



The Granite Belt Naturalist



Mail Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, Stanthorpe Qld. 4380

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



The Pyramids, Girraween National Park

The Club acknowledges the support of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund in the production of this Newsletter

- Meetings** 4th Wednesday of each month at QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe, at 7.30pm
- Outings:** The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each month (Friday outings as pre-arranged)
- Subs:** Single \$15.00, Family \$25.00 per annum, July to June

Mail contributions: The Newsletter Editor, PO Box 33, Severnlea Qld. 4352. **Email:** orana@halenet.com.au

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2003/2004

President	Kris Carnell	46835268
Vice-presidents	Millie Marsden	46811593
	Col Hockings	46811978
Secretary	Liz Bourne	46836374
Treasurer	Dave Bright	46811034
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	46835268
Magazine Committee	Wendy & Neil Donges	46812913
Publicity Officer	Janet Hockings	46811978
Librarian	Trish McCosker	46835371
Management Committee:	President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer	

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



Deadline for next Newsletter:
Tuesday 9th November 2004

Coming Up

Outing Sunday October 24th: Back of Girraween led by Kris & Margaret Carnell

Next Meeting Wednesday 27th: October Program by Errol Walker “Walkerabout”

Friday Outing 5th November: Gasparin’s Hill led by Millie Marsden

ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE TO WILDFLOWER WALK

Eighty six keen nature lovers attended the first in a series of wildflower walks being organised by the Rare Wildflower Consortium which visited the Amiens State Forest on Sunday, 12th September.

The Consortium is a collection of groups working together to raise public awareness about the Granite Belt’s threatened plants and develop plans for their conservation. The organisations involved include the Granite Borders Landcare Committee, World Wildlife Fund, the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club, the Stanthorpe Shire Council, the Queensland Murray Darling Committee, the Border Landcare Organic Group and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Their wildflower project includes identifying the locations of rare plants on the Granite Belt, gaining more knowledge on their ecological requirements and using this information to provide better conservation and management for these plants. It is also hoped to enhance the existing eco-tourism industry in the Shire by developing a focus on wildflowers.

People came along on the walk from all over the Granite Belt as well as from Toowoomba and Brisbane so obviously there is a lot of interest from people wanting to learn more about our native flora. There were also quite a few people along on the walk whose properties are registered under the Land for Wildlife Program and they were keen to learn more about what they can do to conserve these plants on their own land.

After the recent rain, there were plenty of plants in flower at Amiens including good displays of the endangered granite boronia, *Boronia granitica*, a beautiful pink boronia confined to the Stanthorpe area and the New England Tablelands. We also saw the rare species, *Allocasuarina rupicola* and *Acacia latisejala* in the more exposed granite areas in the forest.

The Consortium’s next wildflower walk is planned for Sunday 10 October and will be held at the Cobb and Co property on Bradley Lane, off Amiens Road near the Robert Channon Wines. Participants should meet at Weeroona Park in Marsh Street, Stanthorpe at 10am and bring along smoko, a hat and water. The walk will aim to finish at 1pm.

For further information about the wildflower project, contact Liz Bourne on 4683 6374.

OUTING REPORT Sunday 22nd September 2004

Along the road sides, en-route to Billy Goat Hill, we were dazzled by carpets of Hardenbergia. This was an indication of the flower displays to be seen a little later in the day.

A group of 10 enjoyed morning tea at the base of Billy Goat Hill before setting off.

8 chose the more challenging walk over the hill. Along the way we were amazed at the variety and quantity of flowers, especially as the season had not been particularly kind. The Prostanthera, Mirbelia, Phebalium, Hovea, and Olearia being most prominent, created spectacular granite gardens of purple, yellow and white.

By the time we reached the boulders, a strong but cool wind was blowing so after clambering through the main cavern, we sought a sheltered spot in the sun for lunch. Several wombat burrows were found as we made our way out of the boulders but none appeared to have been used recently. Lyre Birds had been quite active around the boulders with extensive areas freshly overturned. A Rufous Fantail's nest, discovered on the pre-outing nine months previously, was still intact. The nest was originally found after being "attacked" by the pair of Fantails as we explored the area.

Throughout the day birds were notable by their absence.

