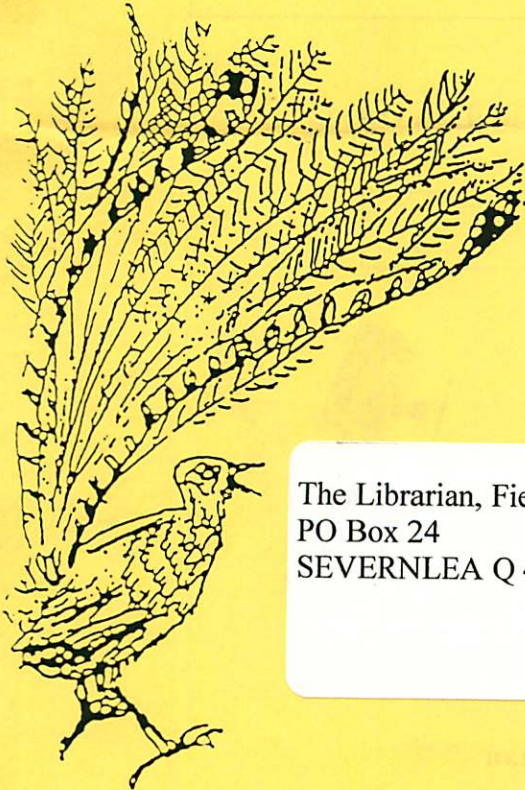


# THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



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.

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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	46811034
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: June 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
led by John Allison to Bald Rock

**Next Meeting: June 26<sup>th</sup>** Program  
by Rob McCosker *Cruising the Kimberley*

**Weekday Outing: Friday July 5<sup>th</sup>**  
organized by Millie Marsden.

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: 8<sup>th</sup> July**

## 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.



### **Billirimba Walk - contributed by Helen Hartman**

Late in March I arranged a walk for a group from Brisbane. Several Field Nats expressed an interest in joining but in the event no one was able to make it. This, it turned out, was just as well since we walked on Saturday instead of the planned Sunday.

The drive down to the Billirimba Fire Trail (south-east of Tenterfield, in state Forest area) saw the forest at its best – mist-shrouded tree tops, elegantly dripping ferns and dimly seen vistas, but when we put foot to ground, it suddenly seemed a lot wetter. In fact it rained throughout the 7.6 kilometres of the outward (downward?) journey. This deterred some of the hardy souls from Brisbane and only about a dozen actually completed the walk.

Their reward was a 355 degree vista of the inside of a cloud, so they all consulted maps instead and listened to my recitation of the geologies and scenic interest of the Demon Fault. If you haven't done this walk, I do recommend it; the lookout is even signposted now. Especially in the damp weather in autumn, the fungi can be spectacular and you are not likely to be much bothered by your fellow man. The bird life is remarkably friendly. The disadvantage of dampness is that the road can be slippery and you may need either 4WD or experience. With a suitable vehicle, you can drive right to the top of the lookout.

**Camp Out to Kings Plains 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2002**

Although the campout to Kings Plains officially started on Saturday, we set out on Friday and ran into drizzle in Tenterfield. However, we thought Kings Plains likely to be drier, being further west. On arrival Kris walked back up the road to put out a Nats sign, and it started to rain in earnest. It was just a sharp shower so we set up camp without any trouble.

When having a look round the campsite I found an ant's nest with empty lizard shells around the top. John explained that the ants raid the lizard's nest and take the eggs back to their nest and discard the empty shells. Later I saw another lot over the creek.

Early on Saturday morning a group of wallaroos were seen on the other side of the creek. They were quite nervous and didn't stop to pass the time of day. After breakfast we set off to walk downstream to the picnic area. On the way we saw a chestnut rumped heath wren as well as a number of other birds. There were four Australasian Grebes on the water doing their disappearing and reappearing act.

We crossed over the creek and headed up the ridge on the other side walking through heath which was head high on Erin. There were a number of plants in bloom, including a deep purple prosanthera. We were wondering what one plant was as the buds looked like wattle but the leaves didn't. When we saw a plant which still had some immature leaves, we realized that it was indeed an acacia.

