



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 website](#) as soon as possible.

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 Müller & P Andrwartha	46812913
Publicity Officer:	Janet Hockings	46811978
Librarian:	Trish McCosker	46835371

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



The Pyramids

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

Friday 8th June, 7 Acre Rock, Michael Müller

Sunday 24th June, Desert Jewels, Yelarbon, Jeff Campbell

Wednesday 27th June; Orchids of the SW, Jeff Campbell

Friday 6th July walk to Tenterfield Park, Halina Kruger

Deadline for next newsletter:

4th July 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 on-line, please email fielddnats@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

The 2012 Transit of Venus:- 6th June:- last chance for 105 years

As by now you all may have heard it from the media, on the 6th of June planet Venus will move directly in front of the sun. We know it takes 365 days for the Earth to circle the sun. Our distance to the sun is approx. 150 million Km. Venus is much closer. At 100 million Km she circles faster and subsequently completes her year in just 225 (earth) days. So every 584 days Venus is overtaking us. It is very easy to see what Venus is doing. If Venus appears as the so called "evening star" she comes closer and is about to overtake us. If we can see her in the morning sky she has already overtaken us. So keep watch, from about 10 days after the event we will gradually spot her shortly before sunrise. The reason why such a transit is so rare (the next one is in 2117) is that in contrast to the earth the orbit of Venus is tilted by 3.4 degrees so that normally she passes well north or south of the sun. However, this time, on the 6th of June from 8.14am we should see the apparent contact of Venus with the disc of the sun. This will last until 2.41pm.

From 8.00am onwards I will have my telescope outside and all members (family etc.) are welcome to drop in at any time and have a look. Tea and coffee available. Let's hope for a clear day.

Michael Müller

Friday 8th June:- Seven Acres Rock, Passchendaele SF.

This outing was scheduled for October last year, but sudden heavy rain forced us to return. We will meet at 9.00am at Weeroona Park and travel to the foot of a long outcrop, on top of which we'll have morning tea with a good view to our destination. From here we then start the easy 4Km return grade 3 walk to 7acres Rock, which is a surprisingly large granite slab with a partly steep dome shaped top.

NOTE:- The outing planned for the Allora Hill Reserve for Friday June 1st will come up as a full day outing on a Sunday in the near future. *Michael Müller*

Sunday 24th June:- The Desert Jewel Walk, Yelarbon.

We will depart from Weeroona Park at 9am for Inglewood for morning tea and a comfort stop. We should arrive at Yelarbon about 11am. The ‘Desert Jewel Walk’ is to the right just off the last bend on the way into Yelarbon from the north. Park outside the gate and walk from there. Lunch about 1pm in Yelarbon. Return via Inglewood; the Macintyre Brook walk from the Rest Area is a possibility time permitting. Return about 4pm without extra walk, 5pm with. *Jeff Campbell*

Outing Reports

Friday 4th May; Sugarloaf, Narelle & Brian Hill

Our Friday outing for May was a beautiful sunny day and 11 Nats turned out for a leisurely morning. Firstly we had morning tea at George’s place, our neighbour’s property in Brown Gully Road. We observed where his front yard was literally washed away in the January 2011 floods and



where he has done considerable work creating ponds and dam walls to prevent this from happening again, and his front yard ending up in the middle of town. He already had a lovely spring fed dam, upon which a white duck was floating, the dam being a leftover hole from the mining days and since Jan 2011 he has created another 3 at the front of his house.

After morning tea we walked up to the northern end of George’s property to his “tree house”, along the way observing many plants, fungi, birds, insects, butterflies and another spring fed dam. . From his tree house we observed the wonderful views to Bald Rock and over

Girraween National Park together with the unusual

construction of the tree house. Michael J has since advised that the tree house sits at 1004m above sea level. (*on Google Earth, the house is clearly visible, Ed.*)

We then continued up the eastern boundary of George’s property to the border fence. Many stops were had along the way while various Nats took photos of plants and many fungi. We saw a red bellied black snake, which slowly moved into NSW. Leeches were in abundance (Pic. - *Carol trying to avoid leeches! Ed.*).

After following the border fence along the northern boundary of another two properties, we cut back south through the “Jeremjenko” property (established in the 1970s) down to the creek on the road. Many trees had been planted, including Bunya & Hoop Pines and a Brown Pine was also seen on this property. Ian was also locating numerous plants and trees along the way.

Michael Jefferies was taking many photographs along the walk, one of which was a brown butterfly. Michael has informed us that this butterfly was a Silver Xenica at the far north of its range and an interesting find. The nearest record known to Michael is from Boonoo-Boonoo Falls. (*See below for pic etc. Ed.*)

At the creek crossing, we explained how our it was washed away also, taking large gums and banksias with it. We were locked in for about 5 weeks until the Council



fixed the road. It was shown that when the creek washed out the crossing, it revealed large logs from an old wooden bridge which was there many years ago. We had been told that some years prior our road was used to get to Liston etc. An elderly gentleman once told us that he as a young man walked through the Sugarloaf area to go swimming at the dam. He also told us that he regularly saw Regent Bowerbirds in this area. Some of the old bridge timbers have been used on the new crossing and one at George's place, which we sat on to have morning tea. Most of the Nats then came up to our property and had lunch. Our property sits at 1054m above sea level. Following lunch some wandered around our ridge before going home. Thank you for a lovely outing. *Narelle & Brian Hill*

Birds seen or heard: Yellow tailed black cockatoos, White cockatoo, Nankeen Kestrel, Red Browed Finches, King Parrots, Brown Thornbill, White Throated Tree Creeper, Wrens, Grey Thrush, Crimson Rosellas, Grey Butcherbird, Red Wattle Bird, Golden Whistler, White Winged Choughs.

