

## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS 2002 - 2003

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**Deadline for Newsletter: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2003**

### 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. |
| 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.        |                                |

### **Outing Report – Campout at Clarence River Gorge May 3 – 5**

Peter and Millie went down on Friday (to secure prime sites on the lawn-like flat beside the Clarence River) and had a couple of light showers after dark.

Heavy fog along the river on Saturday morning dispersed to reveal a beautiful day. Another 17 Nats trickled in after lunch, via Gibraltar Range, Baryulgil and Evans Head. In between setting

up camp, Neil Winters took us, in groups of four, upstream in his tinny, to view the vertical, sculpted walls of the lower gorge. The current was quite strong, the river being about 300mm higher than on the preouting. Millie and Margaret, assisted by Kris, produced their usual excellent dampers for supper, in spite of short lived coals.

Sunday morning also started with river fog, which lifted to reveal another beautiful day as 16 Nats started a leisurely walk up the gorge. We followed a cattle pad, alternating between neatly grazed grassy flats and rocky scree, cliffs on one side and the rugged rocky bed of the Clarence on the other, clothed with low bottlebrush and melaleucas, and dotted with clear pools, some brightened by small flowers of lilies.

Halfway, the cliffs gave way to cleared, less steep hills, and we stopped for smoko, overlooking a 90 degree turn in the gorge. Our resident geologist was unsure of its origin – fault line or erosion of softer material? Moving on through oaks bearing the debris of past floods, well above our heads, we crossed a now shingly river bed to Rainbow Falls, roaring majestically out and over a 6m drop, and producing a rainbow in their mist. Many photos later, and after some fruitless investigation further upstream for a possible crossing to view the other two falls, lunch was taken. More photos, this time from the base of the falls, and we retraced our steps. Narelle enlivened the afternoon, giving Erin and I some tuition in the finer points of canoeing. Margaret made the evening's damper, and very welcome it was, on a cool night.

Monday morning started bright and clear, but with rain forecast, we broke camp early – some unfortunates without work awaiting, had plans to linger at other sites, while the rest headed home from this beautiful and peaceful stretch of river, with a cool tailwind and darkening skies. My thanks to Narelle for compiling the bird list, and to Margaret for the plant list.

*Peter Kerr*

### **Flower List – Clarence River Gorge**

Quite a lot of the flowers we saw were introduced species. These are marked with an asterisk.

\*salvia, melaleuca, callistemon viminalis, \*blue mint, caltrix, \*cream flowered thistle, \*verbena weed, acacia, \*lantana, \*castor oil weed, \*perennial phlox, fig trees, \*senecio, pink hibiscus, yellow water poppy, white flowered water plant, \*shasta daisy, kennedia (running postman), hypoxis (golden weather glass), blue convulvulus, hibbertia, staghorn, whalenbergia (bluebell), plethantus, swainsonia, orange bracket fungus, stinkhorn (Lysurus gardneri), various other fungi including Chlorophyllum molybdites which is poisonous.

### **BIRD LIST CLARENCE RIVER GORGE MAY 2003**

Australian pelican  
Great cormorant  
Grey teal  
Masked lapwing  
Welcome swallow

Little pied cormorant  
White-faced heron  
Wedge-tailed eagle  
Crested pigeon  
Grey shrike-thrush

Little black cormorant  
Pacific black duck  
White-bellied sea-eagle  
Bar-shouldered dove  
Willie wagtail

Grey fantail  
Blue-faced honeyeater  
Peewee

Noisy friarbird  
Brown honeyeater  
Pied butcherbird

White-naped honeyeater  
Spotted pardalote  
Magpie

## Outing Report for May 25<sup>th</sup> Outing to Girraween Lodge

A total of 13 people ventured to Wyberba on a perfect Stanthorpe autumn day for the May Outing. We arrived at the shareholder's campsite, (the Girraween Hilton Mk 2), a little before 10.00am, but this allowed time to get a fire going to boil the billy for morning tea. The campsite is next to an old irrigation dam at the bottom of a large swamp. Well in normal times it is a swamp and the dam is overflowing, however with the continuing drought the swamp is dry and the dam water is down about 1m.

