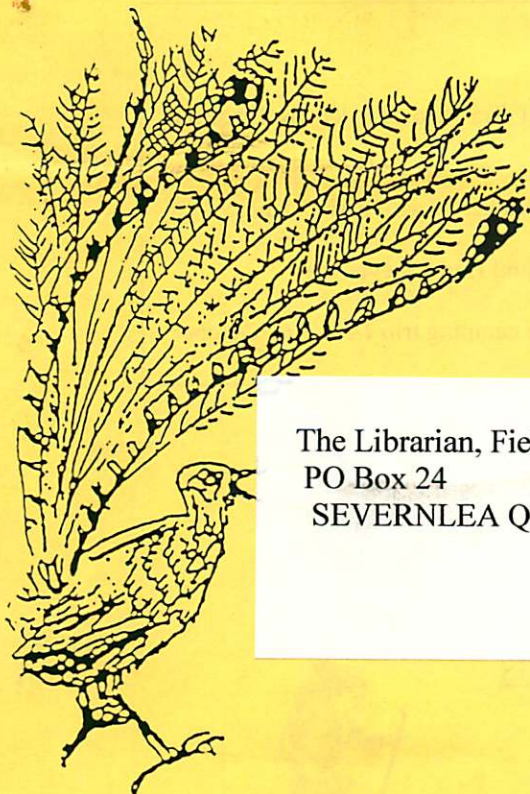


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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



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	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: 20th October 2002 to "Inverted Bottle" Rock in Girraween N.P led by Errol and Annette Walker

Next Meeting: Wednesday 23rd October. Program by Errol and Annette Walker "Two Tassie Islands:

Weekday Outing: Friday 1st November to Underground River led by Joan and Harry Stevenson

Camping Trip: John & Sue Allison have invited members to join a private camping trip 14th – 16th October

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

Deadline for Newsletter: Monday 11th 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.



Friday Outing to 'Springside' Tenterfield 04/10/02

This property is on the western side of Mt Mackenzie and fourteen Nats members and friends had a very enjoyable outing there.

We travelled via Sunnyside and paused on the way to examine a 'flowering' tree, which was actually a fig tree festooned with flowering clematis. While at that area we discovered a large area of trigger plant, just past its prime, which had survived at the base of the sloping rock where moisture had settled. While examining this we found two very small violets as well as one blue bell (whalenbergia). This is a very interesting area as many of the original

trees were either felled or rung but there are many kurrajong and fig trees remaining. With the starkness of the dead trees, the interesting rock formations and the deep green of the kurrajong and fig trees it has a uniqueness I've not seen anywhere else.

We drove past the busy 'Springside' shearing shed (shearing time) and the house and down towards their small creek which was running. The sheep followed us, expecting to be fed. Unfortunately, the sheep have had to be fed for quite some time because of the drought.

Lunch was in the shade by the creek. Then we rambled up and down the creek area enjoying and examining an area new to us.

The birds were quite plentiful. I expect, in good seasons, this would be an excellent bird outing. Considering that we were really not bird watching very seriously we have a very good list of birds observed.

After afternoon tea back at the cars we came home via the summit of Mt Mackenzie. It was good to see that the vandalism there had been repaired. We are at a loss to understand why people have to vandalise facilities that are such a positive addition to the area up there. Unfortunately, as the whole country is covered by drought and smoke haze, the outlook was hazy and smoky.

Two interesting observations were a black rabbit and a small bird's nest made of strands of wool.

I'm sure everyone who attended enjoyed an outing to a 'new' place and we plan to go back there another time. Thanks to the Murrys for allowing us to ramble over their property.

Bird List

Magpie	Eastern rosella	Wood duck
Swallow	Nankeen kestrel	Galah
Yellow rumped thornbill	Currawong	Kookaburra
Cisticola	Yellow faced honeyeater	Grey fantail
Red browed finch	Crimson rosella	Brown treecreeper
White browed scrub wren	White eared honeyeater	Straw necked ibis
Mistletoe bird	Crow	Striped pardalote
Leaden flycatcher	Willy wagtail	

Desley McDonagh

Visit to Myall National Park

From Buledelah on Myall Lake Kris and I headed towards Forster via the scenic route in uncertain weather. We passed a turnoff to Myall Lakes National Park, so had to back track to go there to see what is believed to be the tallest tree in N.S.W..

