

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 2002 - 2003

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Deadline for Newsletter: 8th June 2003

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SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS ON NATS OUTINGS

- Flat walking, road or track.
2. Road or track, gentle hills. 3. Track, some hilly sections.
- Track, some steep sections.
- Cross country, easy open forest, gentle slopes.
- Track, steep sections common, with steps.
- Cross country, some hills, some thick undergrowth.
- Cross country, steep sections with scrambles over rocks etc., and some thick undergrowth.
- Cross country, steep, hilly, rough, thick undergrowth.
- Mountain climbing, hard going, higher level of fitness or plenty of time required.

Pre Outing to Top Tunnel & The Gap Hotel – 6th June 2003

Leaders: Archie & Grace Cameron

We will meet at the Jim Mitchell Park, Dalveen at 9.00am. **Please note meeting place and time.** The park is beside the railway line.

A railway employee will be with us to visit the tunnel. We are trying to arrange to visit the second tunnel but it hasn't been confirmed. If we do, it will be in the afternoon and we will need some 4 wheel drives for a short period, but this can be arranged. We will have morning tea and lunch at the cars.

**Outing Report Sunday 13th April
Girraween – Un-named Rock**

A small convoy of 4 vehicles, (12 people) departed at 9:10am from Weeroona Park under clear, blue, Autumn skies.

We proceeded to the White Gate on the Mt Norman Road where we added 2 more to the party. Morning Tea was enjoyed before setting out for the walk at about 10:30am.

Along the way two ground orchids were observed to be flowering; *Eriochilus cucullatus* (Parson's Bands) and a *Prasophyllum* species (possibly *plumosum* from my close-up photo).

We reached the top of the rock at midday where we enjoyed lunch and the view, which included many of the well-known peaks in Girraween and extended to Wilson's Peak and Mt Barney in the N.E.

After Lunch we proceeded cross-country in an easterly direction to cross the swamp north of South Bald Rock. We then followed the fire-trail back to the vehicles, which we reached at about 3:00pm.

A feature of the walk was the territorial calls of the Scarlet Robins, busy establishing their boundaries before Winter.

Following afternoon tea we went out separate ways, having enjoyed a pleasant walk of about 9km and the pleasure of good company.

Many thanks to Margaret Carnell for compiling both the plant and bird lists.

Janet & Col Hockings

Lunch on Un-named rock

Middle & West Bald Rock

Bird List – Outing to Un-named Rock

Crimson Rosella, New Holland Honeyeater, Currawong, Eastern Spinebell, Wedgetail Eagle, Peaceful Dove, Magpie, Wattle Bird, Scarlet Robin (call), Cuckoo (call),

Flower List – Outing to Un-named Rock

I have used the old name *Helichrysum* in this list as I do not have access to the new names.

Eriochilus cucullatus (Parsons Bands)	Craspedia uniflora (Billy Buttons)	Helichrysum bracteatum (Golden everlasting)	Hypoxis hygrometrica (Golden Weather Glass)
*Helichrysum (rutidolepis?)	Brachyscombe (small white or mauve daisy)	Pratia purpurascens (white root)	Dandelion
Banksia integrifolia	Centuri	Epacris sp (heath)	Stackhousia sp
Trachymene incisa (wild carrot)	Helichrysum sp (yellow button clusters)	Goodenia 2 species	Wahlenbergia stricta (Australian bluebell)
Haemodorum corymbosum Blood root seed	Spiranthese sinensis	Stylidium graminifolium (trigger flower)	Casuarina
Ajuga australis (Australian bugle)	Isotoma petraea	Pimelia sp	Acacia (Prickly Moses)
Hibbertia sp (small flowers notched petals)	Styphelia viridis (five-corners)	Podolepis sp	Solanum (2 species, 1 in bloom)
Geranium pilosum	Eustrephus latifolius (Wombat berry)	Boronia sp (tiny, white)	Lomartia silaifolia (wild parsley)
Murdannia graminea	Dianella sp (flax lily)	Glycine?(twining purple pea)	Hybanthus sp
Pelargonium australe	Prasoyhyllum sp	Mauve fungus (Australian Blewits)	Brown toadstools
White toadstools	Yellow coral fungus	Earth Star	

* Yellow everlastings, something like *Helichrysum albicans*, but with much larger centres and very short petals, carpeting areas that had been burnt.