We set off across a couple of old cultivation paddocks then down to cross Ramsay Creek, where there was a trickle of water flowing between the clear, placid rock pools. An interesting feature of the creek is that about 100m downstream from here it flows through a swamp where it picks up turbidity, which stays in the water all the way to the Junction with Bald Rock Creek. It has been suggested there may be some form of mineralisation responsible for this. We continued on to the Giants Marbles, a scattering of large granite tors on an extensive granite slab with views of the Pyramids and Sliprock. The rain earlier in the month and the spell of warm weather following it had obviously tricked a couple of wildflowers into a false spring, with *Phebalium* and *Mirbelia* showing a few tentative blooms. From the rock slab we descended to the bottom of the gully where there was an outcrop of white quartz, then up the other side to another granite slab, this time with Ramsay Creek trickling over it in a series of small water worn rock pools. Some time was spent here while the photographers waited for the sun to emerge from behind the clouds, before we set off again, across the creek and up through the cool passages created by a jumble of huge boulders. From the amount of scratching in the leaf litter we thought that lyrebirds are very active in the area, and in the middle of the boulders we saw a lyrebird's nest on a ledge well up out of harm's way. We made our way back down to the cars for lunch, and another cup of billy tea. Due to other commitments we had to end the day there, at about 2.00pm, but I think all present felt the outing had been most worthwhile.

Flowers seen on the outing -

*Trachymene incisa* Wild carrot  
*Melichrus urceolatus* Ten corner  
*Mirbelia speciosa*  
*Leucogogon neoanglicus*  
*Cryptandra amara*  
*Stackhousia viminea*

*Stypandra glauca*  
*Hypoxis hygrometrica* Golden weatherglass  
*Bursaria spinosa* Australian blackthorn  
*Prostanthera nivea* Snowy mint bush  
*Podolepis jaceoides*  
*Brachyscome* sp  
One unknown *Acacia* sp with one solitary bloom.

*Correa reflexa*  
*Pterostylis nutans* Nodding greenhood orchid  
*Isotoma anethefolia* Rock isotome  
*Hibbertia* sp  
*Phebalium rotundifolium*  
*Olearia ramosissima* Blue mountain daisy (Blue and white specimens side by side)

*Stenanthemum schortechinii*  
*Stylidium graminifolium* Grass trigger plant  
*Bracteantha bracteata* Golden everlasting  
*Banksia integrifolia*  
*Styphelia viridis* Five corner

*Rob McCosker*

**Pre-Outing to Cliff Mountain Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
Leaders Glenn & Jenny Crossman**

As our outing to Potanin's property last year was so enjoyable it was decided to go there again this year. We will meet at the park at Liston at 9.00am and travel to Cliff Mountain where Con Potanin will meet us. He will lead us to some other part of the property where we haven't been before. At this stage we're not sure where we will have lunch so come prepared to carry it. If you have any queries phone Glenn Crossman on 46861138.

**Pre-Outing to Unknown Destination Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July  
Leader Desley McDonagh**

This will be a bird watching outing. We will leave Weeroona Park at 11.30am and travel to a picnic area where we will have lunch and bird watch. Later we will move to another location to see if we can add to the list. Quite a lot of birds were seen last time I was in the area. Don't forget your binoculars. For more information phone Desley on 46813074.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc  
held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 28 May, 2003**

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 7.36pm, with President, Kris Carnell, welcoming members and visitors, Fred Wallington and Mel Bourke from Bateau Bay near Gosford, and Lyn Collins.

**Attendance:** There were 33 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 23<sup>rd</sup> April were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Rob McCosker, seconded by Patience James. Carried.

**Business Arising from the Minutes:**

Donation to the Stanthorpe Historical Society

Kris presented a cheque for \$800 on behalf of the Club to the Stanthorpe Historical Society for their building project to house Jean Harslett's collection of historical records and photos of the district. This money was raised from the Club's recent raffle and street stall. Jean spoke on behalf of the Historical Society and thanked the club for their donation. She said work on the building extension was progressing well.

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards:**

1. Murrumbidgee Field Nats Club – *Murrumbidgee Naturalist* – May 03
  2. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club - *Darling Downs Naturalist* – May, June 03
  3. Land for Wildlife – *Community Nature News* - April 03
  4. Qld Naturalists Club – *QNC News* – May-June 03
  5. Fassifern Field Naturalists – Newsletter – April/May + May 03
- Chinchilla Field Nats – *Urimbirra* - May 03  
Peter Kerr – Clarence River Gorge campout report  
Samson Total Technology – invoices and statement  
Toowoomba Bushwalkers – *Footprint* – May 03  
Steven Atkinson – membership  
Australian Naturalists Network – various reports

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Val Richardson. Carried.