Shortly after lunch a couple more people arrived so most of the group drove back to the entrance of the park and then walked along the boundary fence towards Kings Plains Creek. Quite a new fence had been constructed and there was a wide firebreak on the inside of the fence. We walked through a lot of heath country with no flowers out at present, but it would be a very interesting place to explore in the spring time. Where the boundary fence crossed the creek there was an old mining area with pipes and ropes lying about. We then walked along a very old road beside the creek down to a second mining area which has a very large mullock heap which was much more recent as there was nothing growing up through it. At the top end of this area we saw a darter in the pond and about a dozen grebes. We meandered back to camp along the creek.

On arrival the fire was lit and we sat around in the firelight that evening talking and eating damper with honey or mulberry jam. We discovered it was not a good idea to put a trivet in the bottom of the camp oven as the damper sinks through it and is quite difficult to remove (but it still tasted great.)

Sunday saw us laden with lunch, walking down to the falls. We took our time and had morning tea perched on rocks along the way. Finally we reached the main drop of the falls which we had not seen previously. As we sat at the top we looked down to a pool of water below and noticed a kingfisher sitting on a rock. There were thornbills, treecreepers and a golden whistler in the trees on the creek bank. Four of the party clambered down to the bottom of the falls on the right hand side facing downstream. The area is very rugged and they found the climb back up on the other side much easier. We noticed "stringy barked" casuarinas growing a little way off the creek. The group who did not venture to the bottom watched a crayfish (yabbie) in one of the pools. During lunch a family of wrens entertained us by flitting down to drink close by.



We headed back up a rocky side gully when it started to spit. The spit increased to drizzle and the rocks were getting quite wet and slippery and we were glad we were not far from the path. We sheltered under the information sign for some minutes and looked at an old tin can with 1955 stamped on the bottom, which John had found. They definitely don't make them like they used to. This can was still quite sound. After a few minutes we walked back up the creek to camp and a change of clothes. Before tea we drove to one of the quiet pools upstream to look for platypus. In spite of sitting still and quiet for at least half an hour we saw nothing more exciting than a family of ducks.

Monday was pack up time, but there was enough time to take a pleasant walk up a gully opposite the campsite to the park boundary. It was quite easy walking along wallaby tracks with no steep hills. There was evidence of pigs and one wallow still had moist mud on the side of it. We saw a different type of vegetation including a callistemon, which was different from any others we had seen, and an extensive stand of phebaliu - another reason to visit this park in the spring.

During the weekend we were entertained by over 50 species of birds, many of which came into camp as we sat quietly. Erin and I watched a pair of brown treecreepers and a family of wrens for ages while we had morning tea. There were two types of treecreeper, pardalotes and several honeyeaters, including the fuscous honeyeater, which was new to some of us. Thank you to John and Sue who kept the bird list for the weekend.

*Kris & Margaret Carnell*

**Bird List Kings Plains Campout Compiled by Sue & John Allison**

Eastern yellow robin	Golden whistler	Yellow tufted honeyeater	White naped honeyeater
Welcome swallow	Dusky woodswallow	Diamond firetail	Sulphur-crested cockatoo
Eastern rosella	Crimson rosella	Turquoise parrot	Noisy miner
Superb fairy wren	Pied currawong	Laughing kookaburra	White-necked heron
Red wattle bird	White-bellied cuckoo-shrike	White -throated treecreeper	Buff-rumped thornbill
Willie wagtail	Yellow thornbill	Yellow-rumped thornbill	Grey fantail
Eastern spinebill	Red-browed finch	Pied cormorant	White-winged chough
Australasian grebe	Chestnut-rumped heathwren (hyacola)	White-browed scrubwren	Pacific black duck
Little lorikeet	Peaceful dove	Jacky winter	Silvereve
	White-eared honeyeater	Darter	Glossy black-cockatoo
Striated pardalote	Azure kingfisher	Spotted pardalote	Crested shrike-tit
White-browed babbler	Fuscous honeyeater	Pied butcherbird	Double-barred finch
Australian magpie	Torresian crow	Brown treecreeper	Magpie-lark (peewee)
Musk lorikeet	Galah	Common bronzewing	Black-faced cuckoo-shrike
Spangled drongo	Straw-necked ibis		

### Outing Report Tenterfield 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002

A small group enjoyed a very pleasant outing to Mt Mackenzie, travelling via Sunnyside through stark pastoral country. Some stops were made for enjoying and photographing spectacular views. Noticed a big white sheep dog (Maremma) amongst the sheep in one property.