There were beautiful eucalypts and rainforest mixed along the roadsides and after climbing steeply for a while and negotiating a fallen acacia which was across the road, we arrived at the picnic area and walked about 130 metres to see the *Eucalyptus grandis* (Flooded Gum) which is 76.2 metres tall and 3.2 metres in diameter at the base. The first branch is 25 metres

above the ground and the diameter at that point is 1.8 metres. There is a boardwalk around the tree and we took photos of it in sections. It is awesome.

We continued on in drizzle towards Seal Rocks. Along the roadside where the scrub had been cleared for the powerlines were masses of white flowers. We stopped after a while and discovered there were actinotus (flannel flowers) and conospermum (smokebush) as well as ricinocarpus (wedding bush), patersonia, hibbertia, tetratheca (black eyed Susan), stypantra, epacris, dilwinia retorta and one calochilus (bearded orchid). On the other side of the road there were gompholobium latifolium (golden glory pea) with huge flowers. Further on the area that had been cleared earlier did not have so many flowers.

When we arrived at Seal Rocks the rain was a bit heavier, so after taking a couple of misty photos we headed for the Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse, and had lunch in the car. Fortunately, the rain eased so we set off to walk the eight minutes or so to the lighthouse. We intended to go wet or not, unlike a number of other people who drove out again when they found they had to walk. They missed a treat.

There were numerous birds calling along the tree lined track, including friarbirds and smaller honeyeaters. We stopped to photograph the sea coming in through and clefts in the enormous rocks. (We discovered later that this is described as a blow hole). There is a collection of white painted buildings at the point with the lighthouse at the top of the cliff. It is still in use and two of the buildings are occupied by lighthouse keepers. I noticed on the verandah of one house was a whale rescue kit.

The wind was howling in from the south and there were too many white caps to notice if any whales were breaching or spouting. The view is exceptionally beautiful and as the sun had come out, the sea was blue. The wind was so strong it was difficult to stand upright at the top of the lighthouse steps.

We watched some gannets flying way below us above the waves, then Kris went round the other side of the lighthouse and there were three sea eagles soaring above the cliffs. We admired them for quite some time before walking back along the track, pausing to watch honeyeaters bathing in a puddle.

The road skirts Smiths Lake which was sparkling in the sunlight. We went into the township of Smith Lake for a cup of coffee. The shop that sells coffee doesn't have cake or biscuits, just pies and fried stuff, but the lady behind the counter suggested we visit the baker two doors up and buy what we wanted and she would be very happy to serve us coffee to have with it.. So we did – and very nice it all was too! It was a fitting end to a lovely day.

Margaret Carnell

Anyone For An Outdoor Shower?

I was watering the garden recently and directed the hose on to a mock orange about 2 metres in height and just bursting into leaf after winter hibernation.

A flock of silvereyes flew into the shrub under the "shower". There were at least a dozen in there enjoying the experience, totally undisturbed by my directing the hose at them from time to time. They were enjoying themselves so much that I watered the shrub longer than I had

planned.

I know that the grape producers don't like silvereyes, with good reason, but they really are beautiful little birds and were here before the grape producers. *Desley McDonagh*

P.S. The peewees (mudlarks) nested in my big eucalypt again this spring, but it seems as if the currawong/s killed and ate the young. The balance of nature again.

3/10/02

The peewees are working on the nest again but the currawongs won't leave them alone. Yesterday there were two currawongs watching the peewee's every move. It seemed as if the peewees are adding more mud to the nest they made at the beginning of the breeding season

"Inverted Bottle" Rock Outing

Sunday 20th October 2002

Leaders: Errol & Annette Walker – Ph 46812008

Scale of Difficulty: 2 out of 10

Meet 8.00am Weeroona Park



And so we may all look in wonder and amazement at such a sight. This balancing rock was very likely first observed by surveyors on the QLD-NSW border fence which runs nearby. When one considers the processes of erosion and weathering in granite, the odds against a tor remaining in this attitude are very high.

The "Bottle" rock for want of a better description is located in the south eastern section of Girraween National park between West and South Bald Rock.

It was probably first noticed by border surveyor Drummond's team in 1885. Nineteen years earlier Roberts surveyed the border to the north and south of this section. One wonders if they left the hardest part to last.

The rock has to be one of the finest examples of a balancer anywhere in Australia.

