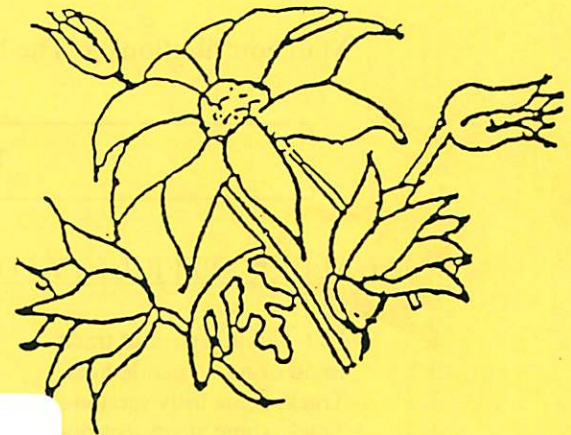
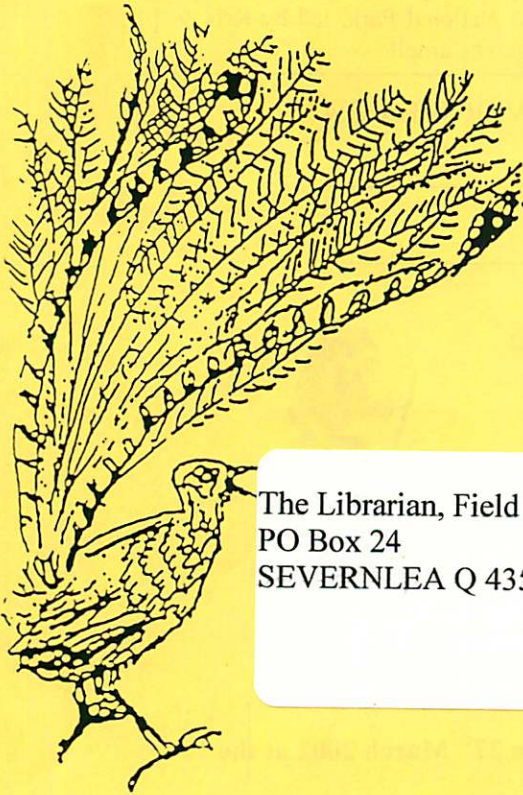


APRIL 2002

Vol. 338

# 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: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each Month at QCWA Rooms at 7.30pm.  
Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4<sup>th</sup> 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:** Braeside on 21<sup>st</sup> April led by Dave Bright.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April. Program by Dave Bright.

**Weekday Outing:** Tenterfield Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May led by Rod Hutchin

**Camp Out:** May 4/5/6 to Kings Plains National Park, led by Kris & Margaret Carnell

Mail contributions to The Newsletter Editor, PO Box 33 SEVERNLEA Q 4352  
e-mail [orana@halenet.com.au](mailto:orana@halenet.com.au)

**Deadline for Newsletter:**

## 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 on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2002 at the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe.**

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 7.40pm with president, Kris Carnell welcoming members.

**Attendance:** There were 15 present and 8 apologies as per attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Desley McDonagh, seconded Patience James. Carried

### **Correspondence:**

#### **Inwards:**

1. Toowoomba Field Nats - *Darling Downs Naturalist* - April 2002.
2. InterNational Parktours - *IPT Traveller* - March 2002.
3. Alice Springs Field Nats Club - *Foxes in Tasmania*
4. Queensland Governmnet - *Community Cabinet News*
5. Australian Naturalists Network - *National Get Together*
6. Chinchilla Field Nats - *Urimbirra* - March & April
7. Fassifern Field Nats Club - *Newsletter* - March
8. Toowoomba Bushwalking Club - *Footprint* - March
9. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist Club - *Murrumbidgee Nat* - February/March
10. Qld Nats Club - *QNC News* - March/April 2002.

**Outwards Correspondence:**

1. Community Service Announcements

The correspondence was accepted on the motion of Margaret Carnell, seconded Rod Hutchin. Carried

**Financial Statement for the period from 27/02/2002 to 27/03/2002:**

Balance as at 27/02/2002 \$1146.36

Receipts: \$13.00

Expenditure:

Postage \$45.00

PO Box rent \$52.00

\$97.00

Balance c/fwd \$1062.36

Accounts for payment:

Postage of Newsletter \$45.00

This financial report was received on the motion of Dave Bright, seconded Errol Walker

**General Business:**

1. Cleanup: Nine or ten people participated in the clean up of Minna Street for the Clean Up Australia Day. Eight bags of rubbish, 1 shopping trolley, 1 dead animal, 1 tyre and some prickly pear plants were collected.
2. Insurance: The secretary has registered the Club for bulk buy insurance.

