



# 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.

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## 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:  
9<sup>th</sup> July 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 24<sup>th</sup> June:** Billyrimba Falls led by Kris & Margaret Carnell

**Next Meeting Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June:** Program *China* by Peter Andrewartha

**Friday Outing July 6<sup>th</sup>:** Wallangarra Ridge led by Michael Mueller

### Pre-Outing Report – Billyrimba Falls – 24<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**Leaders:** Kris & Margaret Carnell

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9.00am for our outing to Billyrimba Falls, and travel along the highway to Tenterfield, where we will turn left into Clifton Street and then right onto Scrub Road and then onto Spirabo Forest Way. We will require 4WD vehicles to drive down to the falls. Morning tea will be taken when we arrive at the falls, which should be at about 10.30am.

After morning tea we will cross the creek and work our way downstream over a ridge, and then descend into the gorge. This is quite steep and strenuous and there is some *Epacris* and *Acacia ulicifolia* to walk through, so be sure to wear long sleeves and pants. As it will be the middle of winter, I guess everyone will anyhow. The descent into the gorge would be rated at 8 or 9.

After exploring the gorge we will return to the cars for lunch. There is an interesting outcrop of rocks on the next ridge, which we will explore if time permits and a small section of vine scrub in the next gully. For those who don't want to brave the scramble into the gorge there is an easier walk upstream of the falls.

When we did the pre-outing there were dozens of black swans and many more coots on the Tenterfield water supply, as well as a number of cormorants. As there was a strong wind blowing, there were white caps on the water and the coots were sheltering in a cove right beside the road.



A few plants of *Hibbertia aspera* had large yellow flowers and there were a lot of *Banksia spinulosa* in bloom, some with black stamens and some with golden. At the falls we also saw some *Banksia integrifolia* flowering and several different fungi.

As we started to make our way along the ridge, we came across an unusual flower on a plant with grassy foliage over 2 metres tall. I thought it might be related to the *Xanthorrhoea* by the look of the foliage and the flower spike, although the flower was tiny in comparison. There was a large green seedpod sitting out from a spent flower spike. We identified it as settler's flax *Gymnostachys anceps* after we arrived home. The leaves were used by early settlers for string and weaving. In the gorge there were patches of *Dendrobium kingianum*, *Dendrobium speciosum* and *Bulbophyllum shepherdii* on the rocks and some *Liparis swensonii* in flower. A dagger orchid hung from amongst a clump of *Liparis*.



As the days are short, we hope to leave the falls no later than 3.30pm. If we get away earlier, we can stop at the water supply dam to look at water birds.

**OUTING REPORT: Bird watching at “Pinaster” Saturday 2 June.**

Thirteen members met at “Pinaster” on a cool, cloudy morning to attempt some bird watching in the garden and surrounds of “Pinaster”, home of Janet and Colin Hockings.

A few birds were noted during the walk along the creek, but the main point of interest was the “play” of a Satin Bower bird that had gathered quite a substantial collection of blue objects. We suspect that this same Bower bird also maintains another bower in the Pinaster garden that has been there now for over fifteen years.

Following morning tea at the house, some members ventured on a second stroll to our eastern boundary, but again, few species of birds were observed. Although the numbers and variety of birds that usually frequent our bush garden were not evident on Saturday, no doubt due to the very dry conditions, all who attended enjoyed a pleasant morning.

**Birds listed:** Buff -rumped thornbill, Striated thornbill, White-eared honeyeater, Yellow-tufted honeyeater, White-naped honeyeater, White-plumed honeyeater, Yellow-faced honeyeater, Grey thrush, Pied butcher bird, Wedge-tail eagle, Crimson rosella, Crow, Wood duck, Blue wren, Red-browed finch, Scrub wren, Bronze wing pigeon, Bar-shouldered pigeon, Peaceful dove, Azure kingfisher, Kookaburra, Eastern yellow robin, White throated tree-creeper, Eastern spinebill.

**Report on Border Ranges NP Outing, May long weekend**

Due to a foreseen and unavoidable situation,(detouring via Toowoomba to welcome our newest Grandson) Trish and I didn't arrive at the Sheepstation Ck Campsite until almost night-fall on Saturday, but on seeing fellow Nats, Helena and Lester we soon set up camp right behind theirs, after some jiggling of Nanette's tent ropes. As Kris had rightly suspected, the place was packed to the teeth with Qld'ers.

Being the last to arrive we were happy to go along with the others plans, which involved a 4.30am rise to drive to The Pinnacle Lookout. To quote the NP blurb – “ This is one of the best locations in Australia to watch the dawn. The silhouette of Mt Warning against the sun should not be missed.” And we didn't. Although the sun was a little obscured by cloud and a little further north of the mountain at this time of year, the light display was spectacular particularly with the Tweed Valley cloaked in fog, 1000m below us, and lit briefly with the first rays of sunlight. Back to camp for breakfast we decided, after finally meeting up with the remaining 6 Nats members who were camped together some distance away, that we would stay as two groups and each take different tracks, as there were so many to investigate.

