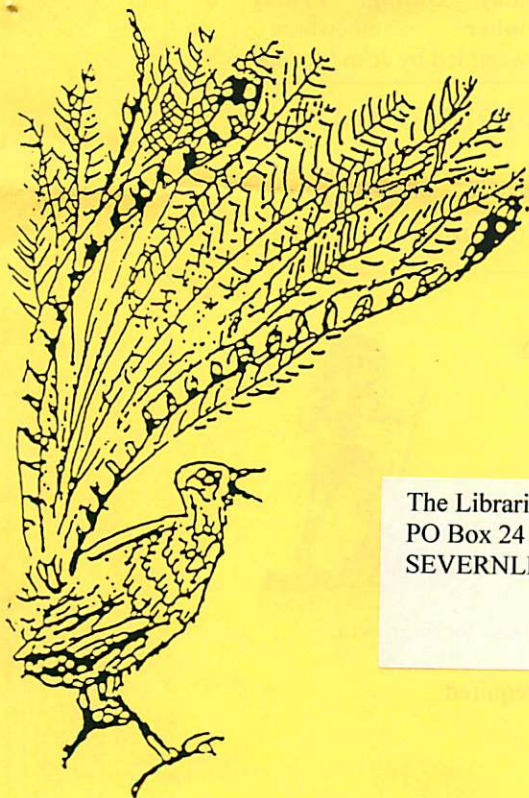


OCTOBER 2001

Vol. 334

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.

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 2001 - 2002

President	Kris Carnell	46835268
Vice-Presidents	Millie Marsden	46 811593
	Mario Pennisi	46813750
Secretary	Liz Bourne	46 836374
Treasurer	Dave Bright	
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	46 835268
Magazine Committee	Wendy & Neil Donges	46 812913
Publicity Officer	Patience James	46 811853
Librarian	Trish McCosker	46 835371
Management Committee	President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer	

Coming Up

Next Sunday Outing: 28th October Amiens area led by Liz Bourne with Queensland Field Nats. **Please note change from regular date.**

Next Meeting: October 24th
Program by Rod Hutchin

Weekday Outing: Friday 2nd November .Somewhere in Girraween led by Joan Stevenson

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

Deadline for November Newsletter: Friday 9th November

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.



October Outing

The normal outing scheduled for October will be held on **Sunday 28th**, not the 21st as normally scheduled. This will be a joint outing with members of the Queensland Naturalists Club who will be visiting the Stanthorpe area for the weekend. They will be camping on our property at Mt Hutton Road for the weekend and a short walk is planned there on the Saturday afternoon.

On the Sunday, the outing will be to the eucalypt section of Amiens State Forest, off Cowies Lane. The wildflowers are very prolific there at present and it is hoped they will still be out in late October. It is planned to walk along the rough track around the boundaries of the forest – a walk that should not take more than 5 hours, depending on the number of stops. There are good views from the top of the hill and quite a variety of vegetation, ranging from open eucalypt to heathlands and swamps, interspersed with boulders and rock slabs. Make a note in your diary of the changed date and come along and explore this little known part of the district with other naturalists.

Liz Bourne Ph 4683 6374

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc
held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 26 September, 2001**

Opening: The meeting opened at 7.45pm with President, Kris Carnell, welcoming members.

Attendance: There were 14 present at the meeting and 3 apologies as per the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the last meeting, held on 22 August, 2001 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Vern Sullivan, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

1. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint* - Sept 2001
2. Pro Bono – volunteer linking scheme
3. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club – *Darling Downs Naturalist* – Oct 2001
4. Qld Naturalist Club – *QNC News* – Sept/Oct
5. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Club – *Murrumbidgee Naturalist* – Aug/Sept
6. Chinchilla Field Nats Club – *Urimbirra* – Aug/Sept
7. Our Community – inviting newsletter subscription
8. Pearson Education Australia – info on a Manual of Accounting Procedures
9. Aust Post – Stanthorpe re posting arrangements for newsletter
10. Membership renewals – Harry and Joan Stevenson; Hewan Gibson; C & H Neden; Mr and Mrs Newman

Outwards Correspondence:

1. Community service announcements for outings and meetings
2. Annual return to the Office of Fair Trading

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Margaret Carnell. Carried.

Business Arising from the Correspondence

1. Postage of Newsletter

The Stanthorpe Post Office has suggested that we get an account with them but this would require us to spend a minimum of \$50 a month. As our current postage cost for the newsletter is only \$32 they have suggested making up the difference with copy paper or other stationary supplies. However, we are unlikely to need to spend this amount on a regular basis. Liz will discuss with them about paying for the postage in advance.

Financial Statement for the period from 27/6/01 to 22/8/01:

In the absence of the Treasurer, an interim financial statement was presented by the Secretary, Liz Bourne.

