



# The Granite Belt Naturalist



Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club Inc., PO BOX 154, Stanthorpe, QLD 4380  
Web Site: [www.granitenet.com.au/groups/environment/fieldnats/](http://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.

**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.



*The Pyramids*

## 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](mailto:fieldnats@granitenet.com.au), so that we can see how well used the newsletter is.  
Thank you.

## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2009/2010

President:	Kris Carnell	46835268
Vice-presidents :	Rob McCosker	46835371
	Michael Mueller	46811421
Secretary:	Halina Kruger	46835206
Treasurer:	Carol Smallwood	46811034
Newsletter Editor:	Michael Jefferies;	46812389
Magazine Cmtee:	Wendy & Neil Donges	46812913
Publicity Officer:	Janet Hockings	46811978
Librarian:	Trish McCosker	46835371

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

The Club acknowledges the support of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund in the production of this newsletter and the purchase of a data projector.

## COMING UP

20th March; Connelly's Dam led by the Carnells.

1st April; Broadwater SF - Michael Jefferies

24th April; Browns and Queen Mary Falls - Carol Smallwood.

**Deadline for next newsletter:**

**28th March 2011**

## 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 on-line, please email [fieldnats@granitenet.com.au](mailto:fieldnats@granitenet.com.au) for inclusion on the email newsletter list. This will ensure you have the document as soon as it is finished and before it reaches you by post.

## Pre-outing Reports

**Connolly Dam and Railway Bridge - 20<sup>th</sup> March 2011** Leaders: Kris & Margaret Carnell

We will meet at 9.00am at Weeroona Park and drive to Mt Lindesay Road, and travel to Cullendore Road. A short way along Cullendore Road we will stop at Maryland River for morning tea. There are quite a few exotic plants here, including a vine with cream flowers and large seed pods full of fluffy seeds. We then cross back into Queensland and go to the site of the old Silverwood Railway Crossing. We are going to walk along the railway line to the site of one of the old Mineral Creek Bridges. It's not a very long walk, but we didn't take note of the distance. The sandstone piers that used to support the metal bridge are still there. It's an interesting historical site. The bridge was replaced in the 1960s by heavy embankment works. We will then return to the vehicles and drive to Connolly Dam for lunch.



After lunch we will walk below the dam wall to explore the creek bed. A lot of the trees in this area are exotics such as Pepperina. We can spend as long as we want looking around Connolly Dam, before returning via the Old Stanthorpe Road to Dalveen. We are indebted to *Errol Walker* for the following information:

**"Mineral Creek Bridge**– On 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1957 plans were drawn up to bypass the Mineral Creek Bridge with a large embankment with culverts. In 1964 the deviation was built around



the Mineral Creek Bridge. The story has it that when trains passed over the bridge, cracks in the freestone pillars would open up. They tried strapping the pillars, but to no avail.

A large embankment at a cost of about \$100,000 was built to replace the Mineral Creek Bridge in 1963-64. The army reservists (CMF) as part of a demolition exercise blew up the Mineral Creek Bridge in 1967. The original earthworks leading up to the bridge can still be seen, along with one pylon still standing with the strapping attached, and the three collapsed pylons with the majority of the huge sandstone blocks still intact, on the western side of the line.

**Spring Creek Bridge** – A deviation was built around Spring Creek Bridge in the late 1960s. The original earthworks leading to the bridge and all the freestone piers can still be seen on the eastern side of the line.

## Outing Reports

### Back Creek Falls 4<sup>th</sup> February 2011

We gathered at Weeroona Park and travelled to Severnlea to Alan and Scott Carnell's property where we found a nice spot between the tomatoes and pears to have morning tea. The first part of the walk was through old orchard ground and we noticed across the creek, pear trees that are about 100 years old. On the way we admired a very large spider on the leaf of an apple sucker.



We followed the creek into a very grassy area with large wattle trees (*Acacia irrorata*), *Maytenus silvestris* and *Leptospermum sp.* The topography gradually changed and we started to see *Eucalyptus blakleyi* with *Callitris* on the banks away from the creek, with *Leptospermum* and *Melaleuca alternatifolia*(?) in the creek. The effect of the flood was very obvious with bark stripped from trees to about 2 metres. As we got closer to the falls we noticed that there were no more *E. blakleyi* and we could see *E. prava* (Mountain Orange Gum). Wildflowers were fairly scarce. There were seeds on the *Maytenus* and

flowers on the *Leptospermum*, *Bursaria spinulosa*, *Pelargonium australe* and *Lobelia sp.*