So, after breakfast, our group set off to do the Bar Mountain Circuit, stopping in at the Blackbutt Lookout for another wonderful view of Mt Warning and the Tweed Valley, now in sunlight. The Falcorostrum Loop at the Bar Mountain picnic area passes through one of largest stands of Antarctic beech in the park. Highlights of the Bar Mountain Circuit were fungi, huge blackbutt trees and the lookout to the west over the Collins Creek valley and to Mount Lindsay and Mount Barney. We had a late lunch at the picnic area before returning to camp, where Trish and I did a quick trip down the Palm Forest walk to a nice waterhole for a brief swim. Very brief as the water was very cold!



Monday morning saw us split up even more, as some decided to do the Palm Forest walk before packing up to return home. Trish and I packed up and moved on to look at part of the Brindle Creek walk and the Helmholtzia Loop, which takes its name from a rare stream lily. The lily grew in abundance here along the moist creek banks, and though no flowers were seen there was plenty of colour in the variety of fungi. We reached the first of the falls, Evans Falls, as a shower of rain started and we decided to return to the car to drive on to the Antarctic Beech picnic area for lunch before heading home. A short walk took us into a forest of beech trees where you could be excused for thinking you were in a time warp back to pre-historic times.

We had a most enjoyable weekend and as usual vowed to return, but at a less busy time, to see the rest of the tracks and hopefully some orchids in bloom.

*Rob McCosker*

### Outing Report Mt Prentice

A group of about 20 Nats travelled to Mt Prentice on the 20<sup>th</sup> May. We made our way along Sugarloaf and Mt Lindesay Roads until we came to “Jindabyne”, the property of the Gasparin family. The first part of the track through the property took us through an area that had been mined and in later years has been used for vegetable production. A few of us would have liked their water supply in our back yard. We passed an orchard and then drove through grazing land into an extensive area that had not been cleared. There were signs that selective logging had taken place over the years, but there were still lots of big trees.



Smoko was taken beside the track while the leaders worked out which of the many tracks we should take. It didn't take long to realize that we were quite close to the unnamed peak in the National Park, so we drove the short distance to the boundary fence. All except two of us tackled the fairly rough western slope of the peak. At the top we were rewarded with our first view of Mt Lindesay as well as the repeater tower and a remarkable balancing rock. We then walked and scrambled to another vantage point to the South where we could see Mt Prentice a short distance away. The walk back to the vehicles was not as difficult as the climb had been.

The drive to our lunch spot, which looked over a *hanging swamp*? (reminds me of Basket Swamp) took us more or less along the eastern boundary of the property. After lunch we crossed again into the National Park and walked through an area that had a number of wombat holes, to the base of Mt Prentice. Mt Prentice is reasonably easy to climb from the west and the views from the top are quite magnificent. There is an extensive area on top with rock gardens and rock formations.

We could have spent longer at the top but because of the shortness of the day, we made our way back to the vehicles and drove out along a different track. Flowers were scarce because of the dry and the time of year and there weren't many birds to be seen. A big thank you to the Gasparin family for allowing us to access the National Park through their property.



*Kris Carnell*

**Outing Report Starwatch 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

Third time lucky? Well, almost. As it happened on the two previous occasions, the clouds came rolling in despite clear skies the days before, but the moon still managed to shine through, so I decided to go ahead with it.

Despite of a slightly dull image, we could clearly make out the long plateau-like ridge in the *Sea of Serenity* and as the highlight, the 1400m high central double peak in the middle of crater Theophilus. Its ring mountain rises 1200m above the surrounding terrain, similar to Mt Warning. However, the diameter of the rim measures 700km across and the bottom of the crater lies an incredible 4400m below the highest point of the rim.

*Michael Mueller*

**Pre-Outing Report – Wallangarra Ridge – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July**

**Leader:** Michael Mueller

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 8.30am and travel to Girraween National Park. After smoko we will walk along the Sphinx Track towards Wallangarra Ridge. The Sphinx is 3.5 kilometres from the picnic area and is Grade 3. The rest of the distance to the ridge will be through the scrub. The total distance to the ridge and back is about 13km. People who do not wish to bush bash may form a group and turn back at the end of the graded track.

Carry lunch and water.

Further details will be available at the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April. Phone Michael on 46811421 if you have any queries.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc  
held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St., Stanthorpe on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2007**

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 7.37 pm, with president, Kris Carnell, welcoming members, especially Jean and Bob Harslett, and visitors, Sonia McKay and Jenny and Glen Holmes.

**Attendance:** There were 26 present at the meeting and 1 apology as per the attendance book.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25 April 07 were received as a correct record of the meeting on the motion of Patience James, seconded by Rob McCosker. Carried.