**Outing Report:**

Dave reported on the outing to Cliff Mountain on 24<sup>th</sup> March, which was led by Glenn Crossman. Members appreciated the hospitality of Ann and Con Potanin.

Jean Harslett moved and Annette Walker seconded, that a letter of thanks be written to the Potanins. Carried.

**April Outing:**

This will be led by Dave Bright to Braeside on the property of Ross McCorquindale. Good clearance or 4WD vehicles will be required.

**Friday Outing:** The Friday outing on April 5<sup>th</sup> will be to Jean & Rob Harslett's property, leaving town at 11.30am.

**Campout May Long Weekend:** Kris and Margaret Carnell will lead this campout to Kings Plains National Park. There are rugged rocks in the creek and a waterfall and an old mine upstream. There is good bird watching.

**Next Meeting:** Dave Bright will give the program.

**Specimens:**

1. Jean Harslett had a young brown snake which was clearly striped and had spots on the belly.
2. Desley McDonagh tabled a brochure on Bird Routes of Baradine and Pilliga.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm and was followed by an excellent slide presentation of the Isle of Bute, given by Desley McDonagh.

**Outing to Tenterfield Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May**

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 11.00am and travel to Tenterfield for lunch in the park. It's hoped that there will still be some autumn tones. On the itinerary will be a visit to the School of Arts and the Federation Museum. There is a charge and members can please themselves whether they go or not, but it is highly recommended. For further information contact Rod Hutchin on 46813439.

### **Bathing Drinking Frenzy**



I recently spent several days away during the very hot weather. When I returned the bird baths were all bone dry. As soon as I could I filled them for 'my' birds again.

That afternoon I was attracted by movement around one of the bird baths. (This one is merely a deep pot saucer attached to the top of a flat metal plate welded to a piece of metal pipe with a sharp end which goes into the ground. (It's a Desley McDonagh idea created by Russell Carnell). It is tall enough for me to have placed it strategically between shrubs under the big eucalypts so that I can observe it from my lounge chair without moving.

There was frenzied movement in and around that birdbath so I investigated. I stood in the shade at the end of my car port and observed.

Two eastern spinebills were rapidly flying in and out of the water, shaking themselves in the shrubs close by and flying back to the water. Between ten and a dozen silvereyes were trying to get into the birdbath as well and four fairy wrens, either young or female, were darting from shrub to water and back again. This frenzied activity went on for about ten minutes, then calmed down. I've never seen anything like it before – it was an amazing experience. When all was calm again the yellow faced honeyeaters had their drink and bath without any fuss at all.

Words cannot really describe this activity but it reminded me of the feed frenzy off the coast when the small fish are attacked by sharks. This time it was the water that was the reason for all the activity.

*Desley McDonagh*

### **Outing to Braeside on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April Led by Dave Bright.**

The April outing will be to Ross McCorquodale's property, which is situated 9km along Crystal Mountain Road. The property covers about 5000 acres and there is quite a large gorge on either Glen Creek or Turners Creek. Vehicles with good clearance or 4WD will be needed.

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and drive via the New England Highway and Crystal Mountain Road to a smoko stop. After smoko, we will drive about 8km north through the property along a farm track to the gorge and lookout. We will walk down a spur into the gorge for lunch. It is rated about 6 on the scale of difficulty.

The gorge starts running west then turns at right angles to the north. There are permanent water holes suitable for swimming and a waterfall, which runs after reasonable rain. We will have to retrace our steps back to the vehicles. For those who don't want to walk down into the gorge there will be ample to see along the top and they can have their lunch there. For more information contact Dave Bright on 46811034.

*Thought for the month:* You shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back.



**Campout to Kings Plains National Park May 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>.**

Leaders Kris & Margaret Carnell

Kings Plains National Park is situated on the western fall of the New England Tablelands and is reached along 10km of all weather road on the northern side of the Kings Plains road, which links Wellingrove with Inverell. From Glen Innes the turnoff to Wellingrove is on the Inverell Road within the town limits with the park turnoff 15km from Wellingrove along the Kings Plains road.