After crossing Racecourse Creek and negotiating the dry swamp, it was decided that we would visit the Round Stone House after collecting the vehicles. A number of the group had not visited the house previously and were surprised at the efforts of the builder/s of both the Round House and the unfinished house base on the ridge beyond the little dam.

On returning to the vehicles people made their own way home via either Wallangarra or Eukey.

Col and Janet Hockings

Plant list from outing to boulders beyond Billy Goat Hill

Compiled by Ian Milinovich et al

Acacias, granitica, adunca, latisepala, ulicifolia	Mirbelia speciosa
Boronia amabilis	Notelaea linearis
Bossiaea sp.	Olearia sp.
Drosera sp.	Patersonia sp.
Epacris microphylla	Phebalium rotundifolium
Eriostemon sp.	Prostanthera phyllicifolia
Hardenbergia violacea	Pultenaea hartmannii
Hoveas, purpurea, linearis	Stylidium laricifolium

Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 22nd September, 2004

Opening: The meeting opened at 7.40pm, with the Vice-President, Millie Marsden, welcoming members.

Attendance: There were 19 present at the meeting and 9 apologies as per the attendance book.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25th August 2004 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Rod Hutchin, seconded by Vo Hall. Carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

1. Chinchilla Field Nats – *Urimbirra* - September
2. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club – *Darling Downs Naturalist* – September
3. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Club – *Murrumbidgee Naturalist* – September
4. Samson Total Technology – invoice for \$29.91
5. Society for Growing Aust Plants – Warwick – newsletter
6. Membership renewals – J. Deukeher; Sue Frances; M & J Newman; H & J Stevenson; Peter & Lyn Haselgrove

Outwards:

1. Card to Ailsa Wilkinson for her birthday

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Dell Whan, seconded by Lyn Marriot. Carried.

Financial Statement for the period from 25/8/04 to 22/9/04:

Cash book balance as at 25/8/04	723.99	
<u>Receipts:</u>		
Subscriptions	535.00	535.00
<u>Expenditure:</u>		
Postage	142.50	
Room rent	45.00	
Photocopier - maintenance	17.70	
Office of Fair Trading	35.10	240.30
Cash book balance as at 22/9/04		1018.69
Latest bank balance not available		

Accounts for payment:

Samson Total Technology 29.91

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

Outing Reports:

1. Friday 3rd September outing to the Carnell's

This was reported in the September newsletter.

2. Wildflower Walk to Amiens – Sunday 12th September

This walk, organised on behalf of the Stanthorpe Wildflower Consortium, attracted 86 people who were interested in learning more about the local flora. It was a very enjoyable day and another one is planned for Sunday 10th October to visit Cobb 'N Co Cabins on Bradley Lane.

2. Sunday 19th September outing to Girraween

Col Hockings reported on his outing to the Billy Goat Hill area of Girraween National Park. 10 people attended and were rewarded with a wonderful display of wildflowers, particularly *Boronia amabilis*

Pre-Outing Reports:

1. Friday 1st October – “Tully Park”

Dell Whan said she hoped there would be a reasonable display of flowers on her property, although it was still very dry.

2. Sunday 24th October

As Rob McCosker is unavailable to lead a walk on this day, the Carnells have offered to organise one to the north east corner of Girraween National Park.

3. Friday Outing in November

This will be to a rocky hill on the Gasparin's property, a short distance from Stanthorpe, and will be led by Millie Marsden.

4. 2004/2005 Programme

The Committee has drawn up a proposed program of walks and meetings for later this year and 2005 and this will be included in the next newsletter.

Specimens:

1. Jean Harslett had a collection of wildflowers including *Phebalium rotundifolium*, *Zieria sp.*, and a white version of *Boronia granitica*. She also had a specimen of *Acacia dawsonii* which was found on a traprock hill on "Foxbar".

General Business:

1. Quoll Discovery Day

The Quoll Seekers Network will be hosting a quoll discovery day at "Braeside" on the New England Highway between Warwick and Stanthorpe on Saturday 25th September from 9am to 12noon.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm and was followed by an entertaining slide programme from Jean Harslett on innovative post boxes she had found in her travels over the years.