Other: Dead yabbie, possibly a red one, in swamp which had been burnt.

Report on Friday Outing to Passchendaele Forest on 4th April 2003

I was so sorry to rush the outing as it was a lovely day for a walk. Five of us left Weeroona Park and met up with Jean and Bob at the forest station. I told the officer there I proposed a different route as I thought the bare rock might be slippery after the recent showers.

Jean has given me a list of the flowers we saw and interesting comments re the effect of the drought.

There was very little wildlife- one Red bellied black snake gave us a good look, but a small skink and another tiny lizard dashed off. Only three birds were identified – a magpie, crimson rosella and noisy miner.

We spent some time on a lovely “big” area of bare rock. We could have spent all day there! After lunch back at the cars Jean and Bob kindly offered to take people up to the TV tower and I rushed home – through very heavy rain on the way out to the highway. Unfortunately it stopped before reaching Church Road, The Summit.

Joan Bourne

Passchendaele Forestry Outing Leader Joan Bourne 4.4.2003

Making a list of wildflowers seen is interesting, after such a long period without rain. There are surprises and some disappointments. Some plants are responding and others, not (not yet anyway). Grasses and weeds or the “ferals” as Rod called them, are quick to come up and are doing very well.

Near rock pools on the large granite slabs moss, small ferns, small plants and colourful fungi were great. *Wombat Vines* (*Eustrephus latifolius*) displayed bright orange berries which really caught the eye. A *Wonga Vine* (*Pandorea pandorana*) gave us a “Pandora’s Box” surprise (without the ills). Beautiful cream bells with reddish/mauve throats, were admired. They come with an added bonus, they flower in Winter.

The yellow and golden colours predominated, or were they more eye-catching? Everlasting daisies (*Helipterum albicans*) held up sunny heads and the smaller *Helicrysum ramosissimum* made quite a show. The yellow “Billy” or “Bachelor Buttons” (*Craspedia uniflora*) created interest. *Acacia deanii* could only muster about a dozen pale yellow balls, and a Hibbertia bush boasted a single flower! The smallest of the *Goodenias* (*G gracilis*) was seen. It is less common than other members of the family. Also a grey leafed *Podolepis canessens* and the yellow bells of *Persoonia cornifolia* were noted. However, Dandelions outnumbered all other yellow species in numbers.

Two distinct members of the lily family were seen, each three petalled. The vivid blue *Wandering Jew*, (*Commelina cyane*) and the mauve *Grass Lily* (*Murdannia graminea*). The *Burr Daisy* has really propagated since the rains. Also a few *Trigger Plants* (*Stylidium graminifolium*) and two Geranium types, *Pelargonium australe* and *Geranium pilosum* in the swamp. The latter were more richly coloured than usual. Also in the swamp were the vivid magenta floriferous spikes of *Purple Loose Strife* (*Lythrum salicaria*).

On the large flat rock areas *Angels Lace* or *Wild Turnip* (*Trachymene anisocarpa*) and the white *Isotoma anthifolia* were flourishing. (Some of the latter had marked pink tones). Other white

flowers included tiny *Whiteroot (Lobelia purpurascens.)* Two teeny single flowers were all the *Flannel Flowers* managed! *Blackthorn (Bursaria spinosa)* was flowering at the T.V. Tower.

Five Corners (Styphelia viridis) are flowering more profusely than I have ever seen and what a crop of fruit they will have. Children riding home from school in a bus will be deprived of the fun of eating them on the way home while on “shanks pony”

Jean Harslett

Camp Report Wooli – 21 to 23 March and onwards

Some 13 of us gathered at the Bushlands Retreat campground at Wooli, arriving in dribs and drabs from Thursday night to Saturday. One of the first to arrive, on announcing they were part of the Field Nats group, was asked, ‘do they take their clothes off?’

