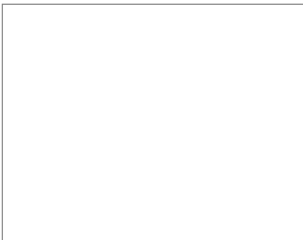




The Granite Belt Naturalist



Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club Inc., PO BOX 154, Stanthorpe, QLD 4380

Web Site: www.granitenet.com.au/groups/environment/fieldnats/

AIMS OF THE CLUB

1. To study all branches of Natural History
2. Preservation of the flora and fauna of Queensland
3. Encourage a spirit of protection towards native birds, animals and plants
4. Assist, where possible, in scientific research
5. Publish a monthly newsletter for the information of members.

WEB EDITION

If you have downloaded this from our web site but are not a member of the Stanthorpe Field Nats please let us know by email to fieldnats@granitenet.com.au, so that we can see how well used the newsletter is.

Thank you.

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).

NOTE; the latest status of any outing is posted to the FieldNats web site as soon as possible.

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2009/2010

President	Kris Carnell;	46835268
Vice-presidents :	Michael Mueller;	46811421
	Rob McCosker;	46835371
Secretary:	Halina Kruger;	46835206
Treasurer:	Nanette Jurd;	46837119
Newsletter Editor:	Michael Jefferies;	46812389
Magazine Committee:	Wendy & Neil Donges;	46812913
Publicity Officer:	Janet Hockings;	46811978
Librarian:	Trish McCosker;	46835371

Management Committee: President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer.



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.

Deadline for next newsletter: 2nd April 2010

COMING UP

Sunday 21st March – to Goomburra with Nanette Jurd

Toowoomba Field Nats visit to Stanthorpe:- 26 - 29th March (see program)

Friday 2 April – led by M Mueller

Saturday 24th April – Nundubbermere Top Falls; Kris & Margaret Carnell

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

This document is on the website above for download. If there is anyone who would prefer to get their copy from the website, please email fieldnats@granitenet.com.au for inclusion on the email notification list. The website will have the document before it reaches you by post (and in colour).

Editor's notes

This newsletter and the electronic version is made using Open Office ver 3.1. Contributions in .rtf format for text and .jpg for pictures separate from the text please. (files in formats such as MS Word require a lot more editing to remove hidden formatting).

Tips

I have found two items that may be of interest or useful to those who use computers a lot. The first is a web site that will translate one file format to another. I used it the other day to convert a document made in Microsoft Publisher (which I don't use) into a file I could handle. The site is called www.zamzar.com and will convert files up to 100mb free!

The second is a free piece of software that will allow you to make a PDF file from a web site; useful if you have a web site with a lot of information you want to read off line. It is at www.primopdf.com Note:- this is only for Windows machines; web browsers on Mac machines can do this already from their browser without extra software!

Notices

The Toowoomba Nats are having a camp in the Stanthorpe area over the last weekend in March. Many will arrive on Fri. 26th and stay until Mon. 29th, but the core of the camp will be Saturday the 27th and Sunday the 28th. We are cordially invited to attend; the details are in the pre-outing section. Margaret Compton 4687 6107.

An **outing to Goondiwindi** is planned for the 23rd May. Because of the distance involved and the disappointing outing to Millmerran, we would like to get definite numbers beforehand. Could you please advise at either of the next two meetings if you intend coming. *Kris.*

FOR SALE

Kayak, Double, 15foot, Fibreglass, Touring, Rudder, Paddles, Seats with back-rests, PFD's. Great for bird watching and visiting Texas Caves. **\$400.00**

Phone :- Col & Janet Hockings – 07 46 811 978 Email:- pinaster@halenet.com.au

Pre-Outing Reports

Goomburra – Sunday 21st March

We will meet at Weeroona Park ready to leave at 8 am. Travel time to the end of the road through Goomburra is 2 hrs. There is a bit of gravel road all suitable for 2 wd vehicles. I have decided to do the walk along the cascades of Dalrymple Creek. On the pre-outing visit last week it was decided that because of the dampness, it was too dangerous to go the track to the Araucaria Falls, & The Winder track at 12 km was too far for the group.