Finding the rock will only be part of the attraction of this outing because we will also have the opportunity to see some of the best granite mountains, high country swamps and alpine plants.

We will be right beside West, Middle and South Bald Rocks during the course of our walk. There will not be time to climb these features but we will get some great views and possibly dramatic photos.

The weather should be warming up by then so a level 2 walk is appropriate. Walking will be 99% on old property trails or fire trails. Because walking will involve 3 hours of our time

there should be plenty of opportunities for wildlife photography and bird watching.

To get into the good stuff as soon as possible we will need 4WD's to get us to the start of the walk which is half way around the Palingyard Creek – Mt Norman road.

Meet at Weeroona Park for 8.00am departure (it's nearly summer so don't complain) and arrange a lift in a 4WD if you don't have one. It might be an idea to sort this out with friends or fellow Nats prior to the outing.

Lunch will have to be carried with morning and afternoon tea at the vehicles.

Carry water, lunch, a hat, camera and binoculars. Shorts should be OK and I hope it rains!
Errol.

Next Meeting – Wednesday 23rd October 2002
Errol and Annette Walker
Two Tassie Islands (Maria and King)

Maria Island is a 11550ha National Park off the lower east coast of the Tasmanian mainland. It has mountains, colourful and interesting beach cliffs, unbelievable wildlife and a history not many people can comprehend.

The island was a penal colony predating Port Arthur, having many buildings largely intact as well as spectacular evidence of commercial ventures of the 1930s.

King Island is on the north western tip of the Tassie mainland. It is a large island of soft green 'English' scenery with atrocious weather to match.

Commercially the island produces wicked cheeses, has a thriving unique kelp industry and has been the source of a large percentage of the world's scheelite from which tungsten is derived. It is used for such things as tool blades and electric lamp filaments.

For naturalists there are fairy penguins, many walking trails, a 7000 year old calcified forest,

Outing Report for September

The outing to Girraween National Park on September 22nd attracted 19 people on a warm sunny spring day.

After arriving at the park, and the customary morning tea was partaken, we set off down the Junction track. Several wildflowers were seen in bloom in spite of the drought, which was in evidence as we crossed Bald Rock Creek, now reduced to a few waterholes. A short distance down the track we turned off towards the ridge to the north with its enticing rock formations and after quite a steep climb we were clambering around the top of the ridge looking for the best camera angles and views. A fairly common plant seen here was the Pink Waxflower *Eriostemon australasius*. Though mostly in bud we did find one plant with its first blooms open, showing promise of what the ridge will look like in a couple of weeks. We continued over the ridge and were startled by the flurry of wings from the ground in front of us. The bird landed nearby and put on such a defensive display with head bowing, tail twitching and alarm call that we gathered it had been nesting and soon found its well hidden nest containing

two whitish eggs with dark spots on one end. The bird was a Spotted Quail-thrush, and the nest was a simple bed of fine sticks on the ground, wedged between a thin flake of granite and a large boulder.

Our next stop was on a vast area of granite with some eye-catching native blooms, including *Kunzea obovata*, a fairly uncommon White Beard, *Leucopogon biflorus* and the brilliant yellow *Phebalium whitei*.

We went on down the slope to a large clump of boulders and stopped in their shade for lunch. With the afternoon now quite hot we opted to return down the gully then across to the Junction Track rather than go back up the ridge. In spite of my efforts to keep our little group together we discovered that one member was missing. We spent some time waiting, searching and calling but to no avail and eventually decided he must have returned the way we came, so we continued towards the gully. We paused on the way to look at an unusual wattle, *Acacia hispidula*, with its coarse rough leaves, and then to wonder at who would have gone to the trouble of building a stone fireplace complete with stone seats around it, here in the middle of this wilderness area of the park. Upon reaching the gully we rock-hopped down its dry watercourse in the wonderful cool shade of the rock walls. After the exposed granite of a few minutes ago, this was like being in a different world, with vines and staghorns overhead.

As the gully flattened out, it became more overgrown and we ascended the ridge to the south once again, passing through clumps of spinifex grass as we crossed over it and eventually came to the Junction track, and returned to the car park to discover our missing member waiting there for us.

Flowering plant list includes the following 35 species.

Acacia granitica, *A. brunioides*, *A. adunca*, *A. latisepala*, *A. pruinosa*.