A pleasant time was had by all, some spent just the three days, others longer. We were a little dismayed to have sandflies and mosquitoes at that time of year, but later found out the area had 14 inches of rain, as evidenced by the outpouring of water from normally fairly dry lowland areas and also tea tree coloration to the river water.

A short precis of events at which we observed about 70 bird species, and due to the wet, an unexpected abundance of flora, including some magnificent *Lambertia formosa*, several acacia, melaleuca, pink heath, banksia, geebung, chocolate lily, pig face, flannel flower and a myriad of varieties of the pea family.

Friday – as John and Sue arrived late each did their own, some exploring Minnie Waters, others Wooli itself.

Saturday – drive to Wooli breakwater, a walk along the beach and back along the river and out onto the breakwater. In the afternoon, drive to Minnie Waters via Diggers Camp, noting some Christmas Bells along the way. At Minnie Waters, at the headland walk starting at Melaleuca Park we shared lunch with the prisoners from Grafton who were on a work programme, and then a ramble along the tracks (some rain). Drive to the beach and explore National Park campground area.

Sunday – Four four-wheel drives set out on the lovely Candole Forest drive to Brooms Head, with an ice cream as a reward at the beach. On the way we explored an old forest camp, finding some interesting coral fungus, and lunched on a perched outlook. Some interesting roads were traversed, all travelled well, including Desley’s Rav 4 on very steep terrain. We also drove out to the northern side of the pretty Sandon River and National Park campground area. We returned to Wooli along the same forest drive. In the evening we dined at the Chinese restaurant at Wooli Bowls Club.

Monday – As some had left, a lay day for those remaining, each doing their own thing.

Tuesday – A wander again at the breakwater. As the tide was well out, a ramble over the river flats, noting the Coffee Rock outpouring, and along the river and beach, a highlight being the sighting of a mistletoe bird on the beach side.

Wednesday – Drive to Station Creek, Red Rock and Corindi, a very successful birding day with the sighting of a Spectacled Monarch and numerous other birds. Sue, having had a wound re-stitched the day before, had a lay day at camp devouring a nice fresh mud crab she had been given. Again all went to Chinese for dinner that evening.

Thursday – Again to Minnie Waters Melaleuca Park, some walked, some watched. Desley and her group continued on to lunch at the beach area and explored Diggers Camp on the return. We went boating up the river.

Friday – The time for us to leave. Desley drove to Woolgoolga.

Many thanks for the company of those who joined us, and to Desley for the bird list. There is nothing like a good campout to establish conviviality.

John and Sue Allison

Of Interest: The new owners of the Bushland Retreat asked me to supply them with a copy of the bird list. They plan to create activities for children staying at the park from the list. *Desley McDonagh*

Bird List Wooli

Magpie, Wedgetail eagle, Masked lapwing, Willy wagtail, Galah, White ibis, Strawnecked ibis, White faced heron, Little egret, Noisy miner, Wood duck, Crested pigeon, Australian pelican, Torresian crow, Pied butcher bird, Grey butcher bird, Glossy black cockatoo, Yellow tailed black cockatoo, Welcome swallow, Black swan, Silver gull, Swamp harrier, Black fronted dotterel, Great cormorant, Little cormorant, Pied cormorant, White breasted woodswallow, Australian magpie lark (peewee), Aust. King parrot, Rainbow lorikeet, Eastern rosella, Brush bronzewing, Richard's pipit, Brahminy kite, Whitebellied sea eagle, Spangled drongo, mistletoe bird, tawny frogmouth, yellow billed spoonbill.

Honeyeaters:, Bluefaced, Yellow faced, White cheeked Brown, Noisy friar birds, Little friar bird, Little wattle bird, Red wattle bird,

Superb fairy wren, Sooty oyster catcher, Pied oyster catcher, Eastern spinebill, Striated heron, Eastern whipbird (call), Caspian tern, Little tern, Crested tern, Brown quail, Striated pardolote, Spectacled monarch, Eastern yellow robin, Black faced cuckoo shrike, Whistling kite, Black shouldered kite, Olive backed oriole, Darter, Common koel, Feral pigeon, Azure kingfisher, Collared kingfisher, Laughing kookaburra.