The view from Mt Mackenzie was quite clear and the air still – smoke barely moving.

The air force F111s were on patrol and we spent some time watching a small crop duster plane, which seemed to be just above the trees, but was much higher than that.

After lunch we took a walk up the hill and could see it was going to rain so we decided to move off. A grey shrike thrush and an eastern yellow robin were observed in that area.

Several of us drove around Tenterfield viewing the autumn leaves, some of which were quite spectacular. Noticed a flock of little corellas in the town area.

For the area covered and the time taken, the bird list is surprisingly long. It was a very enjoyable day.

*Desley McDonagh.*

#### Bird list Tenterfield

White faced heron	Kookaburra	White ibis	Wedgetailed eagle
Yellow faced honeyeater	Yellow rumped thornbill	Yellow tailed black cockatoo	Fairy wren (female & immature male)
Eastern rosella	Noisy miner	Galah	Currawong
Grey shrike thrush	Eastern yellow robin	Maggie	Red rumped parrot
Darter	King parrot	Willy wagtail	Little corella
Grey butcher bird	?swift	Wood duck (maned goose)	

### Pre Outing Report – Bald Rock – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2002

**Leader: John Allison**

The outing to Bald Rock on 23<sup>rd</sup> June will be an easy to moderate walk suitable for all members. We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel in as few cars as possible because there is a day use fee at the national park. Some of us have yearly passes.

We will have smoko on arrival then walk around the back of the rock and have lunch at the top. There is a lyrebird's nest part way up which we will endeavour to find. After lunch and a good look round there are three ways to get back to the car park – return the way we came, straight down the rock face or following a fissure to the west. The third alternative could be more challenging.

Depending on the time available we could possibly explore some of the forest tracks between the rock and Mt Lindesay Road.

**Outing Report Red Rock Gorge 26<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Led by Peter & Lynette Haselgrove**

Thirteen members met at the northeastern entrance of Sundown and transferred into three 4WD vehicles for the drive into Red Rock Gorge. After smoko at the Red Rock parking area we walked north and then northwest along the old road leading out to the Beehive Mine area. This road was constructed around 1913 to provide access to a skidway leading down into Red Rock Gorge where the Beehive Mining Company had workings, including a steam-driven pump to pump water up to the old alluvial working on the side of the gorge. A dam across Red Rock creek and another dam up above the workings supplied the sluice pump.

The road follows the ridge top north of the parking area then curves northwest to finish on a spur leading from Mt Lofty. About half of the road has been "benched" into the side of the hill to allow it to follow the contour and run level out to the site. Given what must have been primitive equipment – either horse drawn rippers/blades or very early-mechanized equipment, the road has been beautifully constructed and is in very good condition nearly 100 years later. Members obtained good views across Red Rock Gorge towards the falls and Carpenters Gully and northwest towards Mt. Malakoff and Nundubbermere.

After lunch back at the vehicles, those members with perhaps more enthusiasm than sense, allowed themselves to be led by Peter Haselgrove along the old road back to the entrance. This leads from below the dam at the Red Rock parking area back to about halfway along what is known as the bottom 4WD track. It was very overgrown and difficult for taller members of the group (sorry Kris) and in some sections required imagination for its existence, but there is one benched section with some nice rock work and down on the flats it was more obvious. This was probably the original road put in to the Red Rock workings and as such must be well over 100 years old so has lasted very well.

The group finished with afternoon smoko at the old Sundown homestead site at about 3.30pm. Fortunately, the Carnells and the Hockings kept note of some of the birds and plants seen on the day. The weather was perfect and complemented an interesting brush with the history of some of the old mining days.