Zieria 2 sp., *Micromyrtus sessilis*, *Grevillea linearifolia*, *Pimelea linifolia*, *Phebalium rotundifolia*, *P. whitei*, *Notelaea linearis*, *Olearia mycophylla*, *Xanthorrhoea*, *Epacris*, *Leucopogon meleucoides*, *L. biflorus*, *Choretrum candollei*, *Pultenaea hartmannii*, *Caladenia dilatata*, *Dendrobium speciosum*, *D. linguiforme*, *Patersonia glabrata*, *Bossiaea rhombifolia*, *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Hovea linearis*, *Kunzea obovata*, *Boronia amabilis*, *Stylidium laricifolium*, *Solanum elegans*, *Prostanthera nivea*, *Pomaderris*, *Indigofera australis*, *Stenanthemum scortechinii*.

Rob McCosker.

Outing Etiquette and Safety

The concern of having a "missing person" on the last outing prompts me to write a note outlining the preferred behaviour of people attending our Nats Outings. I feel that it is really a matter of courtesy to the person who has volunteered to lead an outing that he be the leader, that is in the front of the group unless he has given other instructions. Usually the leader will have done a pre-outing trip and has in his mind a definite plan of his route, particularly to show items of interest found on the pre-outing. He will also have the safety and well-being of all members to consider when walking, making frequent stops if needed to allow the group to keep together, and to ensure that no-one misses out on items of interest. After-all we are a Field Naturalist Club with interests in all manner of natural history, and the actual bushwalking is the method of achieving access to these interests.

Please follow the leader and keep the person behind you in sight at all times.
If you wish to leave early or go a different way you must inform the leader.
Be willing to help others along the way and most of all, enjoy yourselves.

Rob McCosker.

Pre Outing Report Friday 1st November

Leaders: Joan and Harry Stevenson

The outing on Friday 1st November will be to the Underground River at Girraween National Park. We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and drive to the Underground River carpark where we will have morning tea, and walk to the river and back. If anyone wants to stay longer, we will go to the picnic area at Girraween for lunch.

Minutes of Meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc held in the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe on 25th September 2002.

Opening: The meeting opened at 7:35pm by Vice President Millie Marsden with Rob McCosker acting as secretary.

Attendance: There were 22 present and 8 apologies as per attendance book.

Welcome: Millie welcomed everyone especially two new members Dell Wham and Gwen Chapman.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: Tom Archer moved, John Allison that the minutes be confirmed as a correct record of the previous meeting. Carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards

1. Fassifern Field Nats Club	Newsletters August 2002 & September 2002
2. Darling Downs Naturalist	Newsletters August 2002, September 2002
3. Granite Belt Organic Growers	Support for photocopier purchase
4. Chinchilla Field Naturalist Club	Urimbirra September 2002
5. Toowoomba Field Naturalist Club	Footprint September 2002
6. Qld Field Naturalist Club -	QNC News September/October 2002
7. Murrumbidgee Naturalists	Newsletter September 2002
8. Australian Nats Network	Newsletter September 2002

Moved Errol Walker, Seconded Rod Hutchin that the inwards correspondence be received. Carried.

Financial Statement for the period Sept 2002 from 28/08/02 to 25/09/02

Cash Book balance as at 28/08/02 1451.70

Receipts

Subscriptions	245.00	
Room Rent collection	2.50	247.50

Expenditure

Magazine postage July/Aug	54.20	
Room rent July, Aug, Sept	45.00	
Accountant (audit)	115.00	
Photocopier (consumables)	69.00	
Office of fair trading	33.10	
Office of fair trading	14.50	
Govt Tax	0.60	331.20
Cash Book Balance as at 25/09/02		1368.00

Accounts for payment: Magazine Postage September \$29.70

This financial report was received on the motion of Dave Bright, seconded Desley McDonagh. Carried

Outing Reports

Girraween National Park on 22nd September

Rob McCosker reported 19 attended the outing to Girraween with fine weather and quite a few wildflowers.

Some thought the grade should have been 9.5!

Pre Outing Reports

1. Murray's Property Tenterfield on 4th October

Next weekday outing is to leave at 11.00pm to drive to a property at Tenterfield, led by Desley McDonagh.

