



# 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 and the purchase of a data projector.

- 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, 364 Back Creek Road, Severnlea Qld. 4352.

Email: [orana@halenet.com.au](mailto:orana@halenet.com.au)

## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2006/2007

President	Kris Carnell	46835268
Vice-presidents	Michael Mueller	46811421
	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	Robin McCosker	46835371
Management Committee:	President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer	

Deadline for next Newsletter  
8<sup>th</sup> May 2007

## 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



## Coming Up

**Outing Sunday April 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Red Rock Gorge leader Michael Mueller

**Next Meeting Wednesday April 25<sup>th</sup>:** Program *Orkney Islands* by Michael Mueller

**Camp Out May 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>:** Border Ranges National Park led by Rob McCosker

**Friday Outing May 11<sup>th</sup>:** Leader Liz Bourne

## Outing Report The Desert and Basket Swamp Falls 25<sup>th</sup> March

Leader Kris Carnell

In spite of misty showers, 15 Nats set out for Basket Swamp Falls, travelling along Sugarloaf Road to the Mt Lindesay Road and then onto Boonoo Forest Road. We noticed a couple of patches of feral lilies along Sugarloaf Road, and Rob saw a flock of Plum Headed Finches. When we turned onto the forest road we noticed how quickly the regrowth had come after the area was logged, following the bushfire of 2002. This forest is now a hunting area for feral animals. We didn't see any ferals, but did see a couple of fast-moving wallabies. As we were the first car, we disturbed a spotted quail-thrush, which flew across the road, flashing its white tipped tail. I was very pleased to see it, as we almost always saw one or two along the road to Basket Swamp and this was our first sighting since the bushfire.

There was a shower along the way, but by the time we arrived at Bark Hut Picnic Area and donned raincoats, the rain had all but stopped and cloud rolled in as we watched.

After a cuppa we headed towards Wellington Forest Road, all safely negotiating the crossing filled with very coarse blue metal. We travelled through rain and cloud, admiring the lush green of the forest, until we stopped at The Desert to consider our options. A few of us hopped out to look at the wildflowers in bloom. There was a lovely patch of yellow Goodenia on the corner where we stopped, and the pink Epacris had a few spikes of flowers. After careful looking we found a couple of flowers and lots of buds on a Melichrus procumbens (jam tarts).



As the rain had eased we decided to continue to the Basket Swamp Falls. We did not stop at the creek crossing where we had planned to explore, but continued along a track, which was becoming narrower all the time, and had to negotiate a couple of steep humps, one of which was eroded. We stopped beside the track a few metres from the Basket Swamp Creek crossing and proceeded on foot towards the falls. There was a lot of deformed growth on the young casuarina trees and there was some discussion about whether it was caused by galls, or was witches brooms. There was no sign of galls on the branches when we looked closely.



Beside the creek at the base of the falls were patches of flannel flowers in bloom, as well as mauve daisies, a few leucopogon and bauera. Everyone explored the area below the falls and Peter walked along the road to the top. We proceeded back to cars for lunch and had almost finished when another shower came over. As this one was somewhat heavier we headed back via Basket Swamp and back home, some going via Tenterfield and the rest returning the way they came.

*Margaret Carnell*

**Bird List Basket Swamp Falls**

Compiled by Margaret Carnell

Plum headed finch	Fire tailed finch	Bower bird
Magpie	Crimson rosella	Welcome swallow
Kookaburra	Crow	Spinebill or New Holland honeyeater in flight
Spotted quail-thrush		

**Flowering Plants Basket Swamp Falls**

Compiled by Margaret Carnell

Yellow everlasting	White everlasting	<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>
<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i> (Trigger Plant)	Orange pea	<i>Goodenia sp</i> (possibly <i>stelligera</i> )
<i>Pratia purpurascens</i> (white root)	<i>Hibbertina sp</i>	<i>Persoonia pinifolia</i>
<i>Zieria sp</i>	<i>Acacia ulicifolia</i> (prickly Moses)	<i>Epacris microphylla</i> (coral heath pink )
<i>Banksia spinulosa</i>	<i>Leucopogon sp</i>	<i>Actinotus helianthi</i> (flannel flower)
<i>Brachycome sp</i> (mauve daisy)	<i>Bauera rubioides</i>	<i>Hybanthus monopetalus</i>
<i>Hypericum sp</i>	Buttercup	Dandelion

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2007**

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 7.43 pm, with president, Kris Carnell, welcoming members and visitors, Fred and Betty McKinlay.

**Attendance:** There were 20 present at the meeting and 2 apologies as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 28 February 07 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Lyn Marriott, seconded by Helena Kruger. Carried.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

Kris has yet to receive confirmation that Martin Ions will be available to speak at the June meeting.

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards:**

1. Canon Total Technology – statement for \$19.32
2. Commonwealth Bank – statement for March
3. Chinchilla Field Nats. – *Urimbirra* – March 07
4. Qld.Field Naturalists Club – QNC News – March 07
5. Fassifern Field Naturalists – newsletter – March 07
6. Stanthorpe State High School – youth mentoring program
7. Birds Australia – Southern Queensland – 2007 Armchair Twitch
8. Crown Content – Directory of Australian Associations
9. Stanthorpe Camera Club – ayment of \$37.50 for half post office box rental
10. Terry and Margaret Tricker – membership renewal
11. Qld Parks and Wildlife Service – *Bush Telegraph* – Autumn 07

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Shirley Allum. Carried.