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards:**

1. International Parktours -newsletter
2. Commonwealth Bank – statement for May
3. Chinchilla Field Nats. – *Urimbirra* – May 07
4. Qld Naturalists Club – newsletter
5. **Fassifern Field Naturalists – various newsletters**
6. Northern Territory Field Naturalists Club – Aust. Naturalist Network Get-together – 10 to 18 May '08
7. Canon Total Technology – invoice for \$52.65
8. Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Club – various newsletters
9. Society for Growing Aust Plants – various newsletters

This correspondence was accepted on the motion of Liz Bourne, seconded by Col Hockings. Carried.

**Financial Statement for the period from 25/4/07 to 23/5/07:**

Cash book balance as at 25/4/07 462.31

Receipts:

Subscriptions	80.00	
Sale of wildflower books	40.00	
		120.00

Expenditure:

Room rent	75.00	
		75.00

Cash book balance	507.31
Agrees with bank balance as at 23/5/07	507.31
<u>Accounts for payment:</u>	
Canon Total Technology	52.65

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

Kris said that as our bank balance was reasonably healthy, he recommended that our membership fees remain the same for 2007/08. This was agreed to by a motion moved by Dave Bright and seconded by Shirly Allum. Carried.

He thanked Michael Mueller for reducing our mailing costs by delivering many of the newsletters to Stanthorpe members by bicycle.

Dave reported that recent amendments to the *Associations Incorporation Act* meant that the requirement to have public liability insurance may not now be necessary. However, it was agreed that because of the nature of our outdoor activities, we should continue with it. The changes also meant that the auditing of financial reports for small groups such as ours was no longer required.

Millie indicated that the QCWA room rental was likely to be increased next financial year as they had not risen for 15 years.

### **Outing Reports:**

#### **1. Friday walk – 11 May – Amiens State Forest**

Liz Bourne said that the rainy weather deterred most people and only 3 went on this short walk to the eastern section of the eucalypt part of the forest. Surprisingly, there were a number of plants still in flower, including *Boronia granitica* and even a couple of flannel flowers.

#### **2. Camp Out on May long weekend**

This was held in the Sheepstation Creek camping area, off the Lions Road in the Border Ranges National Park. Rob McCosker reported good views at dawn from the lookout over Mt Warning.

#### **3. Sunday 20 May – Mt Prentice in Boonoo Boonoo National Park**

Dave Bright reported that 20 people attended this outing which went to the western side of the Boonoo Boonoo National Park via the Gasparin's property. An unnamed granite dome to the north of Mt Prentice was climbed first, providing excellent 360° views. Most of the group then returned to the cars to drive to the base of Mt Prentice while 3 proceeded cross country to the peak. Once again, there were excellent views from the top and a few wildflowers still out. Large numbers of *Mirbelia confertifolia* were noted near the summit and there were plenty of signs of wombats. Sue Frances saw a lyrebird near the top and a number were heard in the gullies below.

### **Pre-Outing Reports:**

#### **1. Hockings place – Sat 2 June**

Col said this would mainly be a bird watching outing around the garden and people should bring smoko, a chair and binoculars.

#### **2. Billyrimba Falls and Gorge – Sunday 24 June**

This is between Tenterfield and Deepwater. The outing will go to the falls first for smoko and those who want to can scramble down besides the falls, although it is quite steep. On the pre-outing, a number of orchids were noted on the sides of the gorge. Those that want something less strenuous can explore up the creek.

#### **Next Meeting – Wed. 27 June**

The presentation will, hopefully, be Martin Ions from Tenterfield, talking about geology.

### **Specimens:**

1. Rob McCosker had a piece of Antarctic beech wood
2. Patience James said there was a good exhibition of paintings from Queensland botanical artists in the Stanthorpe Art Gallery
3. Jean Harslett had some hard pellets she had found in her garden that may have come from kookaburras. She also reported that birdwatchers had seen a jacana on their dam.
4. Jenny and Glen Holmes mentioned that they had seen 2 superb parrots in the Limevale State Forest, which were unusual to see that far north.

### **General Business:**

1. Kris asked whether we should gauge interest in having our camp-out on another weekend as on the Labour Day long weekend it was difficult to find an uncrowded area. This will be canvassed in the next newsletter.
2. Michael Jefferies said he had a colour film scanner that he wished to find a home for.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm and was followed by a very educational presentation from Ian Milinovich on "The Plants of the Stanthorpe Shire".

**Stanthorpe Cycling Group  
Cycle Ride  
Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

Distance .. 37kms Seal/dirt/Highway 36/0/1 Grade Easy/Medium **Or**  
46 kms Seal/dirt/Highway 45/0/1 Grade Medium

Starting at Woolworth's car park at 9am this ride takes us to Heritage Wines for morning tea, along Old Warwick Road and Granite Belt Drive. Cyclists may join at The Summit Post Office at 10am by prior arrangement. Riders must wear a helmet, carry a spare tube and/or puncture kit and water. Anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. All riders will be required to sign an indemnity form prior to starting the ride.

Please call ride leader, Keith Barnett (46832100) for more details

**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 2007/2008 : 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

