



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.

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, so that we can see how well used the newsletter is.

Thank you.

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2010/2011

President:	Rob McCosker	46835371
Vice-presidents :	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Michael Mueller	46811421
Secretary:	Halina Kruger	46835206
Treasurer:	Carol Smallwood	46811034
Newsletter Editor:	Michael Jefferies	46812389
Magazine C'mtee:	M Mueller & P Andrwartha	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

**Woodside Ranch 24-25 March Campout:
Mario Pennisi**

**Meeting 28th March - The McCoskers WA trip
continued**

No April short walk - Easter

Sunday 22nd April Sundown NP Michael Mueller

Deadline for next newsletter:

31st March 2012

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 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

March Campout to Mario Pennisi's property, "Woodside Ranch". **Weekend 24th-25th of March.**

Woodside Ranch is approx. 75 km from Stanthorpe and 27 km from Tenterfield.

Take the New England Highway South, through Wallangarra and the border until you reach the Sunnyside Platform road to the right. Follow this road until it joins onto the Bruxner Hwy and turn right. Follow the Hwy for approx 5.6 km then turn left into Woodside road. Follow Woodside road for approx 10km until you reach a sign that says Wyuna Valley. I will have a sign attached to this sign that will say "Nats". Turn left here and follow the "Nats" signs into the property. It is bitumen right up to the Wyuna sign, then dirt.

I will be going down early Saturday morning and happy campers can rock on in anytime. We will have an afternoon walk to a lookout towards the East. I will have a BBQ plate set up for who ever would like to use it. Also a camp fire for all to sit around and have a wine or two after dinner. There is a bush shower for those who want to refresh themselves after walking. You will just need to heat water, a 20 liter drum is supplied. There is plenty of water in tanks. A bush toilet will also be set up. Sunday morning after breakfast we will drive down to the creek, (4wd needed) those not wanting to walk can sit and relax by the water. Others can go for a pleasant but steep walk to the far South East corner of the property. Smoko will be carried with us and we will be back at camp for lunch. The afternoon can be spent relaxing and people can head home anytime Sunday afternoon.

There will be 7 beds available (5 single & 1 queen) with mattresses, for anyone who wants more than a tent over their head, you will need to bring pillows, sleeping bags or linen of your own.

Please let Mario know if you require a bed, first in first served. There is plenty of room for camper trailers and larger caravans etc. about 100m from main area. Some under cover parking as well.

RING 4681 3750 to book beds.

Mario Pennisi

NO short walk in April; Easter weekend.

Outing Reports

Tenterfield, Friday 10th February

The first Friday outing for 2012 was a pleasant morning in Tenterfield. We travelled to Tenterfield and collected a couple of members on the way into town and then met a couple more at the Ottobeuren Park which is adjacent to the town water supply.

First item on the agenda was morning tea which was a leisurely occasion as most of us hadn't met since last year's breakup and there was all the news to share. The outing was planned as a bird watching one, so we did start looking for birds on the water supply but although there were lots of birds there weren't many species to be seen. The gate into the dam wall was open and we could see that there was a flow over the wall but there was also a sign prohibiting unauthorised entry so we looked from the gate. We could hear a mower going but we couldn't see the operator to ask if we could enter. After a while we drove a short way along Scrub Road to the head of the dam to see if we could add to the bird list. There weren't nearly as many birds there as there were on the pre-outing but some Nats did their bit for the environment by collecting some abandoned fishing line and Geoff added to his knife collection with fishing knife which he found in the grass.

We then drove a short distance to Tenterfield Park. It was interesting to revisit this area which we have been to a couple of times and we spent a leisurely hour or so wandering through the park. By this time it was lunch time so we decide to go to down to the park by creek in the town where there was shelter and facilities. After lunch we went our separate ways home. Ken and I went to the National Parks office and picked up the latest Parks Guide and got some information on a new reserve at Yetman. A very pleasant way to start the year.

Kris Carnell



Bird List: Coot, Black Swan, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Darter, Dusky Moorhen, Hard Head, Black Duck, Clamorous Reed Warbler, Brown Goshawk, Lorrikeet, Willy Wagtail, Eastern Rosella, Crimson Rosella, King Parrot, Grey Fantail, Blue Jay, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Red-browed Finch, Dollar bird, Speckled Warbler, Striated Thornbill, White-naped Honey Eater, Currawong, White-throated Gerygone, Magpie, Noisy Miner. Calls of Bowerbird, Wren and Koel.

Insects: a number including 2 spp of dragonfly on the dam and this katydid, (picture above) on a *Xerochrysum* flower in the Park.

Sunday 19th February 2012 Araucaria Falls, Goomburra, Main Range NP

An early start for members on a beautiful morning, the weather was perfect, clear blue sky limited clouds and just a slight breeze. The journey to Goomburra part of the Main Range National Park and World Heritage listed area. We headed through Warwick along the highway and turned left into Clintonvale-Goomburra road along the Cunningham highway. Then a right into Goomburra Inverramsay road, this took us through the wonderful fertile valley, with mountains on both sides and lots of green pastures. As we got closer to the National Park we saw many campers enjoying the facilities of the many camping grounds.



After morning tea we drove across the creek and up the steep hill 3.8 km to Araucaria Falls which is named after the hoop pine *Araucaria cunninghamii*, our starting point. The conditions were moist without being too wet and slippery. The track was narrow and closed in but we could view different fungi along the way. One of the members did come across a snake sunning itself. There were bird calls throughout the forest but very hard to see the birds. A lot more water coming down towards the falls then on my previous visit, most people rock hopped across this rocky outcrop to follow the last of the track to

bottom of the falls.



