



# 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 website 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 - 2010/2011

|                    |                   |          |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 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 C'mtee:   | W & N 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

6th May; Dr Robert's Waterhole, Girraween.

22nd May; Mt Edwards, Fassifern Valley, near Aratula. NOTE; leave Stanthorpe at 8 am.

Friday 3 June; short walk, TBA.

**Deadline for next newsletter:**

**1st June 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 online, 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

**Friday 6th May 2011**, Dr Robert's Waterhole, led by Peter Andrewartha. This area has only recently been reopened after the floods of earlier in the year. The impact of this should be interesting to see.

**Sunday 22 May 2011** Mt Edwards, near Aratula, led by Warwick members.

Mt Edwards in the Fassifern Valley will be our destination for the May outing. This peak is one of several volcanic plugs that make up the Moogerah Peaks National Park. Of all the mountains, Mt Edwards is the only one of the peaks to bear a resemblance to a volcanic cone. Despite this, its distinctive shape is the result of 24 million years of erosion and is not an indication of its volcanic origin.



*Summit View from Mt Edwards*

Mt Edwards is located near Moogerah Dam with the trail head starting from the western end of the wall of the dam. The reservoir is currently full and the probability is high that, if there is further rain, some water

may still be flowing over the spillway in May. After crossing the wall, the walk is through well-timbered country with some views gained of Moogerah Dam and Little Mt Edwards during the ascent. The summit provides panoramic views of the northern Fassifern Valley encompassing Mt French and Flinder's Peak. Three terrestrial orchids were noted during our pre-outing.

The walk is a steady ascent. Though relatively steep in some places, the track is well-defined and does not necessarily require any rock scrambling. The summit is reached after a walk of around 4km from the parking area. It did take over two hours to reach the summit during the pre-outing. We have rated the track at around a Level 6 to 7 mainly because of the relentless uphill.

Departure will be from Weeroona Park at 8:00am. After meeting up with the Warwick members at Jack Howe Park on the north side of Warwick, we will depart from there at 9:00am. Morning tea will be at Moogerah Dam with lunch at the summit of Mt Edwards. If time permits, the return drive will take us around Lake Moogerah, past Mt Alford and Mt Greville before rejoining the Cunningham Highway south of Aratula.

David Wilson; 4661 2839; Narelle Crawford; 4661 4651; Peter Kerr; 4661 1818

## **Outing Reports**

### **Friday 1st April 2011 Girraween NP**

Three of us gathered at Weeroona Park on a dull and faintly damp morning. It was decided to go and we met three others at the day-use area. After a gentle morning tea under variable skies we set off to walk down the Junction track. It soon became evident that the tracks had suffered a lot of damage and there were deviations in places where the original track, badly eroded, had been covered with cut logs and brush to protect it from further damage.

The Junction Track was closed with strict warnings about entry, and so we went up to the Arch and then towards the Pyramids. There were several places where one could see water had run down sufficiently to flatten the herb layer and leave what looked like the track of something bulky, bunyips perhaps? Turning back at the point where the path steepened we wandered back to the creek crossing admiring the piles of debris and the polishing of the granite left by the flood. The *Callitris* had suffered the most, quite large trees had been torn out of the ground. There were few flowers or birds about and almost no insects. Some had lunch at the day-use area before home under still variable skies. *Michael Jefferies*.

### **Sunday, 24th April (Easter Sunday): Queen Mary Falls.**



Easter Sunday saw seven members of the club head out from Weeroona Park to Queen Mary Falls in the Main Range National Park, 100 km north east of Stanthorpe. The day was fine and clear, and the countryside lush from the recent rains. Our first stop was at Brown's Falls picnic area at the base of the range, for morning tea, before we headed up the creek to have a look at the falls. A small sign stating the track was suitable only for "able bodied" walkers should have warned us this was not to be a ten minute stroll up to the falls. The concrete path gave way to a muddy track and then to slippery rocks and on to a stream

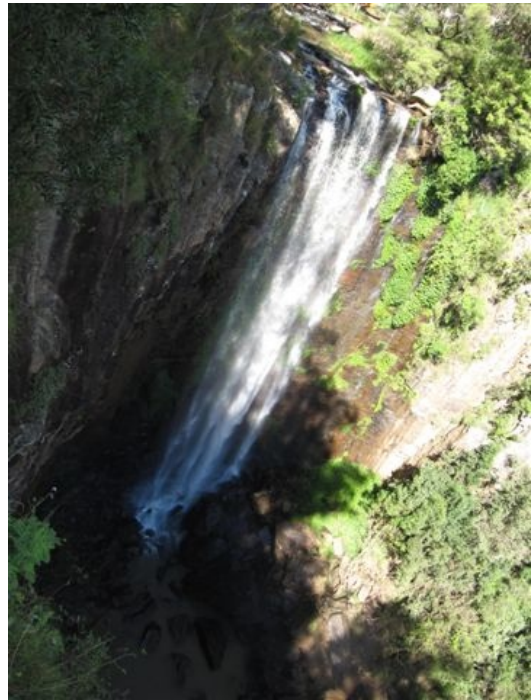
crossing. Most sightseers turned back at this point.