Balance as at 25/7/01

\$ 741.65

Receipts:

Subscriptions	305.00	
Room rent collection	1.00	
Donations	<u>15.00</u>	
	<u>321.00</u>	<u>321.00</u>
		\$1062.65

Expenditure:

Room rent	12.50	
Magazine postage	32.00	
Samson Total Technology	<u>41.29</u>	
	<u>\$85.79</u>	<u>85.79</u>
		<u>\$976.86</u>

Balance as at 22/8/01 is \$976.86

This interim financial report was received on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Rod Hutchin. Carried.

Accounts for payment:

Australia Post Postage for next two newsletters - \$64

Moved: Liz Bourne Seconded: Mario Pennisi Carried:

General Business:

1. Program for 2001/2002

The proposed program of meetings and outings for 2001/02 was published in the last newsletter. Kris said this was only tentative at this stage and asked that if those who had volunteered to lead outings or give a meeting presentation found that they were no longer available, they should let him know as soon as possible so alternatives could be arranged.

2. Harvesting of Endangered Plants

Liz Bourne reported that she had recently found someone harvesting wildflowers (including the endangered *Boronia granitica*) in Amiens State Forest and that she had reported this to the Parks and Wildlife Service who were investigating. The person in question did not have a permit to harvest native plants on state forests or road reserves and she requested members report any similar activities, especially those involving endangered plants. She said she believed that under the *Nature Conservation Act* no one was able to commercially harvest endangered species and that she would be pursuing the matter further with the QPWS.

Outing Report:

Nineteen people attended the outing to Girraween Environmental Lodge, led by Rob McCosker, with all but three going on the walk to the lyrebird's nest. A good display of wildflowers were seen as well as a variety of birds.

Pre-Outing Report:

There will be two outings during October. The first will be on Sunday 14 Oct which will be a half day trip to Jolly's Falls, The Summit to look at the wildflowers. Jean Harslett offered to get in contact with Neville Jolly to arrange for him to meet with the group at about 3pm. The outing will leave Weeroona Park at 1pm.

On Sunday 28 October, there will be a joint outing with members of the Queensland Naturalists Club to the southern, eucalypt section of Amiens State Forest. This group will be camping for the weekend on the property of Liz Bourne, who will be conducting the outing on the Sunday. The trip will follow the road which borders the state forest so should be fairly easy. Liz said there was an excellent display of wildflowers in the area at present.

Specimens:

1. Kath Sullivan had prints taken on Sunday's outing to Girraween Lodge.
2. Jean Harslett reported seeing a magpie chasing the mailman near St Joseph's.
3. Patience James said that on her recent trip to the Gold Coast, she had seen eagles nesting on top of power poles as well as a pair of plovers on the roof of a bank.

Next Meeting:

Rod Hutchin will give a presentation on his trip to the USA.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

CORRECTION

**We must apologise for a typing error in the 2001-2002 Program.
The outing in January is on 20th not 23rd as printed.**

PLEASE NOTE

There is no outing on 21st October. It is on 28th October instead.

Outing to Somewhere in Girraween - Friday 2nd November 2001 Organized by Joan and Harry Stevenson

On Friday 2nd November we will meet at Weeroona Park at 11.45am and travel to the picnic area at Girraween National Park for lunch. Lunch can be either a barbecue or picnic, whichever you prefer. After lunch we will walk to a mystery destination.

September Outing Report

The outing to the tracks around the Girraween Lodge on September 23rd was enjoyed by 19 people, despite the dull and drizzly start to the day.

Spring was evident with the everchanging display of wattle species flowering along the roadside and as we drove along the Pyramids Road after turning off the highway we were greeted, appropriately, by the Wyberba wattle - *A. pubifolia*. The mass of yellow flowering shrubs a little further along, however, were not acacias but *Pomaderris nitidula*. To contrast with the yellow we also saw patches of purple Wild iris - *Patersonia glabrata*.

After parking the cars at the Lodge we were greeted with some excitement as we were shown some fresh droppings collected along one of the tracks which looked very much like Wombat droppings. With high hopes of seeing a fresh burrow or even more fresh droppings, we set off across the paddock to the start of the Orange track, passing a low growing wattle - *A. granitica*, and saw the prickly *Melichrus*, two species of *Pimelia* and *Leucopogon* and two twining creepers, the brilliant purple false Sarsaparilla - *Hardenbergia violacea* and *Glycine* with its pale mauve pea flowers. Some members made use of the bench seat provided beside the track to enjoy the view of the Sphinx and Turtle Rock, before continuing past the large balancing rock and on to the views of the Pyramids and Sliprock. There was a good display of *Ziarea* near the top, as well as *Hovea*, an Egg and Bacon plant, *Notelaea linearis*, *Correa reflexa* and two more wattles - Prickly Moses - *A. ulicifolia* and Hickory wattle - *A. implexa*. The sky was still overcast when we reached the BBQ spot for a cuppa, not ideal for birdwatching, but the Yellow Robins did make an appearance and the Satin Bower bird was heard calling. Another call we heard, descending notes repeated, we decided was made by a cuckoo. Marc soon confirmed that it was a Fantailed cuckoo. I would like to thank Peter for helping to get the fire going and we were soon enjoying billy tea and sampling the home cooked Anzac bikkies.