The area around the falls was a bit of a scramble but we all made our way safely to the top of the falls. We noticed a dyke of coarse rocks, running away from the top of the falls. The granite on the western side consists of a large pile of rocks, running basically parallel to the dyke. Growing amongst these granite rocks were some *Eucalyptus caleyi*. We walked through this area to the "Top Orchard". The track back to the vehicle was along a farm track and it was getting quite hot by this stage. Before leaving Alan invited us to see their packing shed in action. They were packing pears and generously gave us a bag of pears each to take home. *Kris Carnell*

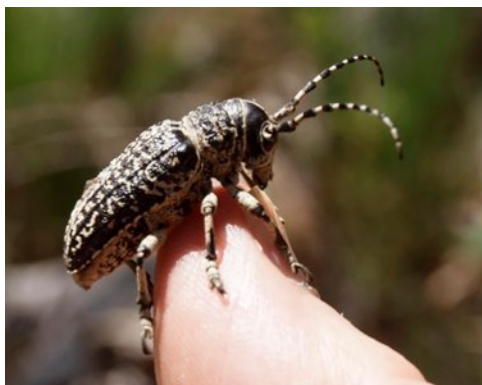
**Flower List:** *Bursaria spinulosa* (Black Thorn), *Wahlenbergia sp* (Australian Bluebell), Evening Primrose, *Trachymene incisa* (Wild Carrot), *Garnia* grass, *Goodenia sp*, *Pelargonium australe*, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, *Lobelia sp.*, *Glycine clandestina*. *Maytenus silvestris* berries.

Peter Haselgrove saw or heard the following **Birds:** Superb Blue Wren, Brown Thornbill, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, White-throated Tree Creeper, Eastern Yellow Robin.



**Also Seen:** Cabbage white butterfly, Common Brown butterfly, *Heteronympha merope* (f), *Aridaeus thoracicus* a longicorn beetle mimic of a hunting wasp. (Close-up picture at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ogcodes/5417883382/>)

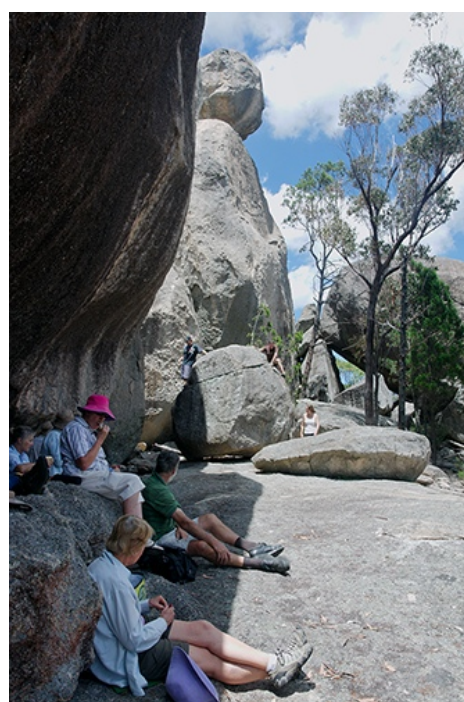
## The Sphinx and Turtle Rock; February 20<sup>th</sup> 2011



The usual 9.00am departure from Weeroona Park saw our group of ten gather at Girraween National Park for morning tea, before setting off for the Sphinx and Turtle Rock. There were few flowering plants to be seen along the track to the Castle Rock turn-off however we saw a fine specimen of the large weevil named by Joseph Banks – the Botany Bay Diamond weevil (*Chrysolopus spectabilis*), and another smaller but similar weevil (actually a longicorn beetle called *Penthea* - pictured -my error, MGJ).

The track levels off a little after passing Castle Rock and from an open slab of rock we could see the southern side of Castle Rock, as well as views of Mt

Norman and The Sphinx. There was a good display of the bright little blue *Lobelia andrewsii* and a few specimens of the Slender Lobelia *L. gibbosa*. The day had become quite hot and progress was accordingly quite slow however we reached the Sphinx for a well earned lunch stop in the shade of some boulders with a view of the Sphinx. While there we were entertained by a group of young “Boulderers” as they tested their strength and skill by climbing the nearby boulders unaided except for the sturdy mat placed on the ground to catch them should they lose their grip (just visible right). Also while having lunch I noticed a small spider running aimlessly over a rock and on closer inspection saw it had been parasitised, presumably by a wasp, as it had a larvae attached to its abdomen. With lunch over we walked the short distance to Turtle Rock and climbed to the vantage point to view the panorama of the Sphinx, Castle Rock and the Pyramids. After spending a little time here, waiting for the “right” light and investigating the tunnels we moved on to scramble through the cool caves or more correctly rock overhangs and then continue to circumnavigate the main rock. We found some delightful leafy spots, airy rock overhangs and a breezy tunnel to bring us back to the track. We had a leisurely walk back to the cars which we reached at about 3.00pm. Rob McCosker



In spite of being late summer with hot, dry conditions we managed to spot over 30 flowering plants.