We will travel past the Glengallen homestead to the turn-off just past it on the Toowoomba road. The whole area just looks as if it has come out of a picture book at the moment after good rain in all surrounding areas. We will stop at the end of the road at the Manna



Gum camping area for morning tea before proceeding along the Cascades Circuit. It is 6km long & takes about 3 hours to walk. The track goes from the end of the Manna Gum camping area and winds through sections of rainforest featuring series of cascades in the upper reaches of Dalrymple Creek. After the walk, we will have lunch at the campground before proceeding up Lookout Road to the end to the Mt. Castle Lookout. The drive up the hill is quite steep & is lined in parts with an avenue of tree ferns. This lookout about 400 mts from the road and has some colourful fungi. Should time permit, we can also take another short walk (470 mts) to the Sylvester Lookout where there are also some spectacular views over the Fassifern Valley.

When we return to our cars we travel home via the Gladfield road, across the Cunningham Highway & then turn off at the Freestone road & take the very picturesque drive through Yangan & then Warwick.

Nanette Jurd 46837119

Toowoomba Field Nats Outing – Friday 26th March to Monday 29th March

Provisional Program

NOTE:- the Toowoomba Field Nats welcome any of our members to attend any or all of the program. Remember you will have to book a place if you wish to attend the dinner. *Margaret Compton 4687 6107.*

Friday: Afternoon program: Del Wham's orchids.

Evening program: share-a-meal with invited guest speakers, Jean Harslett & Rob McCosker.

Saturday: Early morning program: Birding around the dam.

Morning program: Undercliffe Falls.

Lunch: Maryland River.

Afternoon Program: Maryland Station.

Evening Program: Meal at licensed Girraween Country Inn www.girraweencountryinn.com.au

3 course meal plus coffee & tea. - \$30 Choice from set menu, dietary requirements catered for if notified in advance. Drinks - beer & glasses of wine approx \$5, bottles of wine approx \$18.

Sunday: Early morning program: Birding around the dam.

Morning Program & Lunch: Bald Rock N.P.

Afternoon Program: Boonoo Boonoo NP.

Evening Program: To be announced, Frog-spotting perhaps?

Monday: Early morning program: Birding around the dam.

Rest of Day: is your own. We thought you might need a rest. If not there are lots of choices which will be listed at camp.

Nundubbermere Top Falls: Note it is on Saturday 24th April



We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9 am for this outing. The drive to the parking area is about 45 minutes. After morning tea we will head down a gully following animal tracks until we reach the river. It takes about an hour to walk upstream to the pool at the bottom of the falls. It is slow walking picking your way along tracks and over rocks but it's not too bad. There is quite an area to explore around the falls. There was no water running when the pre outing was done in February. The plan is to carry lunch with us and then make our way back afterwards. This is all dependant on there not being a big flow in the river. If the outing

has to be changed we will still meet at Weeroona at 9am for an alternative venue.

Kris Carnell 46835268 after 15th April .

Outing Reports

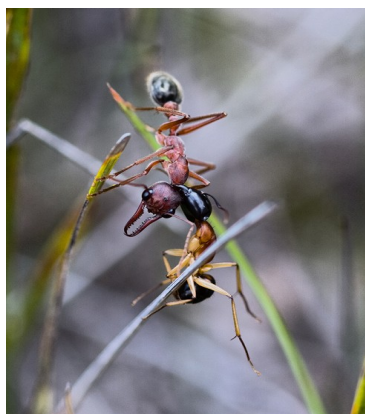
Tuesday 3rd November 2009 – Sunset and Moonrise on Bald Rock .

On arrival at Weeroona Park I noticed nobody else had yet arrived and I quickly ran to the shops to get another litre of milk for breakfast next morning. After my return I gradually realised that ½ litre may have been enough. Assuming that a few would wait at the Rock or along the way I headed off. On the Mt. Lindsay Hwy. a group of Koreans were just getting out of their damaged car; seconds before they had hit a wallaby at considerable speed judging by the dent. I stopped to look whether there was a young one in the pouch, possibly still alive. Another vehicle full of Koreans arrived and I was on my way again.

