

# The Granite Belt Naturalist

Monthly Magazine of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc

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## Coming Up

**Outing Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June:** Girraween Environmental Lodge led by Rob McCosker

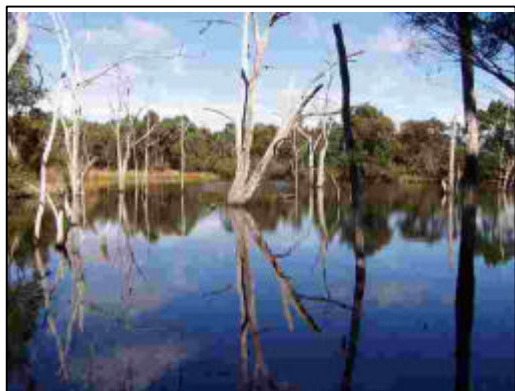
**Next Meeting Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June:** Program by Kris Carnell *To Kiama and Back*

**Weekdays Outing July:** to be discussed at the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June. (Put your thinking caps on.)

## Sunday Outing to Red Hill Tin Mine. 21<sup>st</sup> May

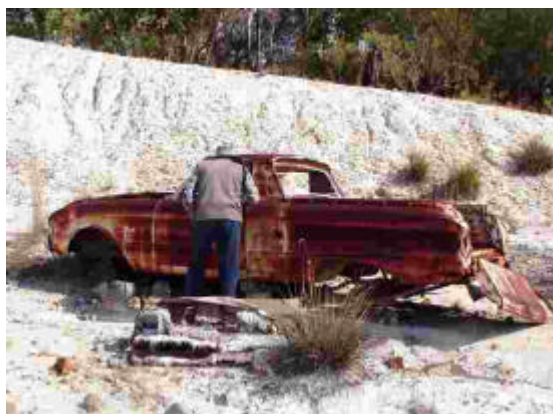
A total of 21 people attended the outing to the Red Hill Tin mine. We drove directly to the mine site and at 9.30am had our morning tea in the warm sunlight. Before heading off Jean gave us an extremely informative talk on the history of mining in the Red Hill/Sugarloaf area.

We proceeded to an area which was the last section to be mined in the early 1990s. Here we saw an old rusted tumbler & sluice used to separate the tin from the rubble. Part of an old timber stand, possibly from another sluice is still standing. From here eight Nats left to go back to the cars and then off home, while the rest of us continued around the dam inspecting some of the recent drilling activity. From here we headed back to the cars for lunch. Two more Nats left us before lunch & three headed off after lunch for an afternoon of musical entertainment.



After lunch two stayed at the cars while the remaining 6 went walkabout. We found the spot where there were several Beryl

samples still to be found even after the drilling company ripped it up with their equipment. We looked around this area for a while finding interesting stones and crystals. We then headed up the hill to the Border fence and found several



test holes that have been drilled in the past ten months. At one of the holes we found some rock samples with rather large samples of tin in them. Here Ian also found a patch of orchids *Chiloglottis* (bird orchid).



Continuing around the border we came across a rather desert like area and found another sluice approximately ten metres long and 1.8 metres wide. It was so well hidden amongst several she oaks that we almost walked right past it. Further down we found a rubbish

heap with rusty car parts and old mining equipment. We slowly made our way back to the cars picking up samples of rocks along the way. On arriving at the cars we had afternoon tea and then headed for home.

A great day was had with the weather being absolutely perfect. Very little bird life was seen which was most unusual, however we did see lots of footprints of wallaby, fox, dingo, pig and for the first time since my parents have owned the property we saw deer footprints.

Bird list. Sighted : Willy wag tail. White Throated Tree creeper.  
Heard only : Black cockatoo. Grey Thrush.

*Mario Pennisi.*

### Outing Report – Amiens State Forest - Friday 12 May

**Leader: Liz Bourne**

We had a beautiful autumn day for our walk at Amiens. Fifteen of us gathered at Weeroona Park in town and we then drove out to Paula Coutts and Brett Boatfields' property in the middle of the pine plantations at Amiens. We had our morning smoko on their back verandah and admired their garden and two orphaned, young grey roos that she is raising. Paula also showed us her book of photos and specimens of the plants on her property, which has been beautifully put together.