A couple of small logs and poles enabled the group to get across without getting our feet wet. The track continued for another fifty metres before we had to cross back over the creek and again with a bit of help, we all got across dry. Time to head for higher ground! A track was found on the bank above the stream and this provided much better footing, giving us the chance to look at the plants rather than our feet. The understory of the rainforest consisted of a variety of ferns, vines and creepers, and some interesting fungi with impressive hoop pines and white trunked eucalypts towering overhead. The falls were worth the walk with large volumes of water and spray flowing from the cliffs above us.

We were surprised by the large number of people who had arrived at the picnic grounds while we had been up at the falls; time to head up the range to see Queen Mary Falls. No surprise there to find the area very busy with families enjoying the great outdoors with picnics and barbecues. We decided to do the circuit walk to the falls via a series of steps leading down towards the floor of the valley. The path crosses at the base of the falls then winds up in a series of well graded zigzags to the top of the valley where there is a viewing platforms that looks over the top of the falls and into the valley below.

Again, the falls didn't disappoint with large volumes of water falling 40 metres onto the rocks and pool below the falls. The track continues back to the picnic area and we were lucky to find a vacant table for our lunch break before heading back to our cars. We stopped off at Dagg's Falls where there is another strategically placed viewing platform, looking down onto the top of the river and falls.



The facilities in the area cater well for visitors with barbecues, picnic tables and toilets, and provide great viewing options for the falls and the surrounding forests and mountain scenery. Brown's Falls would be more easily accessed if the stream level was lower but we enjoyed the challenge. The bellbirds were in fine form and the weather perfect - a very enjoyable day. *Carol Smallwood.*

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.  
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria st, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 27th April 2011**

**Meeting opened: 7.38pm**

**Attendance:** 14 Apologies 2 as per attendance book

**Minutes of the previous meeting:**

R McCosker moved C Smallwood seconded **carried**

**Business arising from the minutes:**

There is still no contact with the Warwick Bush Walking Group. Enquiries made but no contact.

**Correspondence:**

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

**Financial Report:** \$601.30

C Smallwood moved that the financial report be accepted seconded C Hockings

**Outing Reports:**

Week day outing: 1<sup>st</sup> April M Jefferies, The Junction Track, Girraween National Park

Weekend outing: 24<sup>th</sup> April C Smallwood, Browns and Queen Mary's Falls

**Pre outings:**

Weekday outing: 6<sup>th</sup> May P Andrewartha Girraween

Weekend outing: 22<sup>nd</sup> May Warwick Members Mt Edwards near Moogerah Dam  
Early start 8am Stanthorpe, 9am Jack Howe Park Warwick.

**General Business:**

R McCosker wanted to know if the Librarian has been sent a copy of the Newsletter for filing. M. Jefferies said it was posted every month but he would check the address etc.

**Next Meeting:** 25<sup>th</sup> May 2011

**Specimens/ Items of interest:**

Wallaby fly, from the Hill's place at Sundown. (*fam. Hippoboscidae, louse flies or keds. see note P. 6*)

Photo of Autumn Greenhood - *Pterostylis revoluta*, from the TV Tower Hill at Passchendaele.

**Meeting closed: 8.01pm**

**Presentation: Narelle Hill - Wilson's Promontory, Grampians, Great Ocean Walk.**

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR APRIL 2011.

Cash book balance as at 27/4/2011 \$696.30

Receipts:

|             |         |         |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| Outing fees | 1/4/11  | \$6.00  |
|             | 24/4/11 | \$9.00  |
| Income      |         | \$15.00 |

Balance \$711.30

Expenditure:

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| Stamps            | \$24.00  |
| Post box hire     | \$86.00  |
| Total expenditure | \$110.00 |

Balance 27/4/11 \$601.30

**FOR SALE**

Canon Camera Lens  
EF-S 18 – 55mm (for APS-C sized sensor cameras)  
1:3.5 - 5.6  
Image Stabilizer  
Auto Focus  
UV filter included  
VGC \$140.00 or best offer.  
(Selling as I now have a 17 – 85 lens)

Phone Col Hockings 07 46 811 978

AND FINALLY

This is a **Small Green-banded Blue**, *Psychonotis caelius* which is common along the coast from north of Sydney to North Queensland but the first time I have seen them here. This one was on Blackthorn next to the TV tower. The larvae feed on *Alphitonia excelsa*, Red Ash.



There are a number of ‘Blues’ with this startling underwing pattern and it is suggested they are unpalatable but I didn’t taste it!

A larger version can be seen on <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ogcodes/5457836946/> and another I took is on the Encyclopedia of Life page for the species at <http://www.eol.org/pages/269432>

The Large Green-banded Blue is a rainforest species in the Far North.

**Below** is a picture I (MGJ) took using the focus stacking technique of a Wallaby-fly given to me by the Hockings and the same as the fly that the Hills exhibited at the last meeting. To see a larger version see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ogcodes/5562241901/>



These flies are obligate parasites of mammals and birds; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hippoboscidae> and are live-bearers, giving berth to fully grown larvae that then pupate in the soil.

Note the very long and powerful hind legs; this is why they can move so quickly from place to place. Also their flattened bodies are easy to slip into fur or feathers. The identity of this one is a bit unclear, possibly an *Ornithomyia* species.