Nats Outing May 25th 2003

As the Bluff River Road venue proposed for the May Outing is not available to us on the 25th we will instead take another look at the tracks at the Girraween Environmental Lodge.

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and drive to the Lodge to do one of the short walks before having morning tea at the cars. We will then walk to the Devil's Marbles, and Ramsay Creek falls before returning to the cars for lunch. As some of this walk will not be on made tracks I will rate it at Grade 7.

The cars will be parked at the shareholder's camp, which has a bush toilet, tank water and a basic shelter for people to use as well as a fireplace to boil the billy for morning tea and lunch. For those people not wishing to do the more strenuous walk, it is also quite close to Ramsay Creek, which is usually good for birdwatching.

Rob McCosker Phone 46835371

Minutes of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc. held in the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe on 23rd April 2003 at 7.30pm.

Opening: The meeting opened at 7.35pm with president Kris welcoming members

Attendance: There were 19 people present and four apologies.

Minutes of the previous meeting; The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th March were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Col Hockings, seconded Kath Sullivan. Carried

Correspondence:

Inwards:

Murrumbidgee Field Nats	Newsletter April
International Parktours	IPT traveller April
Toowoomba Bushwalkers	"Footprint" April
QPWS Naturesearch	Training Calendar
Toowoomba Field Nats	"Darling Downs Naturalist" April
Chinchilla Field Naturalist Club	"Urimbirra" April
Blue Care	Letter re donation

Financial statement for the period from 27/3/2003 to 24/4/2003

Cash Book balance as at 26/03/03 \$766.75

Receipts

Room rent collection	4.00	
Raffle	356.50	
Street Stall	459.00	<u>\$819.50</u>
		1586.25

Expenditure

Border Post Advertisement	15.00	<u>15.00</u>
Balance as at 23/04/03		\$1571.25

The bank statement had not been received by the meeting date.

Accounts for Payment

Room rent 2 nd quarter 2003-04-30	45.00
Stamps	100.00
Stanthorpe Historical Society	800.50

The financial report was received on the motion of Dave Bright, seconded by Errol Walker. Carried

Outing Reports:

Passchendaele State Forest on Friday 4th April led by Joan Bourne. Rod Hutchin gave a report on the outing. 8 or 9 people attended and started the walk from the Thulimbah side of the forestry park. They walked 5 or 6 kilometres to the top of a rock. An hibbertia and mushrooms were seen and a wallaby track across the rock to a natural pool where the lichen had been worn off the rock. There were a number of native and feral plants seen. Jean Harslett led the Nats on a shortcut back to the TV tower where they had a good look around and found five corners blooming profusely and admired the views. From there they travelled to the sawmill, and then home.

Col Hockings reported on the outing to Girraween on 13th April. Fourteen people attended and reached the top of the rock in time for lunch. There were good views of South Bald Rock, Middle Rock and West Bald Rock. The group walked East across the swamp to return to the cars. Parsons bands and a Prasophyllum were sighted as well as a lot of other species of flowers.

Wooli Camp Out Desley McDonagh reported on the campout. On Sunday there was a 4WD trip along forestry tracks with lunch at a lookout at Brooms Head. On Wednesday they visited Station Creek, Red Rock and Coorindi. John and Sue left on Friday and Desley and Co went to Woolgoolga. There were lots of melaleucas in bloom, as well as flannel flowers. Over 70 species of birds were seen including a striated heron and everyone had a really good time as the campout was very well organized.

Pre-Outings: The Friday outing for May was cancelled as it was considered too close to the weekend campout. Robin McCosker reported that the outing on 25th May would be to a property on Bluff River 20k south of Tenterfield. There is a large pile of rocks to explore.

Camp out to Clarence River Gorge. Kris reported that there is a 4WD track up the mountain with a view up the gorge, as well as trips up the river and a walk to the falls.