Kings Plains National Park is an important conservation area, protecting mature old ironbark/cypress pine woodland. There are no marked walking tracks. The Red-Necked Wallaby, Eastern Grey Kangaroo and Wallaroo are common and the Brush-Tailed Rock Wallaby has been seen in the rugged gorge area of the park. Platypus are widespread along the creek according to the National Parks brochure but we haven't seen them ourselves.

We will be camping at the area with vehicle access rather than the walk-in camping area. There are no facilities there, but a chemical toilet and bush shower will be provided. There are no camping fees but we have to **provide our own drinking water and firewood**. We will be camping on the Friday night (3<sup>rd</sup> May) but activities won't start until Saturday.

On Saturday afternoon we intend to explore the area upstream of the campsite. There are several large waterholes and an abandoned mining area. Sunday's activities will be walking downstream for about 3km from the walk-in campsite to the falls. There are several small falls and we understand that there is a larger one, which we have not yet reached in our two preoutings. There is a track along the creek for part of the way, then we rock hop our way downstream. The rockhopping is quite slow and a bit tiring but our five year old granddaughter accompanied us and was quite ready to climb a cliff after a short rest, when we arrived at the falls.

There are a number of rare plants in the park, including Grey Guinea Flower, Kings Plains Homoranthus, Folded Leaf Waxflower and Rodd's Star-Hair Bush, and a variety of birds. On our first visit we played hide and seek with a pair of grebes for quite some time, before we gave up trying to get a close look, and left them in peace.

The area between the two campsites has some interesting rock formations in the creek and there are also fire trails on both sides of the entrance to the park, which we can explore. On Monday we intend to look at these areas. The National Parks have agreed to mark on our topographical map the park boundaries and fire trails. At the meeting we mentioned a possible visit to Kings Plains Castle, but have been informed that they no longer do the tourist thing. We intend to break camp at lunchtime on Monday as we will be travelling to Sydney.

Maps of the park and access roads will be available at the April meeting or contact Kris or Margaret on 46835268.

**Outing Report – April 5<sup>th</sup> – Mountain View**

About a dozen Nats members met at Weeroona Park and travelled to Harslett's Farm at Amiens. After discussion it was decided to walk to the south side of the farm, near the

junction of Swipers Creek and The Ten Mile before lunch. It was a pleasant gentle climb up to the Sow and Piglets where we could see over the granite and traprock contact area and a general view of the farm. While looking over the dams, there was much discussion of the relocation of geese from Talc Street in Stanthorpe to the farm, and the subsequent displacement of native fauna.

There were very few flowers and fauna, but we did see a Burton's legless lizard. Back at the base of the rock Jean took us to look at the remains of a pioneer's bark hut. The stone fireplace still remains. She also explained the history of the settlement in the area. We returned to the house for lunch and on the way saw ducks, grebes a brush cuckoo and some mannikin finches.

After lunch Jean showed us part of her extensive display of local insects and gave an interesting talk about them. She also showed us artefacts collected in the area of the farm, along with her comprehensive topaz (gems) and tin (mineral) collection.

Jean suggested that we visit a balancing rock in the forestry area close to the farm after lunch. The outing was enjoyed by all and we expressed our gratitude to Bob and Jean for making it such an interesting outing.

*John Allison*

### **Update on Spider**

The spider which was using the snail shell instead of a leaf which we reported on last month had an accident with its shell. Florence went out one morning to find the shell broken. Now the spider has a bigger and better shell woven into its web.

### **Outing Report Cliff Mountain**

We met at Liston and proceeded to the airstrip at Lindsay View where we had morning tea and met up with the land-owners Con and Anne Potanin. From there we went in four wheel drive vehicles most of the way up Cliff Mountain. A short walk took us to the top of the mountain where there were several viewing points overlooking Rivertree and the Clarence River. We were observed by a rock wallaby and about eight birds soaring above us.

After lunch some people walked across country while others drove to the old graphite mines. These were a series of large holes with evidence of graphite littered around. Here we saw a few building platforms, which had been used as bases for small houses at the time and there was also the remains of a kiln for firing bricks. We followed an old wheelbarrow path around the side of the hill which led to a mine tunnel. The tunnel floor was covered in water and the entrance was guarded by leeches waving about, while bats were seen inside.

A bush fire went through the area in last October and this was obvious everywhere except in the moist gully where the entrance to the tunnel was. The vegetation in this gully appeared quite untouched while the understory of the other areas was quite open as a result of the fire. There was a variety of plant life including zamia & blue gums.

We finished the day by having afternoon tea in pleasant surroundings in Potanin's garden before heading home.

*Glenn Crossman*