



# 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 - 2004/2005

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:**  
**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2005**

## Coming Up

**Outing Sunday July 24<sup>th</sup>: McAlisters Gully in Sundown National Park leader Rob McCosker**

**Next Meeting Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July: Program by Samantha Williams – Border Landcare**

**Friday Outing 5<sup>th</sup> August: “Mountain View”, Amiens led by Jean Harslett**

**AGM Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August: Program *Remember Last Year***

## Outing Report to Swiper’s Gully 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005

We arrived at Swiper’s Gully on a beautiful, fine day, the surroundings enhanced by the recent welcome rain. We followed Cowies Lane into the Forestry area, and at the upper fossicking area entered the scrub, which was dominated by numerous test diggings, to investigate a long horizontal shaft, which runs for approximately 30 metres underground (with the occasional vertical access shaft) following the prehistoric creek bed. We marvelled at the ability of the early miners to work this area in such potentially dangerous conditions for meagre reward. The present day activity of fossicking still goes on, but on a much smaller scale. After morning tea, we investigated the lower fossicking area, and then went on to the surrounding slabs and domes. We were pleasantly surprised at the number of plant species in flower, considering the recent extreme dry conditions (as evidenced by dead shrubs and eucalypts). The bush was extremely quiet with few birds present. We had a long lunch enjoying the tranquillity of our surroundings and were pleasantly surprised when National Parks arrived to do some maintenance.

Bird List Grey shrike thrush, Red wattle bird, Superb fairy wren, Currawong, White eared honeyeater, Brown thornbill, White browed scrub wren, Striped honeyeater (H)

### Plant List

Coral Heath Epachris Microphylla,	Snowbush Leucopogon Melaleuroides
New England Beard Heath Leucopogon Neoanglicus	Peach Heath Lissanthe Strigulas Subdulata
Five Corners Styphelia Viridis	Urn Heath Melichrus Erceolatus
Pepper and Salt Spyridium Scorchetini	Billy Buttons Craspedia Uniflora
Helichrysum Collinum	Dead Finish Cassinia Quinquifaria
In Bud	Sally Wattle Acacia Floribunda
Acacia Latisepala	Wallangarra Wattle Acacia Adunca
Boronia Granitica	Narrow Leaved Hovea Hovea Purpurea

*John Allison*

## Outing to Sundown National Park

Rob McCosker's proposed trip to Sundown National Park on 19 June unfortunately had to be cancelled because of rain.

As there were a number of people keen to go on this trip, it has now been rescheduled for Sunday 24 July in place of the trip I was scheduled to lead. The details remain the same as published in the June newsletter (reprinted below). If you know of anyone who wanted to go on this trip, could you please let them know about the new date.

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am as usual then drive out along the Texas Road to the National Park camp ground at the Broadwater. On the pre-outing trip it was anything but a broadwater, more a rocky depression in the river bed. One consolation of this is that we will not have to remove our shoes to cross to McAlister Creek as I remember having to do on a previous trip.

After morning tea at the camp ground we will walk up the creek to Split Rock falls for lunch. The walk is not difficult but requires us to 'rock hop' for about 3km to the falls. On our pre-outing trip Trish and I climbed around these falls and continued on to Double Falls and that could be an option if anyone is keen to do this, time permitting. Don't expect to see any running water unless there is a miraculous downpour the day before, so carry plenty of drinking water. There are a couple of water holes in the creek, which are havens for wildlife, including the feral goats.

We should be back at the cars for afternoon tea by about 3.00pm.

**Leader** Rob McCosker Phone 4683 5371.

### ***New Wildflower Book Published***

A new book, *Common Wildflowers of Girraween and Bald Rock National Parks*, has just been published by two members of the Queensland Naturalists Club, Leith and Peter Woodall, who have a long standing interest in many aspects of our state's natural history.

The book will be a very welcome addition to the reference guides to the unique flora of the Granite Belt region and complements *The Flora of Girraween and Bald Rock National Parks* that was produced by the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage in 1995.