Nobody at the picnic area either. I had my cup of tea, waited a little while and walked up just in time for the sunset. A red glow gradually spread over 1/3 of the horizon and faded. Then the moon appeared opposite, like a floating ball of copper. The lights of Stanthorpe & Tenterfield seemingly close and half of SE Queensland at the horizon, I felt anything but lonely. I felt I was in the middle of everything.

It was still 20°C when I lay down right beside the trig; I slept better than I had expected and woke up just past 4am when the eastern sky was starting to brighten up. The horizon was breathtakingly clear and the valleys were filled with morning mist. Back at the picnic area I had a choice of eggs, sausage, toast with different sorts of jam and muesli; a lovely morning after a great night. *Michael Mueller.*

(Sorry for the delay in this one, it came via post from Germany; Ed.)



Friday 5th February: Looking for spiders – Girraween NP.

Six of us gathered at the Underground Creek car park for morning tea and a view of a few orb-web spider photos which we might see. The day was reasonably pleasant with intermittent sun. However orb spider webs were conspicuous by their absence but a lot of other things were seen as we went down to Dr Robert's Waterhole and then down the creek to the beginning of the Cascades. The creek was not flowing much at all. There were a few flowers out and various other spiders and insects were seen including two bee-flies of interest to me which I collected. One black spider with bright orange spots on the abdomen is thought to be *Habronestes huntii* which is a specialist ant hunter and those on-line can see it at

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ogcodes/4332053218/>. It is too dark to print well.

We also saw a life-and-death struggle between two ants; see picture above!

Several walkers had not been to the Waterhole or the top of the Cascades before so it was good to show those off. On return we had lunch at the car-park and went home with no pictures of orb-web spiders but a few other things instead! *Michael Jefferies*

Sunday 21st February – To Millmerran and Mt Basalt



Meadow Argus

Butterflies, butterflies and more butterflies. That was the order of the day for our field trip to Mt Basalt. All four of us departed Weeroona Park just after 8 o'clock northwards towards Warwick, turning left onto the Cunningham Highway, then turning north through Leyburn to Millmerran. Our first stop was to view the murals depicting the establishment of the water supply, then on to Anzac Park for smoko.

A quick look at the museum site with its old church followed by the Progress in Transport, the Old Millmerran Butter Factory and the Millmerran Swimming Pool murals. By then it was time to go bush so we departed southwards on the Inglewood Road, turning right onto the road to the Commodore Peak lookout. Butterflies were present in profusion, flitting about all over the place. Margaret found two pretty caterpillars on mistletoe attached to an *Allocasuarina*. I was very surprised to extract a large spider from its burrow with a piece of grass at the second attempt. A second was extracted from another burrow just as easily, they were very aggressive indeed. From the lookout we had a good view over the plains, easily picking out the power station and the slag piles from the coal mine.

We continued southwards on the Inglewood road, turning east to connect onto Kooroongarra Road and turning right through the gate to Mt Basalt.

Once again we were greeted by masses of butterflies. It is not often one gets a bird's eye view of a wedge-tailed eagle, but we managed to look down on a pair of them as we crested the first of the two peaks of Mt Basalt. The top of the second peak is virtually comprised of columnar basalt, the columns the smallest in size I have ever seen. Some were curved as well, bending as they hardened. A shower came over just as we were returning to the vehicles and continued during our lunch stop, but we were quite comfortable under the shelter, a very well timed lunch break.



Basalt columns

After lunch we continued southwards on Kooroongarra Road, turning east onto a side road to the pioneer cemetery. Although there are not a lot of graves, it brought home the isolation of the early pioneers to see three of them were children less than 15 months old. We stopped at Inglewood for smoko and more butterflies before returning to Stanthorpe.