From there, we travelled a short distance into the plantation where we left the cars and walked westwards into a natural section of the forest, passing some huge granite boulders. There were enough



Hibbertia

plants still in flower to keep the botanically inclined occupied, including some *Hibbertia*, an urn heath and some greenhood orchids amongst the rocks. We also found some of the endangered *Boronia granitic*, which still had a few pink flowers on them, more than 9 months after they would have started flowering last year. The photographers in the group also found plenty of interest amongst the rocks and granite slabs.

Lunch was had on a large granite slab with good views westwards and we then descended to the bottom of the slab where we reached a track separating the eucalypt forest from the pine trees. A stroll along here for a couple of kilometres ultimately brought us back to the road where we had left the cars.

*Liz Bourne*

#### **FOR SALE**

***Down Under King size double de luxe swag  
Perfect condition***

**\$200.00**

**Phone Mary Clarke on 46836317**

## Pre-Outing Report Girraween Environmental Lodge – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**Leader: Rob McCosker**

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to the Girraween Environmental Lodge where we will have morning tea in the parking area.

The walk will be a fairly strenuous one, but there are a number of shorter tracks for those members who would like to walk them at their leisure. Be prepared to carry lunch.

For further information contact Rob on 46835371

## Campout Report - April 29<sup>th</sup>-May 1<sup>st</sup>. Toonumbar National Park

**Leaders: Colin and Janet Hockings**



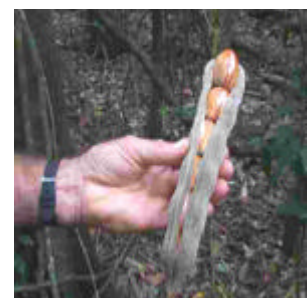
16 members arrived at the beautiful Iron Pot Creek camping area on Friday afternoon and throughout Saturday. Setting up campsites was Saturday's main activity along with enjoying the short, guided walk through the rainforest along the creek and observing the prolific bird life around the campgrounds. The Carnell grandchildren, despite the cool weather, took every opportunity to swim in the creek with its many delightful waterholes and cascades.

Spotlighting on Saturday evening was disappointing apart from a couple of small black flying foxes which appeared to be feeding on the fruit of a White Cedar.s



Cloudy skies on Sunday did not deter us from our plan to explore the 5km return circuit walk to Murray Scrub. This easy to moderate track took us through the World Heritage rainforest for which this area is renowned. Highlights of the walk were the grove of Red Cedar trees and the enormous Flooded Gums that towered above the canopy. Colourful varieties of fungi, noted on the decomposing logs or camouflaged amongst the leaf litter, gave the photographers plenty of opportunity to test their

photographic skills. A break in the canopy, created by a large fallen tree, was frequented by a pair of brilliant Mistletoe Birds. During our walk a bower of a Satin Bower Bird was seen, together with a small, unidentified black snake which wasn't very impressed with all the attention! By the time we had returned to the cars, the rain, which had started gently, was pouring down by the bucket.





On returning to camp for a late lunch, the remainder of the afternoon was spent enjoying the open fire, hot drinks, great company and conversation in the very much appreciated, camp kitchen.

Our thanks go to the fire keeper (Kris) and the damper maker (Margaret) who provided a delicious supper for all on Sunday evening. During the evening, an aggressive spider, possibly a Funnel Web, provided some excitement when it caused everyone to either jump up on seats or depart the camp kitchen at a great rate of knots!

After a damp night, the rain had stopped by Monday morning allowing us to pack up a wet camp before returning home after a very enjoyable and memorable weekend.

### Ode to the Spider



Iron Pot camp at Toonumbar was where the scene was set,  
While Nats were gathered round the fire, the night was cool and wet.  
We dried our clothes, we warmed our backs, the damper in the pot,  
All intent on just one thing - a drink of something hot!

“What is this?” a voice called out “something near to me.”  
“A piece of grass, a spider shell, I find it hard to see.”  
The torchlight shone down on the thing causing such a flap.  
“Oh! It is a SPIDER-a FUNNEL WEB at that!”

Some curious souls took a closer look, the cameras they did flash,  
While others scrambled to their feet ready for the dash!  
The spider reared up on its legs-“Don’t interfere with me!”  
“I can stand on tippee toes, there, that will make you flee!”

The spider started to advance, a zigzag course at first,  
Never have I seen a crowd so quickly to disperse.  
Some of us went round and round, the spider close behind,  
Others climbed on tabletops, we really didn’t mind.

What a commotion, such a fuss, the camp had come alive.  
A small, black legged creature the centre of so much strife.  
Soon the chase was over, a lid was screwed on tight.  
The spider safe inside a jar, not roaming in the night.