*Goodenia bellidifolia*, Daisy goodenia:  
*Goodenia hederacea*, Ivy leaved goodenia:  
*Trachymene incisa*, Native candytuft:  
*Stylidium graminifolium*, Grass Trigger plant:  
*Tricoryne elatior*, Yellow rush lily: *Thysanotus tuberosus*, Fringed lily: *Dianella sp*

*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, Yellow buttons: *Podolopis jaceoides*, Showy podolepis  
*Xerochrysum bracteatum*, Golden everlasting: *Brachyscome stuartii*, Purple daisy  
*Dampiera stricta*, Blue dampiera: *Wahlenbergia graniticola*, Bluebell:  
*Lobelia andrewsii*, Trailing lobelia: *Lobelia gibbosa*, Tall lobelia:  
*Dodonea hirsuta*, Hairy hop bush: *Dodonea triquetra* Large leaf hop bush  
*Stackhousia viminea*, Slender stackhousia: *Dipodium variegatum*, Hyacinth orchid:  
*Grevillea viridiflava*, Narrow leaved spider flower: *Boronia polygalifolia*, Dwarf boronia  
*Leucopogon melaleucoides*, Snowbush – flowers and fruit:  
*Melichrus urceolatus*, Urn heath: *Melichrus procombens*, Jam tarts:  
*Prostanthera saxicola*, Spotted mintbush: *Westringia amabilis*:  
*Actinotus helianthi*, Flannel flower: *Isotoma anethifolia*, Rock isotoma:  
*Dillwynia retorta*, Parrot pea: *Hibbertia* sp: *Acacia* several spp.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.  
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2011**

**Meeting opened:** 7:35pm

**Attendance:** 21 Apologies nil as per attendance book

**Minutes of the previous meeting:**

moved M Jefferies seconded R McCosker **carried**

**Business arising from the minutes:** nil

**Correspondence:**

H Kruger moved that the Correspondence accepted seconded M Carnell **carried**

**Financial Report:**

Opening balance \$1,166.83 Reconciled with bank statement to 15/2/2011.

Receipts:	Donation	\$20.00
	Outing fees	\$21.00
	Total	\$41.00

Expenditure; CGU Insurance \$437.53

Total \$437.53

Cash Book \$770.30. Balance as at 23/2/2011

C Smallwood moved that the financial report be accepted; seconded P Andrewartha **carried**

**Outing Reports:**

Weekday outing: K Carnell Back Creek Falls, Severnlea

Weekend outing: R McCosker Girraween, Turtle Rock & The Sphinx

**Pre-outings:**

Week day outing: 4<sup>th</sup> March Narelle & Brian Hill's property Sugarloaf.

Weekend outing: 20<sup>th</sup> March Connolly's Dam K Carnell

**General Business:**

Program changes. Note the April Outing falls on Easter Sunday; to be discussed at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011

**Specimens/ Items of interest:**

Books of interest

'The Butterflies of Australia' by Orr & Kitching, Jacana Press ISBN978-1-74175-108-6

'Castiarina - Australia's richest Jewel Beetle genus' by S Barker, ABRS. ISBN 978 0 64256 843 4

M Jefferies also had photos of some of the jewel beetles.

**Meeting closed:** 7:58pm

**Presentation:** Peter Kerr "South West of Western Australian" Wonderful pictures of an astonishing number of orchid species and scenery.

**Editor Notes.**

Remember contributions are welcome - though when they will appear depends on the space available as I try to keep the newsletter to 6 pages for cost reasons. I am most grateful to those who send contributions in Rich Text Format as it is easier to process into a uniform style. I am also following scientific convention where possible in putting *scientific names* in italics, it is much appreciated where this is done with the report and you know who you are!

Pictures as .jpg about 80kb are fine too. If you wish to know more about word processing, file formats and photos don't forget you can get lessons at GraniteNet (wearing my other hat;-)

I am now doing this using the word processing program called Pages (this runs on the Mac OS) which I am finding very easy to use and flexible, particularly with the placement of photos.

And finally below is a composite picture of a *Castiarina* species. I have seen specimens from Quart Pot Creek above Red Bridge and from the Severn at Nundubbermere in the Park. It is close to one collected and named after Jean Harslett but may be something else!