**Financial Statement**

In the absence of the treasurer, the financial statement was tabled by the president.

**Financial Statement for the period from 29/2/07 to 28/3/07:**

Cash book balance as at 29/2/07 547.13

Receipts:

Subscriptions 15.00

		15.00
<u>Expenditure:</u>		
Photocopier charges	19.32	
Post office box rental	65.00	
		84.32
Cash book balance as at 28/3/07		479.81
<u>Accounts for payment:</u>		
Kris Carnell – postage of newsletter	100.00	

This financial report was received on the motion of Kris Carnell, seconded by Lyn Marroit. Carried

**Outing Reports:**

1. 2 March Outing

This was reported on in the March newsletter.

2. Sunday 25 March – Basket Swamp, Boonoo Boonoo State Forest

Fourteen members participated in this outing. It rained on the way to the Swamp and morning tea was held in drizzling rain. It fined up enough for a walk to the base of the falls but there were quite a few leaches about. The group returned to the cars for lunch before returning home.

**Pre-outing Reports:**

1. Star Watching

Michael Mueller is offering to host a star gazing night on the night before the next meeting – Tuesday 24 April. It will be an informal night so people can stay as long or as short as they like.

2. Next Meeting

Michael will also be the guest speaker at the April meeting and will give a presentation on a bicycle trip to the Orkney Islands.

3. Sunday 22 April outing

Michael will also be organising this outing to Red Rock Gorge in the Sundown National Park. It will go down into the gorge and will be quite a strenuous walk of about 6km which will include some rock scrambling. Those not wishing to visit the gorge could stay up on top near the cars.

4. Camp Out in May

Peter Kerr will be unable to lead this trip as planned so a nominal leader will be required to organise the campsite and write a report afterwards. It will be held in the Sheepstation Creek camping area, off the Lions Road in the Border Ranges National Park. The McCoskers said they should be able to lead the trip provided their next grandchild was not born just before the weekend.

**Specimens:**

1. Michael Jefferies had a photo of a hunting wasp taken at the Xmas break-up and a Paeleolithic hand axe from Uganda.
2. Liz Bourne had a small bird's nest made out of paperbark, found outside Maryborough.

**General Business:**

1. Peter Andrewartha mentioned that the water level at Glen Lyon Dam was very low again and it may be worth a trip there to see the Texas Caves. Kris said he thought the last trip took place when it was at 15% capacity and it was not as low as that yet.
2. Liz mentioned that the Stanthorpe Rare Wildflower Consortium was organising some Fire and Biodiversity workshops on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 June and members would be invited to attend either one of these days. There will be further details in future newsletters.

The meeting closed at 8.24pm and was followed by a presentation from Rob McCosker on a trip he and Trish made around the Wide Bay-Burnett region visiting the Coalstoun Lakes, Mt Walsh, Kinkuna, Deepwater, Kroombit Tops and Cania Gorge National Parks.

### **Nats Outing April 22<sup>nd</sup> - Red Rock Gorge**

The April outing on the 22<sup>nd</sup> will be to the Red Rock Gorge area in the Sundown National Park. The meeting point will be Weeroona Park at 9a.m. We will then travel to the park via Ballandean. If required, cars can be left at the entrance to the park, but 2wd vehicles with reasonable clearance should be able to make it to the car park at the gorge lookout. After smoko, we will walk around the edge of the gorge until we reach a small waterfall on the far side.

After reaching the waterfall, we will move along the creek until we meet a 4wd track. From there we turn back along the ridge until we meet a rock slab where there are views down to the Severn River valley. We should be back at the car park by afternoon tea time. The walk is rated about a 7. Carry your lunch and water.

Those members who want an easier day can remain at the lookout area watching the progress, having extended morning teas and doing short walks around the car park.

Leader Michael Mueller Phone 46811421

### **Starwatch**

On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April, Michael is arranging a star watching night. The venue is the Stanthorpe State Primary School oval with the entrance via the two little gates on Connor Street. The program is viewing the moon and will start at 7 p.m. Come and go as you please and bring a chair and a drink.

### **Program**

The program on the 25<sup>th</sup> will be on the Orkney Islands. Some time ago Michael undertook a bike tour of the island and we will see slides of his tour.

### **Camp-out- May Long Weekend**

The campout on May 5,6and7 will be to the Border Ranges National Park which is described as a World Heritage rainforest park on the rim of a vast ancient volcano. The campout will be at the Sheep Station Creek Camping area on Symes Road. Symes Road turns off the Lions Road which runs between Rathdowney and Kyogle. Activities for the weekend will be arranged to suit the members who are camping. There at least 5 lookouts and 8 walks so there should be plenty of choice. According to the web site firewood is supplied but the water is unsuitable for drinking. Camping fees and car day use fees apply for this park.

Would any one planning to camp please contact Rob McCosker on 46835371

### **Vegie Patch**

Wendy Mueller would like to have her own vegetable garden so Michael is looking for a small area (20 sq.meters) in the town area. If anyone has a suitable area that they are not using could you please contact Michael.

### **Back Page**

For those of you who receive your magazine by email the back page of the hardcopy magazine is photocopied information on the ARMCHAIR TWITCH 2007. Birds Australia Southern Queensland is holding the twitch on the last weekend in September. Information can be found at

[www.users.bigpond.com/basqld/active/activities.htm](http://www.users.bigpond.com/basqld/active/activities.htm)