Plants seen in flower included two *Acacias*, *Bursaria spinosa*, the *Allocasuarina* mistletoe and a *Callitris* mistletoe, a *Xerochrysum* sp, a *Brachyscome* sp, a *Senna*, an *Olearia* and a small pea flower. (*Butterflies from the trip I have seen include the Meadow Argus and the Common Crow. Ed*)

Jeff Campbell



Common Crow

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 24th February 2010**

Meeting opened: 7.35 pm

Attendance: 13 Apologies 3 as per attendance book

Minutes of the previous meeting:

Confirmed by M Jefferies seconded by M Marsden **carried**

Business arising from the minutes: Nil

Correspondence: as per correspondence book

Correspondence accepted on the motion of H Kruger seconded R McCosker **Carried**

Financial Report: Balance \$155.99

Confirmed by N Jurd seconded by M Marsden **carried** (details below)

Outing Reports:

Weekday outing: Dr Roberts Waterhole at Girraween National Park with M Jefferies

Sunday outing: Millmerran and Mt Basalt; with J Campbell

Pre-outings:

Week day outing: Due to the Apple & Grape Festival, no outing on March 5th.

Weekend outing: Goomburra with N Jurd (see pre-outing report, Ed.)

General Business:

Further discussion will be made regarding subs, possible outing fees, and log books.

Club wishes to officially thank Rob McCosker, Errol Walker and Janet Hockings for time and effort spent in creating a very memorable 40th Anniversary celebration at December Christmas Party.

Jeff had concerns about the Chinchilla's Sixth Australian Naturalists' Network Get-together not being advertised earlier enough for more members to take up the hospitality of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club Inc. Kris confirmed that this will be advertised in the next send out from Chinchilla.

Specimens/ Items of interest:

Margaret had photos of Mt Basalt and murals at Millmerran outing on Sunday.

Rob had a Bush tick which had laid many eggs in a box.

Margaret brought in a perfect skin of a Velvet Gecko from behind a picture frame.

Nanette had a photo album with photos of her trip to Cape York.

Next Meeting: 24th March 2010

Meeting closed: 8.10pm

Presentation: by N Jurd trip to Cape York.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT for Dec-Feb from 26 / 11 / 09 to 24 / 02 / 10

Cash Book balance as at 26 / 11 / 09 \$663.52

Receipts:-

Subscriptions	\$ 80.00	\$80.00
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Expenditure:-

Room Rent	\$ 150.00	
Insurance.	\$ 437.53	
		\$587.53

CASH BOOK BALANCE AS AT 24 / 02 / 10	\$155.99
<u>Bank reconciliation</u>	
Cash Book balance as at 24 / 02 / 10	
Plus outstanding cheques	
CWA –rent..... \$ 150.00	
Less outstanding cash \$ Nil	
Agrees with bank balance as at 24 / 02 / 10	\$155.99
Accounts for payment:- NIL	

BLOG

The newsletter has details of both future outings and pre-outing reports. I am considering adding to our web site a Blog on which members can post their own accounts of trips and happenings as well as posting the reports as they become available. The inspiration for this was the one the Toowoomba Club has set up; see <http://toowoombafieldnaturalists.blogspot.com/> I welcome comment on this idea! Email me at michael@granitenet.com.au *Michael Jefferies*

POSTSCRIPT

GraniteNet <http://www.granitenet.com.au/>

For those of you who don't know GraniteNet is the entity that provides the Field Nats on-line web site. <http://www.granitenet.com.au/groups/environment/fieldnats> This is free to Community groups such as ourselves. At the end of February GraniteNet became an Incorporated body and is now coming out from under the auspices of CDS who have fostered and supported it up to this point in time. In setting up GraniteNet Inc we have a board of which I am chair and we have a number of board members, all volunteers.

One of the consequences of this change is that GraniteNet now has to make enough income to go on providing the services to community groups.

To achieve this we are working on ways of providing services for which we can charge. We have agreed to rent from CDS the Hilton Street premises (the Youth Centre) and make the premises available to rent to other organisations. We have set up a number of computers on a network which will be available for groups to use and for training courses. We also have a wi-fi facility which visitors can use for a small fee using their own laptops. We are hosting and building web sites for businesses too.

I would be very interested to hear from any Field Nats who would like on-to-one training on any aspect of computer use, from the very basic to such things as setting up an on-line Flickr account or running your own blog or editing your own photos so that we can look at providing such to our mutual benefit! Email me at michael@granitenet.com.au *Michael Jefferies* 4681 2389.