**Flora at Red Rock Gorge**

There were not a lot of flowers in bloom on this outing, but some plants of interest were Pterostylus (greenhood) plants, a vine growing on a scree slope which we looked at through binoculars. There was also a tree close by which appeared to be a rainforest variety with the sun glinting off its leaves. A number of oleander wattle trees had grown to be very large in the traprock. They are much smaller in granite. Peter also pointed out coolatai grass, which is a pest on traprock like lovegrass is on granite. It burns at high temperature, which destroys native flora, and takes over from native grasses. Near the skidway we noticed a pomaderris argrophyllia tree which was quite large – certainly a tree not a shrub.

**Flower List**

Correa (reflexa?) – cream flower	Hibbertia	Daisy bush (pale flower)	Melichrys
Whalemburgia	Calotis (daisy burr)	Mistletoe – golden	Olearia (peach bush)
Rostellularia adescens – tiny pink/mauve flower	Olearia blue mountain daisy		

### Bird List Red Rock Outing

This list is not complete. We heard and glimpsed a number of birds are not recorded here.

Wedgetailed Eagle	Currawong	Thornbill	Pardalote - spotted
Jacky winter	Richard's pippit		

On the way in to the National Park at Ballandean Station a herd of between 20 and 30 deer crossed the road led by a buck with antlers.

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 22 May, 2002

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 7.37pm with President, Kris Carnell, welcoming members and visitors, particularly new members, John and Lyn Marriott.

**Attendance:** There were 21 present at the meeting and 7 apologies as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Patience James, seconded by Dave Bright. Carried.

#### Correspondence:

##### Inwards:

1. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club - *Footprint* - April 2002
2. Murrumbidgee Field Nats Club - *Murrumbidgee Naturalist* - May 2002
3. Chinchilla Field Nats Club - *Urimbirra* - May 2002
4. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club - *Darling Downs Naturalist* - May 2002
5. Qld Naturalist Club - *QNC News* - May/June 2002

##### Outwards Correspondence:

1. C and A Potanin and Ross McCorquadale - thanks for allowing access for outing
- This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

#### Financial Statement for the period from 25/4/02 to 22/5/02:

Cash book balance as at 24/4/02 \$ 1,025.26

##### Receipts:

Room rent collection 6.00

##### Expenditure:

Room rent 25.00  
Magazine postage 45.00  
Kris Carnell - paper and labels 47.20  
Govt tax 0.60  
117.80

Balance as at 22/5/02 is \$913.46 which agrees with the cash book balance as at 25/5/02.

Less outstanding cash receipt of \$6 from room rent for April.

Agrees with bank balance as at 17/5/02 of \$907.46

This financial report was received on the motion of Dave Bright, seconded by Patience James. Carried

#### Photocopier

Kris said he was still investigating other photocopier options but we had had no maintenance costs since the service agreement with Samson had expired.

#### Membership Fees

Kris recommended that the membership fees for 2002/03 remain the same.

Motion: "That the membership fees for 2002/03 remain as \$15 for a single and \$25 for a family"

Moved: Desley McDonagh Seconded: Margaret Carnell Carried.

#### Public Liability Insurance

In March, Liz registered our Club's interest in group cover for public liability insurance with the Queensland Government's Insurance Taskforce. They are now requiring additional information about the club and its

financial situation with a view to developing a scheme for insurance cover for community groups. If we respond to this request for information, we will still have the opportunity to accept or reject their offer, depending on whether it is cheaper than our current insurers. They anticipate that the scheme will be operational by 1 September and we have cover via CGU Insurance until January 2003.

Motion: "That we continue to register our interest with this group insurance scheme until they give us details about the proposed cover and premium costs" Moved: Millie Marsden Seconded: Liz Bourne Carried.

#### General Business:

Tom Archer said he had been considering developing a tourist brochure outlining places of interest in and around Stanthorpe eg. birds, fossicking, fishing etc. He thought it might take the form of a booklet that could be sold to tourists. Members were asked for feedback on this idea.

#### Outing Reports:

##### 1. Camp Out at Kings Plains

Margaret Carnell reported on this camp out which took place on the May long weekend. Although there was some rain, it was not enough to spoil the weekend and participants saw quite a good variety of birds and wildflowers.