Once we got back to the cars, everyone agreed that they would do the short walk out to Sylvester's Lookout. This is about 4.7 km from the camping ground. The rainforest was more open but cool and beautiful, a welcome escape from the 29 degrees predicted for the day. The lookout platform offered magnificent views over Moogerah Dam and Mt Edwards and a view of the border ranges to the south. A great day had by all.

Back down the camping ground we enjoyed lunch and later a safe journey home. *Halina Kruger*

Picture of *Commelina sp.* (Possibly *Tradescantia fluminensis* not native, weed in rainforest - Ed.)

Bird List Goomburra 19/2/2012

Magpie, masked lapwing, starling, sulphur-crested cockatoo, coot, lorikeet (call), Pacific black duck, currawong, tree creeper (call), pigeon (call), white-browed scrub wren, peewee, satin bower bird, thornbill (don't know which), kestrel, crested shrike tit, whipbird, Lewins honeyeater, fire-tailed finch, grey fantail, brown cuckoo dove, little black cormorant, Australian raven. Insects: Wanderer butterfly, Orchard butterfly, butterflies that appeared mostly white when flying, chrysalis (Black Jezabel butterfly) on leaf (picture to right).



Flower & Other Plant List

Ranunculus sp (buttercup), *Isotoma fluviatilis* (swamp Isotoma), *Isotoma sp.* (larger blue flower, not rock Isotoma), *Hypericum gramineum* (small St John's wort), *Whalenbergia sp* (bluebell), *Pelargonium sp*, *Hardenbergia violacea* (sarsaparilla), *Xanthorrhoea sp* (grass tree), *Commelina cyanea* (wandering Jew with deep blue flower), *Commelina sp* (small with white flower), *Commelina sp* (large with white flower clusters), *Viola hederacea* (purple & white violet),

Xerochrysum bracteatum (golden everlasting), *Alocasia brisbanensis* (Cunjevoi), *Cassinia sp.* (Rosemary tea tree), *Plectranthus sp.*, *Bursaria spinulosa* (blackthorn), *Rubus sp.* (Raspberry fruit), Dandelion, Lantana. *Cyathea sp.* (rough tree fern), Palm trees.

Orchid Plants: pencil orchid, *Dendrobium speciosum* (king orchid), (*Bulbophyllum sp.*) pineapple orchid

Fungus: basket fungus on ground (smelly) (*A Colus* species), yellow mushroom on rotting log (possibly *Galerina patagonica*), tiny white fungus on rotting log, white mushroom on rotting log, bracket fungus on rotting log, white mushroom on ground, long thin yellowish fungus hanging from underside of log.



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria st, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 22nd February 2012**

Meeting opened: 7.35 pm

Attendance: 16 Apologies: 1 as per attendance book

Minutes of the previous meeting:
confirmed by L Saunders seconded by E Walker carried

Business arising from the minutes: nil

Correspondence: as per folder
H Kruger moved correspondence be accepted seconded M Carnell carried

Financial Report:
H Kruger moved financial report be accepted in the absence of C Smallwood seconded M Jefferies
Balance: \$655.57

Outing Reports:

Weekday outing: Tenterfield Hill – K & M Carnell

Sunday outing: Araucaria Falls Goomburra – H Kruger

Pre-outings reports:

Week day outing: 2nd March Finnies Falls Stanthorpe - C Smallwood

Weekend outing: 24th-25th Campout West of Tenterfield – M Pennisi

General Business:

K Carnell suggested that we think about our Incorporation and Insurance Policy between now and the next AGM. Whether we continue as we are or find out our options regarding Public liability etc.

J Campbell advised that the Tasmanian Field Naturalist group had a cabin that could sleep 20 to rent if members were in the area on holidays 70 ha land, 10 different walking tracks, camping also available, plus cabin.

Next Meeting: 28th March 2012

Meeting closed: 8.10

Presentation: Presentation K & M Carnell – Lake Eyre.

Omnivorous Friar Bird



One morning in December when we were sitting on the deck, we noticed a Noisy Friar Bird on the ground acting strangely. We usually see them feeding on nectar or insects in the trees, but this one was pecking and shaking at something. Closer investigation revealed it had a small snake, which it was softening by banging it on the ground like a Kookaburra does. We watched it for some time and when Kris went to take a photo it flew into the tree with the snake in its mouth and continued with its meal. None of our bird books make any mention of Friar Birds eating snakes or lizards.

Margaret Carnell

Finally; remember the web site is there both to use and to read. The story appeared there first. *Ed.*

Other observations.



At the beginning of the month I spent a day in the Queensland Museum handing in specimens collected under my license and identifying specimens that I had not been able to do on-line. One of them was this bee-fly which we found on a walk in Girraween in July 2008, (*Brychosoma pictipenne*). It is common on the Granite Belt in July and August but there were no specimens in the Museum (till now)!

I am sure most Field Nats are familiar with the wasps that catch spiders and drag them to their nests. In Girraween the other day, walking down the Junction Track I saw a pompilid wasp with a spider; [photo on Flickr here](#) for those on the web. I just had time to set up my camera and take some video of the wasp filling the hole in when I noticed that a fly was watching this. It sat very still for a while and then sidled round the wasp and swooped at the hole. Looking at the video I took showed that the fly had dropped three live larvae which quickly wriggled till they dropped into the hole the wasp was filling in. The fly is a member of a group which are kleptoparasites, basically food robbers and the larvae will eat the spider in competition with the wasp larva.

The [video is on Flickr here](#) for those with web access.

Michael Jefferies