The Woodall's book does not try to cover all of the 700 + species that occur in both national parks. Rather, it concentrates on the most common and colourful species that are likely to be readily encountered by visitors to the area, particularly in spring. Using a wonderful collection of their own colour photos, they have grouped the 132 plants depicted in the book by families, colours, function or habitat type, making this a ready guide for those people lacking an extensive botanical knowledge. Each photo is accompanied by the plant's common and botanic name, its height, size of its leaves and normal flowering time. It is pleasing to see the Woodall's have also included a page on some of the more common weeds of the district as many visitors mistakenly think that plants like the yellow flowering *Coreopsis*, common along our roadsides, are natives. Eight of the rare and threatened plants found in the parks are also depicted in the book and this should help stimulate interest in some of these lesser-known species.

Even the casual observer should be able to use this guide to help identify plants they might come across in both parks and, for the keen enthusiast, it will whet their appetite to find out more about our unique granite flora.

At a recommended retail price of just \$6.95, the book is a real bargain for nature lovers. Copies will be available for sale at the next meeting or can be obtained by contacting Liz Bourne on 4683 6374 or [batmaps@halenet.com.au](mailto:batmaps@halenet.com.au)

#### Date Claimer

The Toowoomba Field Naturalist Club will be having a camp out at Tully Park, Dell and Ian's property, on the weekend of **September 2<sup>nd</sup>**.

Stanthorpe Field Nats are invited to join them for a **barbeque at 5.30pm on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup>**.

More information will be published in the August newsletter.

#### Pre-Outing Report - *Mountain View* on 2<sup>nd</sup> August

**Leader: Jean Harslett**

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to *Mountain View* where Jean will show us some of her extensive collection of butterflies and other insects; then we will have morning tea in the garden, weather permitting. The rest of the morning will be spent birdwatching and other activities.

#### Spring Wildflower Walks

Following on from the success of last year's Wildflower Walks, organised by the Stanthorpe Rare Wildflower Consortium, another 3 walks are being organised for this spring.

The first walk will be on Sunday 11 September and will be going to the Amiens Forest. After the recent rain, there should be excellent displays of wildflowers here, including the endangered *Boronia granitica*. There will be a bit of a scramble uphill for 5 - 10 mins to get to where the best wildflowers are to be seen, but it should be fairly easy, off-track walking after that.

October's walk, on Sunday 9, will be to the Harslett's property at Amiens and another good display of wildflowers can be expected here. November's walk on Sunday 13 will be to Girraween National Park.

We hope to have a number of wildflower experts along on all of the walks to help with identification so if you want to learn more about the Granite Belt's rich wildflower heritage, these walks will be a great opportunity. All walks will leave from Weeroona Park in Marsh Street at 10am and aim to finish about 1pm. Further details will be in future newsletters or you can contact me.

Liz Bourne

Ph 4683 6374

[batmaps@halenet.com.au](mailto:batmaps@halenet.com.au)

#### Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2005

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 7.40pm, with the Vice President, Col Hockings, welcoming members.

**Attendance:** There were 14 present at the meeting and 5 apologies as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> May were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Rob McCosker, seconded by Shirley Allum. Carried.

#### Business Arising from Minutes:

1. Club Name Tags

Kris and Margaret have produced name tags and these were distributed to those members at the meeting.

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards:**

1. Toowoomba Field Naturalists Club – *Darling Downs Naturalist* – June
2. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Club – *Murrumbidgee Naturalist* – June
3. SE Aust. Naturalists Network – information about Aust. Naturalists Network get-together in Jan/Feb 2006
4. Taita Publishers – copy of their new book *Common Wildflowers of Girraween and Bald Rock National Parks*
5. ROSS planning – summary of their report on their Stanthorpe Recreation Facilities Study
6. Chinchilla Field Nats. – *Urimbirra* – June
7. Samson Total Technology – invoice for \$21.73
8. Pro Bono Australia – invitation to be listed in their directory
9. Commonwealth Bank – statement
- 10 Dave and Lorna Bright – postcard from Alaska

**Outwards:**

1. Response to Community Development Services about Adult Learner's Week display
  2. Letter of thanks to Mac and Gilruth Rees for the Rivertree outing
  3. Letter of thanks to Dave Perritt of the St Martin de Porres Community for hosting part of the Wallangarra outing
- This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

**Business Arising from Correspondence:**

1. New Wildflower Book

It was agreed to purchase at least 10 copies of this book (cost \$6.95) and have them available for sale at the next meeting.