The campers soon returned to tents, torchlight at their feet  
To search their clothes, boots and bags, no spiders did they meet.  
The spider it was soon set free, once more into the night  
Probably wondering who it was that got the biggest fright!

by Janet Hockings

**Minutes of Meeting of Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Inc. held in the QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe, on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006.**

**Meeting opened** at 7.35pm

**Welcome:** President, Kris Carnell welcomed members to the meeting, and added a special welcome to Colleen Petzler and Glen McRae.

**Attendance and Apologies:** Fifteen people attended the meeting and there were 6 apologies as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting** were received on the motion of Peter Kerr seconded Rod Hutchin. Carried

**Business Arising from Minutes:** The data projector has been purchased.

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards**

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Qld Parks & Wildlife Service | Copies of <i>Bush Telegraph</i> and <i>Darling Downs Traveller</i> to distribute |
| 2. Amiens State School          | Invitation to opening of Discovery Centre  |
| 3. Chinchilla Field Nats        | <i>Urimbirra</i> May 06  |
| 4. Toowoomba Field Nats         | <i>Darling Downs Naturalist</i> May 06   |
| 5. Qld Naturalists Club         | <i>QNC News</i>  |
| 6. Total Technology Centre      | Invoice for \$19.02  |
| 7. Commonwealth Bank            | Bank statement   |
| 8. International Park Tours     | IPT Traveller  |
| 9. Fassifern Field Nats         | Newsletter by email  |

The inwards correspondence was received on the motion of Margaret Carnell, seconded Mario Pennisi. Carried

**Financial Statement for the period 26/4/2006 to 23/5/2006**

Cash Book balance as at 26/4/2006 2077.14

Receipts – Nil

Expenditure

Projector Purchase 1758.00

Cash Book Balance as at 23/5/2006 319.14

Agrees with bank balance as at 19/5/2006 **\$319.14**

Margaret Carnell moved, and Rob McCosker seconded that the financial statement be adopted, and an account for \$19.02 be paid to Total Technology Centre. Carried

**Specimens**

Ian Milinovich supplied the following

1. Photos of Kitchen Caves/Slip Rock outing
2. Photos of *Acacia hispidula*, and *Acacia scripta* and *Olearia gravis*, all of which were seen on the Kitchen Caves outing and identified by Ian later.
3. Rocks from Lode Creek outing – quartz, beryl, tin and a rock with veins and minerals.

**Outing Reports**

**Amiens State Forest;**

Margaret reported that about 16 people met for morning tea at Paula Couttes' place, and admired her pressed specimens of plants on her property, before travelling a short distance to the State Forest. We parked the cars and walked slowly to a granite slab, botanising on the way. A patch of greenhoods, *Pteostylis revoluta* were admired on the way. After lunch we walked down the slab, onto the road back to where the cars were parked. There were a few flowers in bloom, but no great quantities.

**Lode Creek**

Mario reported that 21 people attended the outing, and drove to the lower part of the tin mine, which was last mined in 1990. Members picked up stones, walked around the lake and checked some test holes. It took 11 seconds for a pebble to hit water when dropped down a test tube, which ran at an angle.

Six members walked further and found specimens of beryl. They walked to the border fence which is on the edge of the Great Dividing Range. The leaves of *Chiloglottis* (bird orchids) were found at the base of a messmate tree.

Two birds were seen and 2 heard, and there were fresh animal tracks.

A sluice box 10m by 2m was found surrounded by casuarinas. Mario had never seen it before.

### **Pre-Outing Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June to Tenterfield Park**

Kris Carnell will lead the outing to Tenterfield Park, which is being restored by the Tenterfield Field Nats, and then to the Tank Traps and Thunderbolt's Hideout. Meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to the Tenterfield water supply for morning tea, before exploring the park and other areas.

### **Outing 18<sup>th</sup> June.**

Mark McNichol is unable to lead the outing, which was planned for Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June. He could lead it on any other day but Sunday later in the year.

Suggestions were called for.

Kris suggested Wellington Rock or Mallee Ridge.

Rob McCosker offered to lead an outing to Girraween Lodge and his offer was accepted.

We will leave Weeroona Park at 9.00am and travel to Girraween Lodge at Wyberba for morning tea. Lunch will be carried on the walk.