OUTING TO BACK OF GIRRAWEEEN, SUNDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2004

Leaders: Kris & Margaret Carnell

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel via Sugarloaf Road, and then onto Pyramids Road where we will park on the roadside and have morning tea before setting out along the fire break between Girraween National Park and Peter Pugno's property. The walking is quite easy for about 150 metres, then there is a steep climb for about 300 metres to some large boulders. From then on the walk is quite easy and nearly all of it is along a mowed fire trail.

After about 2 kilometres we will reach a large granite slab from which Bald Rock, the Pyramids and other landmarks in the park are visible. There are gardens around the rock and there were *Eristomen*, *Leptospermum* and *Phebalium* (Fruit Salad Plant) in bloom on the pre-outing. There were 24 different species in flower from the road to the rock on the first weekend in October, including the endangered *Rulingea hermanniifolia*. Also of interest were two clumps of Brown Beak orchids (about 25 in each clump).

For those people who feel the walk will be too strenuous, we have permission to drive through Peter Pugno's property to the base of the granite slab, where we can hop across the fence and meet the walkers for lunch. If you need to take advantage of this offer, please contact Kris or Margaret prior to the outing. Phone 46835268. We will need to carry lunch and water.

Outing Report – Tully Park on 1st October 2004.

Leaders: Dell Wham & Ian Milinovich

It was great that hardly anyone attended the outing because of the **lovely rain**. However, three hardy souls braved the elements and joined with the three already at Tully Park. In the morning we walked to the back of the property and saw *Caladenia carnea*, *Diuris aurea* (double tails) and *Galeola foliata* (climbing orchid), before retreating to the house.

Narelle stayed, and in the afternoon went orchid hunting again and found Spider Orchids (*Caladenia* probably *dilatata*).

PROGRAM 2004-2005

At this stage the program has not been finalised , but here is the program to the end of March.

Friday	Sunday	Wednesday - Meeting
October 1 Tully Park	October 24 Back of Girraween K & M Carnell	October 27 Errol Walker <i>Walkerabout</i>
November 5 Gasparin's Hill Millie Marsden	November 21 Koreelah N.P. Rob McCosker	November 24 Glen Costello – Quoll Seekers Network
	December 12 Break-up at <i>Pinaster</i> (Janet & Col Hockings)	
	January 23 Third Crossing	
February 4 Outing - Dave Bright	February 20 Tenterfield Area Margaret & Terry Tricker	February 23 David Wilson
March 4 Outing – Joan & Harry Stevenson	March 20 Condamine Gorge David Wilson	March 23 Millie Marsden & Dave Bright

Excitement at *Orana*

A few minutes ago my typing was interrupted by strange noises emanating from beneath the lavender bush where the dog was sniffing. On investigation we found a grey baby animal with a pointed nose and a white tip on its tail. I thought it was a fox, while Kris thought maybe a quoll. I put on a pair of gloves and picked it up to the accompaniment of much spitting and struggling and showing of a sharp set of teeth. I found that by holding the scruff of its neck I could manage it. We took it inside and decided it was indeed a fox, by which time it was sitting quietly in my hands and seemingly quite relaxed. It was a beautiful little animal and, fox or not, we could not bear to harm it, so we shut the dog in and carried it out into the bush and released it. It was so small that unless it finds Mum, I doubt if it will survive to damage the wildlife. - *Margaret*

A Whale of a Time

In the last week of September we were camped at Lake Arragon, near Brooms Head in the Yuragir National Park. On the second day we went for a walk behind the dunes to Plumbago Point where we stopped for smoko. Margaret suddenly jumped out of her skin and said, Look! Look! Look! A whale! There just beyond the breakers were two whales travelling south.

The next day we saw a pod of two and a pod of three from the headland in the morning, and two close inshore late in the afternoon. The icing on the cake was on the third day when we watched two whales for about 3 ½ hours. One of them rested with its tail out of the water for five to ten minutes at a time, then the two of them would appear to be playing and travelling very slowly southwards. At one stage they breached together, and a few times they breached several times in succession. Eventually they went out of view towards the south.

We have been on whale watching tours twice and haven't seen them as close as we did this time. There were also dolphins closer to shore on two occasions when we were watching the whales.

Kris