**Financial Statement for the period from 25/5/05 to 22/6/05:**

As the treasurer, Dave Bright, is away overseas for 3 months, no report was presented to the meeting.

Since the last meeting, expenditure has been \$42.66 for Samson Total Technology for the photocopier. The closing balance as at 17 June 05 was \$400.79

The only account for payment is for \$21.73 to Samson Total Technology.

Moved: Liz Bourne Seconded: Val Richardson that this account for payment be approved. Carried.

**Outing Reports:**

1. Outing to Wallangarra – Friday 3 June

This was reported on in the last newsletter.

2. Sunday 19 June – Sundown National Park

This walk unfortunately had to be cancelled due to rain. However, as Liz Bourne, who was to lead the July outing but has another engagement on that day, it was agreed to reschedule Rob's walk for Sunday 24 July. The details for this outing will remain the same. There may now be some water in the Severn River and the side creeks.

**Pre-Outing Reports:**

1. Friday 1 July

This will be to Swiper's Gully in the Passchendaele State Forest and will be led by John Allison. Details as per the newsletter.

**Next Meeting**

Samantha Williams from the Granite Borders Landcare group will be our guest speaker.

**Specimens:**

1. Kris Carnell had photos from the Wallangarra outing

**General Business:**

1. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club

Rob McCosker asked whether we were still getting the club's newsletter, *Footprint*, as he had not seen it for a while. It appears they may have dropped us from their "free" list as we do not exchange a newsletter with them.

The meeting closed at 7.53pm and was followed by a very interesting slide programme from Col Hockings of a trip he and Janet went on that was organised by the Queensland Naturalists Club to Hinchinbrook Island in 1975.

**ANN Get-together 2006  
High Country in the Alpine Spring  
Hosted by South East Australian Naturalists' Association**

Naturalists from throughout Australia are invited to attend ANN Get-together 2006 from Monday 16 January to Thursday 2 February 2006. The Get-together will be held in the high country of Victoria and New South Wales

during the high country spring season when the alpine wildflowers are in bloom.

The Victorian section of the Get-together will be based at Feathertop Chalet, Harietville. There will be excursions to Mt Buffalo national park, Mt Hotham and Mt bogong areas. The evening program will include speakers on topics including flora, fauna, fires and geology.

On Thursday 26 January we travel to the Snowy Mountains region of NSW. We will stay at the Jindabyne Sport & Recreation Centre for 7 nights and visit places within Kosciuszko National Park. Proposed walks include the Mt Kosciuszko summit, the lakes and streams of the upper Snowy River catchment and their varied plant communities.

On Thursday 2 February we will return to Melbourne Airport (Tullamarine) via Myrtleford.

The Get-together has been organized with coach transport and full accommodation and meals. Due to the nature of the planned program and terrain of the area, tagalong participation is not an option.

Participants travelling to Melbourne by air and others who wish to be picked up in Melbourne must be at Melbourne airport by 1.00pm Monday 16 January. Coaches will leave at 1.30pm. Those who prefer to meet at Myrtleford will be picked up at 4.15pm. In Myrtleford cars and caravans can be stored in a locked yard for the duration to the get-together.

### **Cost**

The cost of the get-together will be in the range of \$1600 - \$1650. The number of participants, fuel surcharge, accommodation rates for 2006 and other variable factors will influence the final price. All participants will be notified of the exact cost at the beginning of September. The cost covers all bus travel, entrance to national parks, accommodation, all meals (breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner).