**Business Arising from Correspondence:**

Australian Naturalists Network

Their next get together will be in Western Australia in 2004. Desley McDonagh, Peter Kerr and John and Sue Allison may be going to it.

**Financial Statement for the period from 23/4/03 to 25/5/03:**

Cash book balance as at 23/4/03        \$ 1580.15

Receipts:

Room rent collection                    8.00

Photocopying                              1.50

9.50

Expenditure:

Magazine postage                        100.00

Room rent for April and May            45.00

Donation to Stanthorpe Historical Soc. 800.00

Govt. tax                                    0.30

945.80

Bank balance as at 28/5/03 is \$643.85 which agrees with the cash book balance as at 28/5/03.

Accounts for payment:

M. Carnell – p/copying of last newsletter    35.10

Samson Total Technology                    24.73

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

**Business Arising from Financial Statement:**

Kris contacted Samson Total Technology about the \$50 credit owing to us from the sale of our old photocopier and the need for us to receive regular statements.

**Outing Reports:**

Clarence River Gorge

In the absence of the trip leader, Peter Kerr, David Wilson reported on the camp out to the Clarence River Gorge. The group first travelled up the gorge on a small dingy and the next day did a walk to the Rainbow Falls which had a reasonable amount of water coming over it.

Girraween Environmental Lodge

13 people attended this outing, organised by Rob McCosker. They walked to the Devil's Marbles rock formation on a granite slab. Smoko was had at the shareholders camp. Some of the group explored Ramsay Creek where a lot of quartz was observed. In spite of the dry conditions, 25 different species of flowering plants were observed.

**Pre-outings:**

Friday 6 June

This outing to visit various sites associated with the railway line near Dalveen will leave from Dalveen at 9am and will be led by Archie and Grace Cameron. As it will be along the railway line and through two of the tunnels, strong footwear is recommended. The Gap Hotel site, to the north of Dalveen, will also be visited.

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June

Glen and Jenny Crossman will be leading this walk which will leave from the Liston Hall at 9am.

Friday 4 July

There is currently no leader for this outing so Desley offered to organise it.

**Specimens:**

Millie had photos taken at the campout to the Clarence River Gorge.

Jean Harslett reported she had recently been visited by TV naturalist, John Young, who was looking for some powerful owls to film. He was able to find some near Wallangarra. Hopefully, he will be able to let Jean know when it is likely to be shown on TV.

Desley reported she had seen a yellow tailed black cockatoo flying with a yellow banksia flower.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm and was followed by an excellent slide presentation by David Wilson on active glaciers in New Zealand as well as looking at the impact of past glacial movement on parts of Australia.

### **Book Review – Australia's Wild Islands**

Australia's Wild Islands by Quentin Chester and Alisdair McGregor; Hodder & Stroughton 1997.

This is a delightful coffee table book, slightly larger than A4 size and illustrated with magnificent photographs. It describes islands and island groups around the coast of Australia from Christmas Island and Thursday Island in the north to Macquarie Island in the south.

Details are given for each island/group under the following headings: Location; Area; Climate; Status; Access and Facilities.

Photographs vary from full page views to small illustrations of flora and fauna. The text includes quotes from early explorers/seafarers including Dampier and Cook and early scientists who identified the flora and fauna.

Some early aboriginal rock art shows signs of very early maritime visitors to the islands, including Macassans and Japanese.

Bird illustrations include crested terns, tawny frogmouths, pied oystercatchers; white cheeked honeyeaters; bar tailed godwit; shearwaters; penguins; etc etc. Animals include the rare Monjon unknown till 1978 which is the smallest of all rock wallabies and lives on Bigge Island, part of the Bonaparte Archipelago off the coast of NW Australia; and the rednecked wallaby, (Tasmanian subspecies), stick nest rats; seals etc. Flora illustrations include orchids, grevilleas, banksias, etc etc.

I borrowed my copy from the town library and found it so interesting and beautiful that I wanted others to know about it as well.

*Desley McDonagh*

### **Photos of Clarence River Gorge**

Rainbow Falls at The Gorge

View of Clarence River looking up the gorge

View from the tinny