Specimens:

Kris Carnell had 2 different cobblers pegs or farmer's friends. A new one which has petals on the flower has appeared after the fires last October.

Tom Archer had an antechinus that he had caught which Col Hockings identified. It eats meat and can take it out of an ordinary mouse trap without difficulty. It moves very quickly.

Col Hockings had a photo of the prasophyllum seen on the outing to the un-named rock.

Desley McDonagh had photos and brochures from Solitary Island Marine Park

General Business:

The money raised from the street stall and raffle amounted to \$800.00. Kris suggested an official handover to the museum with the Border Post present. Desley suggested contacting Lorene Long at the Museum to arrange a time.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Desley McDonagh presented a very interesting program of slides of wildflowers.

**Visit to Bingara and Barraba
28 March to 4 April**

When we left the Wooli camp, we had arranged to meet a friend of ours, a member of the Brisbane Field Nats to do an extension birding trip. After travelling up the range, we met her at Elsmore, about 20km outside Inverell on the Glen Innes side. The campground is a lovely little park by a willow-lined creek, established by the Lions Club, and is adjacent to a fossicking area of the Inverell Lapidary Club – mainly tin crystals, cytrine and quarts. There is always an abundance of birdlife in the area. We spent 2 nights here, some fossicking, walking and observing. The creek level was a lot higher than on our previous visit.

Onwards via Inverell and the Copeton Dam Scenic Drive route, a walk to the lookout in the Munro State Forest and approximately 10km before reaching Bingara, we camped on the banks of Bora Creek near a diamond and topaz fossicking site. This area is identified on the Bingara bird route 5. There are plenty of bush camp sites both on the creek and on the banks of the Gwydir River. We walked up creek, had a dip in one of the many deep holes, did some wishful thinking fossicking, and observed lots of birds.

We then moved on, driving up to Batterham Lookout and observing a spotted pardalote, on our way into Bingara. Our companion was born in Bingara in a private hospital, her family had returned to the Tamworth area when she was still a child, she had not explored the area since, so this was a delightful voyage

of discovery for her. The townspeople were so helpful she managed to visit the old hospital which is now a private home, and they tried to contact her family's ex neighbour who is still in the area. Bingara attracts world wide attention because it is planted with orange trees, planted as a living memorial to Bingara's fallen in World War 2. There is an annual harvest by the school children which has become a symbol of community pride.

We moved on to Barraba, with sightings of emus, following some of their documented bird trails along travelling stock reserves, and camped at Woodsreef Reserve at a tranquil camping spot on the creek bank, where we saw hooded robin, turquoise parrot, musk lorikeet and azure kingfisher to name a few. We had been hoping to see the regent Honeyeater, but the locals told us they were not present this year because of a tough winter, no spring, a very dry summer, and as a result the white box they breed in, did not blossom at all. We thought this strange, as our local eucalypt has blossomed more profusely than normal, we presume trying to survive the tough year. On leaving here, we collected some interesting green Serpentine stones to bring home to use for bookends, and visited a local lady rockhound for information and what we had seen on our ramblings up the creek.

Onwards towards home, this time we camped at the Ruby Hill fossicking area on the Bingara Birdroute 1, known for garnets. As we set up camp we were observed by three crested shrike tits which were not in the least worried about our presence. This night we had a huge storm, quickly turning the creek into a raging torrent, and the rough red mud track into a slippery, gluggy mess, so were pleased that we both managed to get out safely the next morning. We later read that the Pyrope garnets can be found in the surface dirt beside the track and one of the best locations to find the garnets is in the meat ant's nests. After washing off the mud at the All Nations gold mine site where a stamper battery stands overlooking the town, we parted company with our companions who were moving on to Kings Plains and Torrington. After passing back through Inverell we visited the Lake Inverell Reserve, which has a self guided walking tour. A final last night out at Elsmore again, where the creek had once again raised to a higher level, and we saw a water rat very strongly swimming the current.

We found the Bingara-Barraba area most interesting, very accommodating to bush camping, and we will no doubt return.

John and Sue Allison