Deposit of \$500 per person together with the completed registration form should be sent to: SEANA (ANN 2006), Box W328, Ballarat West, Vic 3350 by **1 August 2005**.

*Any Stanthorpe Field Nats who are interested can obtain a registration form and a full copy of the information provided from Kris Carnell, phone 46835268 or email [orana@halenet.com.au](mailto:orana@halenet.com.au). All information will be tabled at the July meeting.*

### **Walk to Burning Mountain**

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June dawned cold and foggy at Scone, with rain predicted, so Kris and I decided we should head for Burning Mountain as soon as possible, in case of a downpour like the one we had experienced the previous day.

Burning Mountain is caused by a coal seam, which has been burning for about five thousand years, caused by spontaneous combustion or a lightning strike. We set off in the cloud and fog along the track, that goes through private property for a start, with quite a number of steps. The steepest part is at the beginning, which makes it easy on the way back. The return trip takes about 1½ to 2 hours. The first information sign, beside a Notolea, told some of the traditions of the local aboriginal people. We walked on through grassland, with some Eucalyptus blakelyi and Ironbark, with an occasional prickly acacia, until we entered an ironbark woodland with no understory at all. Further up the hill there was leptospermum growing – it is the first plant to come back once the coal fire has moved on and the ground has cooled.

We passed several gullies caused by the subsidence of the soil when the coal had burnt out beneath, and the soil in parts was very red. The burning caused iron oxide to form. As we approached a deep gully, a small mob of kangaroos hopped across the track into the long grass where they stopped and shook their heads at us. We could smell the fire from here.

When we reached the summit a kangaroo was busy grooming itself on the bare earth, while basking in the warmth of the burning coal, among yellow patches of sulphur, with smoke issuing from some of

the cracks. There was an eerie atmosphere here, looking through the fog and smoke to the dead trees across the other side of the mound. As the fog started to lift, we could see the beautiful mountains across the valley and another mob of kangaroos close by. On the way back we saw treecreepers, thornbills and a female whistler, which was quite unconcerned by our presence. There were coots and grebes on a small dam near the track and a flock of sulphur crested cockatoos made their presence felt with their screeching. As we had our morning tea at the shelter shed, we saw blue faced honeyeaters, noisy miners, magpies and eastern rosellas. We counted sixteen different birds in the area.

I had always wanted to see Burning Mountain and was not disappointed. It was well worth a visit and very well explained by the interpretive signs at the picnic area and along the track.

*Margaret Carnell*

## Management Matters

As subscriptions are now due for the next 12 months, at the next two meetings there will be some time allotted for the treasurer to write receipts between the end of the meeting and the beginning of the program.

If paying by **cash** at the meeting please put your **money in an envelope with your name on the outside** to make it easier for the treasurer.

### Subscriptions for 2005/2006 : Family \$25.00 – Single \$15.00

*Please complete your correct name and address details below and present with your subs. to the meeting in an envelope with your name on the outside, or post to:*

Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, STANTHORPE Q 4380.

Name (including title please) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Payment enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please note – Receipts not collected at the meeting will be enclosed with your Newsletter.

<i>Names and addresses are only used for posting the magazine and are not passed on to anyone else. If anyone does not want their name mentioned in outing reports could they please advise the editor.</i>
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As quite a few of our members have Email we would like to have your email address if you are agreeable. Sometimes it is convenient to contact as many members as possible about a change in arrangements, and this could be a convenient way to do it.

Email address \_\_\_\_\_



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**Club Program Suggestions – 2005/2006**

The committee once again asks for your assistance to provide a wide range of outing activities and meeting programs for the coming twelve months. Please **jot down your suggestions below**, and indicate if you would be prepared to lead an outing or provide a meeting program. All suggestions will be considered at a special committee meeting to be held shortly after the AGM.

Name: .....

Outings	Camp-Outs	Programs

**Comments:** .....

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