2. Bottle Rock , Girraween National Park on 20th October

Next monthly outing will have an early start at 8.00am. It will be a walk in Girraween National Park to include views of a spectacular balancing rock as well as the major peaks. It is grade 2, mostly on fire trails. Lunch will be carried. Leaders Errol & Annette Walker

3. November Weekday Outing on 4th November

This will be led by Joan and Harry Stevenson. More details later

4. Torrington

John and Sue Allison issued an invitation to members to join a private camping trip to Torrington on October 14th – 16th.

Next Meeting on 23rd October: Program by Errol Walker on Tassie Islands – King and Maria Islands.

General Business:

1. Mary Clarke has donated 14 books to our library. A full list of library titles is to be printed in the Newsletter.
2. Rob McCosker raised the matter of the importance of keeping the outing leader informed if a member wishes to leave the group on an outing, otherwise stay with the group.
3. Dave Bright reported that the submission for a grant for a new photocopier was ready to be sent.
4. A committee meeting has been held to prepare the program for the next year and should be printed in the next newsletter.
5. John Allison suggested this year's Christmas party be held at "Tully park", 397 Mt Tully Road, the property of Dell Wham, on 8th December.
6. Following discussion re a donation to the Historical Society to fund the housing of Jean Harslett's Collections the following suggestions were received.
 - (a) A Fundraising Dinner at QCWA Rooms. QCWA will provide free rent for the room
 - (b) A levy on members attending the Christmas party
 - (c) A request for donations from members unable to attend a function.

Specimens

1. John Allison had a garden plant from Wilson's Downfall he wanted identified.
2. John also had photos from two previous outings
3. Rob McCosker had a new booklet produced by Girraween National Park ranger Jo McLellan with 50 colour photos of common wildflowers, titled "Girraween's Festival of Flowers".

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Program by Jean Harslett after a brief introduction, describing the formation of the Nats Club in 1969, the work leading up to the Gazettal of Girraween National Park and the construction of the Park Office building and walking tracks. Jean's slide show epitomised what the Field Nat's Club is all about, covering all aspects of interest, sprinkled with lots of humour.

Following the program most members stayed to socialise with tea, coffee and biscuits – courtesy of Dave Bright.

The program for the next twelve months is on the following page. There are still a couple of outings to be finalised and we will discuss them at the next meeting. The program is a proposed one and if there are any difficulties the organizers are asked to swap with someone else or contact Kris, so that alternative arrangements can be made.

2002/2003 PROGRAMME

Oct	Fri 4	D McDonagh	Tenterfield
	Sun 20	E Walker	Balancing Rock
	Wed 23	E Walker	Tasmania-King & Maria Islands
Nov	Fri 1	Stevensons	Underground River
	Sun 24	M Pennisi	Sugarloaf
	Wed 27	P Andrewartha	
Dec	Sun 8	Break Up	Tully Park
Jan	Sun 19	T.B.A.	T.B.A.
Feb	Fri 7	Banala Reserve	J Allison
	Sun 23	Rocky River	J Allison
	Wed 26	Tasmania	C Hockings
Mar	Fri 7	J Harslett	
	21to 23	J & S Allison	Campout at Woolli
	Sun 23	Wellington Rock	K & M Carnell
	Wed 26	R McCosker	Slides of Stanthorpe
Apr	Fri 4	J & J Bourne	
	Sun 20	C Hockings	Middle Bald Rock
	Wed 23	D McDonagh	
May	3/4/5	Camp out	Clarence R.Gorge P Kerr
May	Wed 7	M Marsden	<i>Note change of date</i>
	Sun 25	R McCosker	Bluff River Road
	Wed 28	D Wilson	
June	Fri 6	A & G Cameron	The Gap Hotel and Tunnels
	Sun 22	G & J Crosssman	Potanins or Maryland R Gorge
	Wed 25	J Harslett	
July	Fri 4	T.B.A .	
	Sun 20	Warwick Members	Goomburra
	Wed 23	N Crawford	
Aug	Fri 1	D Bright	
	Sun 24	P Haselgrove	Herries Range, Rabbit Fence
	Wed 27	Remember Last Year	
Sep	Fri 5	J Allison & Friends	Mt Tully
	Sun 21	L Bourne	Broadwater State Forest
	Wed 24	M Marsden	Eulo & Yowah

Spare outings ; Condamine Gorge (Winter) , Girraween Lodge Trails
(R McCosker) and Rats Castle at Harslett Farm