### **Camp Out to Toonumbar N.P. in May**

Kris gave a brief report on the Camp out to Toonumbar National Park, which was excellent. Members saw the best stands of red cedar he'd ever seen. There were hundreds of bell birds at the camp site. Rob McCosker reported that the spider in the camp kitchen, was a mouse spider, not a funnel-web.

### **Program next month**

Kris will provide the program *Here to Kiama and Back* on June 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **General Business**

The president said that the data projector would be available for hire at a fee to other clubs or individuals. The amount will be decided by the Management Committee.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm, and was followed by an excellent program from Michael Mueller – *By bike through Japan and Korea*.

## **Outing Report Tenterfield Park 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2006**

Seven Nats left Weeroona Park to travel to Tenterfield where we met Peter, John and Deanna Sommerlad and Dusty the dog, at the shelter beside the water supply. We parked the vehicles to make as much of a windbreak as possible while we had our morning tea. When I offered Dusty my apple core he took it very politely, then spat it out. It seems he doesn't like sundowner, only granny smith, pink lady and delicious.

A white-bellied sea eagle was gliding above the water and Peter told us it has its nest around the corner. Most of the waterbirds were also sheltering around the corner but we saw quite a number of black swans on the water and pied cormorants on the wall of the dam. There were also crows flying about.



After morning tea we drove to Tenterfield Park and noticed quite a few golden everlastings in bloom. We walked first to the Acacia area where most of the acacias were doing well, including brigalow. The myall was not looking very good at all.

Tenterfield Park was gazetted in 1887 as a Public Recreation Area. It has been a golf course, arm camp, garbage dump, quarry and has been grazed. There are some magnificent *Eucalyptus blakeleyi* which were planted along the fairways when the area was a golf course. Four years ago the horses were excluded and a rabbit-proof fence was built. It is hoped to turn the area into a regional botanical garden.



E. blakeleyi



The area of the old dump has had callistemons planted in it and a frog hole constructed. The frogs breed more successfully in temporary waterholes, as predators quickly learn to hunt the permanent waterholes. A huge amount of work has been done getting rid of weeds, including privet, cotoneaster and pyrocanthus, and the battle to get rid of lovegrass is continuing. It is controlled by using Roundup at its regular strength with a quantity of vinegar equal to the Roundup added. It is best sprayed late in the season or after rain. Areas that have been sprayed are left alone for the grass to decompose. We skirted around one

corner where grass was regrowing in some wheel tracks, while the untouched area was dead.

Nest boxes have been constructed in some of the big trees and it is planned to have trees flowering throughout the year for food for birds, possums and gliders.

Peter explained that the rock in the park is granite, while over the fence the rock is rhyolite. 250,000,000 years ago there was a huge volcano with the epicentre at Bluff Rock, which erupted and caused the present geological formation of the area.

Our walk ended back at the gate where a parking area and picnic area is to be constructed, hopefully in time for an Open Day on 28<sup>th</sup> October.



John shows drill holes at Tank Traps

Our next stop was in the vicinity of the WW2 Tank Traps where we had lunch in the sun on the side of the road and chatted about cabbages and kings, before starting the walk to Thunderbolt's Hideout. We admired some lovely smooth-barked eucalypts, formerly *sE deanii*, but now something else, which I can't remember. The walk along the track is very interesting. We walked firstly through the tank traps that are kept free of vegetation as much in a fire. There were clumps of

orchid leaves along the path under the bracken and some magnificent large Messmate and Stringybark trees. We also saw blueberry ash and the largest heath in the world, which had some black berries on it. One of these was a tree about 5 metres high.



Blasted Rock -Tank Traps

As we walked along the track towards a ferny gully, we heard a Lyrebird performing. It was imitating a number of birds as well as a frog. Peter saw its fresh mound, but we couldn't catch even a glimpse of the bird, although it was very close.

When we arrived at the entrance to Thunderbolt's Hideout John explained that it is very important that this small remnant of vegetation doesn't burn, as the eucalypts would take over if the rainforest plants were destroyed. As we had to meet children after school, we didn't have time to walk to the Hideout, but had to head for home. We had an extremely interesting outing and would like to thank Peter and John Sommerlad for showing us these areas which they are so enthusiastic about.

*Margaret Carnell*

## Management Matters

As subscriptions are due on the first of July 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 2006/2007 : 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.

*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.*

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 \_\_\_\_\_

If you would prefer to have your magazine emailed to you please tick the box

☐



**Club Program Suggestions – 2006/2007**

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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 .....