Three members decided to investigate the colour coded walks and the rest returned to the cars to collect lunch packs then set off for the Lyrebirds Nest. We left the fire break track and continued uphill to the south, initially through rocky scrub, then on open granite slopes. The wildflower displays seemed to improve the further we went. There were petite Spade flowers - *Hybanthus monopetalus*, a clump of Tongue orchids - *Dendrobium linguiforme* with lots of buds almost out, similarly a Climbing orchid - *Erythrorchis cassythoides*, pockets of *Phebalium rotundifolium* and the lovely soft leafed Trigger plant - *Stylidium loricifolia*. Just a few blooms were left on the showy *Mirbelia* while *Cryptandra amara* was also still very pretty. The red stemmed wattle *A. latiseptala* had almost finished flowering but the masses of egg and bacon flowers, possibly *Bossiaea*; as a back drop to *Boronia amabilis* was quite stunning. We were now gaining enough height to get some views over the rugged Wyberba landscape. We cut across to access the ridge running up from the east, and on the way discovered an excellent specimen of King orchid - *Dendrobium speciosum* with dozens of flower spikes. After spending some time clambering around for the best photo angle and waiting unsuccessfully for the sun to peep through the clouds we went on the short distance to the large overhang which protects the Lyrebirds nest, and stopped there for lunch.

The nest is built on a stone platform of about 4 square metres and is about 2m above ground level with the large granite overhang protecting it from all weather. The stick nest is about 90cm in diameter and 20cm high with a definite bowl shape in the centre. It has been there for well over forty years to my knowledge but has not been used for many years.

A large clump of Boronia, once again with a backdrop of yellow pea flowers, was seen here in full bloom. The bushes were over 2m tall - obviously protected from the devastating 1994 bush fires by the surrounding rocks. A very showy specimen of Pomaderris lanigera, covered with bright yellow flowers was nearby, and as we made our way down the ridge we were able to get a close up view of a Running postman vine - Kennedia rubicunda, which had grown to the top of a Cypress tree only to become blown over in a recent storm. Stypandra glauca - Nodding blue lily, Hibbertia, Solanum, Ozothamnus obcordatus, Prostanthera nivea and Leptospermum flowers greeted us as we made our way to the Cathedral Arch. Peter Hocking, in typical youthful exuberance, clambered to the top of one of the tors which form the arch and posed for photos, but on the way disturbed a large goanna sunning itself on the rock.

We followed the yellow markers down the track and returned to the BBQ spot to find the other members waiting with the billy already boiling for another well earned cuppa. After comparing notes and a little more bird watching, members left for home at about 4.00pm.

With the Grasstree - Xanthorrhoea johnsonii and Lomandra we recorded about 40 plants in bloom and below is the bird list recorded on the outing.

Grey fantail	Eastern rosella	Plover
Spotted pardalote	White throated gerygone	Firetail finch
Willy wagtail	Jackie winter	Kookooburra
Currawong	Satin bower bird	Superb blue wren
Yellow faced honeyeater	Grey shrike-thrush	White browed scrub wren
Crow	Grey butcher bird	Eastern spinebill
Wood duck	Noisy miner	Magpie
Magpie-lark (Peewee)	Crimson rosella	Bronze wing pigeon
Dusky wood swallow	Yellow tufted honeyeater	Fan-tailed cuckoo

Rob McCosker

Outing Report – Basket Swamp 9th September



Three carloads of Nats left Weeroona Park for Basket Swamp where we had lunch at the picnic area. We were joined by three more cars, so ended up with a group of about 16. We had a leisurely ramble to the creek, then crossed over and explored a little on the other side. We couldn't see any of the orchids which we thought might be out, but there was some cryptandra, eriostemon and kunzea. Erin and Caitlin had a lovely time climbing rocks, finding hollow trees and hiding amongst the ferns.

Next stop was to admire a substantial area of kunzea just coming into flower, and some mirbelia rubiodes which was quite beautiful. A little further along the road to the falls was one of the best stands of pomaderris we have ever seen. We pottered around and admired the view at the falls and saw a number of other flower species – the total recorded for the day being 24. While having the mandatory cuppa someone noticed some calendenia carnea at the base of a tree.