##### 2. Friday outing to Tenterfield on 10 May

Desley McDonagh and Rod Hutchin were joined by the Harsletts on Mt McKenzie outside Tenterfield which produced good views and lots of birds.

##### 3. Red Rock Gorge - 19 May

13 people attended this walk, led by Peter and Lyn Hazelgrove. They followed the road to the Beehive Mine which was constructed in 1912 and is still fairly trafficable. All agreed it was a very interesting part of the park and its early history.

#### Next Outings:

The next Friday outing on 7 June will be led by Tim Murray and will be to the railway tunnel at Dalveen.

Participants were asked to wear bright clothing, The trip may have to be cancelled if trains are scheduled. It will leave from Weeroona Park at 11.30am.

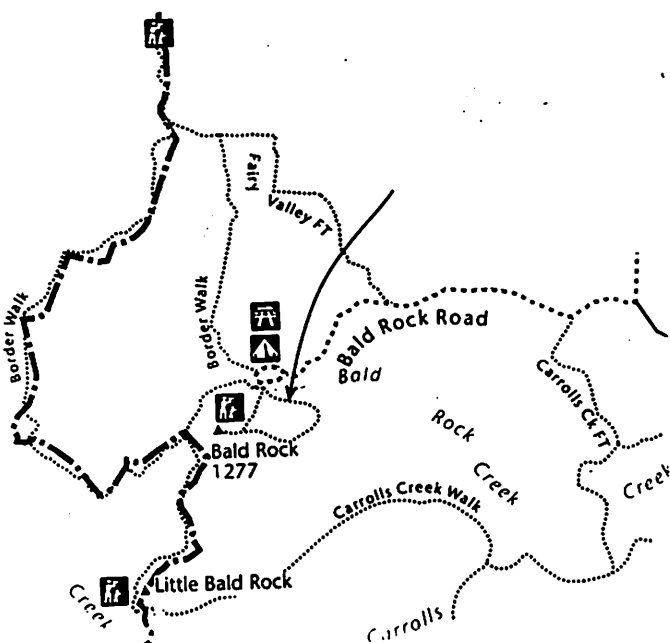
The next Sunday outing is scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> May and will be led by John Allison.

#### Specimens:

1. Millie Marsden had old photos of members on various Field Nats. outings.
2. Jean Harslett had photos taken from the trip up Mt Mackenzie, near Tenterfield
3. Rob McCosker had rocks collected on the camp out.

The meeting closed at 8.13pm and was followed by an excellent slide presentation by Kris and Margaret Carnell taken on various trips to some of the national parks in northern New South Wales - Torrington, Kings Plains and the Warrumbungles.

## Annual Meeting August 28<sup>th</sup> 2002



#### Bald Rock

A steady climb on a marked track, with signs that explain features. Australia's largest granite rock. The summit is 260 metres above a landscape of rocky outcrops, with fine views into Queensland. Return the same way or take the much steeper direct descent. Allow 3 hours; 3 kilometres return. Medium gradient; take non-slip shoes.

#### Little Bald Rock

Walk from the picnic area, over small hills and south along the state border to this large granite rock. Climbing the rock is interesting and gives good views into Queensland's Girraween National Park. Allow 3 hours for 6 kilometres return; medium gradients.

#### Carrolls Creek Walk

This is a long loop suitable for fit walkers. The walk follows fire trails used by park vehicles, passing through open woodland and crossing pretty Carrolls Creek. This permanent creek has small waterholes but walkers should carry drinking water. Begin the walk by following the Bald Rock entrance road to the Carrolls Creek Fire Trail sign. The walk then loops west to the state border and north past Little Bald Rock to the camping area. Allow a full day for 18 kilometres return; medium gradients, with the option to climb Little Bald Rock.

#### Border Walk

An interesting loop walk following fire trails and the state border. Scenery varies but is mostly through dry woodlands, so carry ample drinking water. A side walk of 2 kilometres return climbs gently to a good viewing point. Some high rocks where children must be supervised. Allow 5 hours; 12-14 km return; medium gradients.