Some of us travelled home via Tenterfield and saw some different acacias growing along the roadside. All in all it was a relaxing, successful outing.

Kris & Margaret

THE SCOTTISH SEABIRD CENTRE

This centre, which opened in 2000, is on the east coast of Scotland at North Berwick, east of Edinburgh. Off the coast is Bass Rock, which is white, covered with breeding gannets, thousands of them.

Video cameras are located at two places on the rock; the old lighthouse and the cliff edge. In the Seabird Centre visitors are able to use the remote control functions and zoom in on the activities on the rock which are shown on large screens. I saw a baby gannet under its mother, one of the first of the season, by zooming in on a very small area of the rock. I also saw herring seagull young, and other sea birds.

A smaller offshore rock, Craigleith, a little further north, has colonies of puffins, guillemot, razorbill, kittiwake etc. which can be viewed through the highpowered telescopes on the deck at the centre. I have to admit to becoming very excited when I saw the my first 'live' puffins.

The logo for the centre represents a gannet as it dives for food. (Did you know that gannets drop into the water at approximately 120kph? Their heads are protected so that they do not do themselves a damage.) There is an area in the centre which anyone can visit upstairs. This has a bookshop, restaurant and a general viewing area. The entry fee allows you entry to the areas downstairs where there are the screens for video viewing, theatre areas, and static exhibits. The staff are extremely helpful and genuinely enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the centre. I enjoyed speaking with a number of them about their birds and our Australian birds as well. Staff members give talks on particular topics - I attended one on sea birds. Once you have paid entry you may come and go into the centre as many times as you wish for that day. I went in and out a number of times and also spent time enjoying North Berwick itself.

The day I travelled to North Berwick by train from Edinburgh was extremely windy. The wind, fortunately, blew the Scottish mist (haar) away so the view was great, but the usual boat trip around Bass Rock did not run. The small sailing boats were tied up in the harbour and the wind blowing through the rigging made an amazing noise. It reminded me of the Singing Ship at Emu Park, the noise multiplied many times. I am very fortunate to have experienced such an event. I'm sure the memory will remain with me for a long time - I'm sorry I wasn't able to record it. Incredible.

The eider ducks were in abundance close by the shore. These ducks are seen in family groups including a number of males which are black and white, females which are a dull brown, and the ducklings all together in quite a large group. (The eider down WAS used to make eiderdowns before the doona was invented or the name borrowed from Scandinavia!)

I would highly recommend a visit to the Scottish Seabird Centre to anyone who visits Scotland.

Desley McDonagh

AUSTRALIAN NATURALISTS' NETWORK GET TOGETHER

LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA, NOVEMBER, 2002

This get together is the second, the first being in Alice Springs in July 2000, which I attended. I highly recommend the experience.

The Core Programme is from 9-18 Nov, based at Treasure Island Caravan and Cabin Park, Glen Dhu Street, Launceston [(03) 6344 2600 Fax (03) 6343 1764] and arranged by the Launceston Field Nats. Activities are planned each day during that time. A bus will be hired for these. There will be five full day trips, and other shorter daily trips. At the 2000 Get together, this bus travel gave us an opportunity to get to know each other and was very enjoyable, as well as being very economical.

Launceston Field Nats have also arranged pre and post get together bus trips; the pre tour from Nov 6 - 9., staying at St Helens, Bicheno and Coles Bay; and the post tour from Nov 19 - 22, staying at Stanley and doing, amongst other tours, the Arthur River Cruise. Costs and details of these tours are still being negotiated, but should be approximately \$350.00 for fully catered tours.

I'm hoping/planning to attend, driving from here and taking my camping gear, going over on the boat on Friday 9, but staying after the get together till probably Tuesday 26, as I plan to stay with friends and do some private touring. Why else did I buy a Rav 4? It would be great if I could have the company of another traveller on the journey.

Between 26 August and the end of October 2001, the contact person is Jeff Campbell, 42 Holbrook Street, Launceston. 7250 (03) 6331 7269; email : lfn@telstr.easymail.com.au

After that date contact the co-ordinators: Marion and John Simmons, P.O. Box 1148, Legana 7273. Phone/fax (03) 6330 1370. email: jayemes@bigpond.com

You will need to book your own accommodation and travel. The co-ordinators recommend that boat and caravan park accommodation reservations be made by November 2001 because November is a very busy time in the tourism calendar in Tasmania.

If you register, you will be sent all the information you need to make decisions about the get together. Meanwhile, I can give you a photo copy of the information which these details came from if you wish.

Desley McDonagh 4681 3074

The last word Wednesday 10th

Summer must nearly be here. Yesterday I saw for the first time this spring a Mongolian Plover which I presume has just arrived on its migratory travels and today I saw my first Dollarbird of the season. All we need now is the rain promised for tomorrow.

Kris