Plant list:- (transcribed MGJ, errors & changes are mine!)

Taxonomic name followed by 'common' name. * =exotic weed.

Asteraceae: *Xerochrysum bracteata*, Golden Everlasting; *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, Yellow Buttons; *Brachyscome macrocarpa*; *Calotis cuniefolia*, Blue Burr-daisy; *Olearia elliptica* subsp. *viscosa*, Sticky Daisy bush; *Cyanthillium cinereum*, Ironweed; **Senecio madagascarensis*, **Hypochaeris radicata*, Cat's Ear.

Apiaceae: *Hydrocotyle peduncularis*, Pennywort; *Trachymene incisa*, Native Candytuft.

Campanulaceae: *Lobelia purpurascens*, White Root; *Wahlenbergia* sp. Bluebell.

Dilleniaceae: *Hibbertia linearis* var. *obtusifolia*, Guinea Flower.

Goodeniaceae: *Goodenia bellidifolia*, Daisy-leaved Goodenia.

Euphorbiaceae: *Poranthera microphylla*, Small Poranthera.

Stylidiaceae: *Stylidium graminifolium*, Grass Trigger-plant.

Violaceae: *Hybanthus monopetalus*, Slender violet; *Viola betonicifolia*, Mountain violet.

Roseaceae: *Aceana novae-zealandae*, Biddy-widdy.

Laxmanniaceae: (Asparagaceae) *Eustrephus latifolius*, Wombat Berry.

Verbenaceae: **Verbena bonariensis*, Blue-top.

Proteaceae: *Banksia integrifolia*.

Plants of rainforest interest

Celasteraceae: *Elaeodendron australe*, Staff Climber. (*Cassine australis* var *angustifolia*).

Primulaceae: (Myrsinae) *Myrsine howittiana* or *variabilis*, Muttonwood.

Apocynaceae: *Marsdenia rostrata*, Common Milk-vine.

Trees planted at Jeremijenko since 1970

Bunya Pine, Hoop Pine and Brown Pine (*Podocarpus elatus*).

Fungi

Amantia muscaria, Fly agaric (Photo left, by Ian); *Amantia* sp.; *Lactaria* sp.; *Russula purpureaflava*; *Chalciporus*, a Boletus; *Hygrocybe* sp.; *Lycoperdon pyriforme*, puff-balls; *Heterotextus miltinus*, Golden jelly-balls; *Pycnoporus coccineus*.

Ian Milinovitch





Insects

There were not many but there was one of particular interest; the Silver Xenica; *Oreixenica lathoniella* (Westwood, 1851). This species is at the far north end of its range; its photo is alongside. While similar to some other ‘browns’ the eyespot on the upper front wing and the bright triangles on the under-hind wing are characteristic. It has been reported from Girraween in the past and an effort is to be made to see if it is still present. Please look through your photos of butterflies to see if you have any that can give us a location anywhere in the district!

Michael Jefferies

photo Ian Milinovitch.

The Ascent of Mount Sturt - 20th May 2012

Nine people gathered at Jackie Howe Park, Warwick, for the ascent of Mt Sturt. After a short 20 minute drive east of Warwick, we arrived at the property of Bruce & Anne Hempel at the foot of Mt Sturt. We were warmly greeted by Anne before beginning our climb. As with the pre-outing, there was some difficulty locating the start of the track. Eventually, it was located and the climb up the steep western side of the mountain began. Much of the ascent was through remnant vine scrub, some of which was regrowth after logging. Numerous stops were made to catch our breath. As



the summit ridge was approached, the vine scrub gave way to open forest. It was here than the track was briefly lost. Incredibly, while we were off track, I located my lens cap lost during the pre-outing! What were the chances? With the track located again, it was a short walk to a viewpoint on the south west corner of the mountain. Lunch was enjoyed from this vantage point with the rolling farmland of the southern Downs and the distant Granite Belt spread out before us. For a short time, a wedge-tailed eagle soared overhead. After our break, we retraced our steps back to our starting point. The steep descent made us appreciate why the climb had been so exhausting. With the walk



completed, all took the option of a leisurely drive through farmland around the base of Mt Sturt. A stop was made in the park at Yangan for a well-earned cuppa. Some members took the opportunity to purchase cappuccinos from the historic Yangan store. Once the cuppa was over, we headed up to the saddle ridge near the eastern flank of Mt Sturt that separates the Swanfels & Freestone valleys. Regrowth has obscured the once impressive view into the Swanfels Valley from this point. Once we entered the Freestone Valley, some dark clouds started to build over Mt Sturt. Numerous stops were made to take

photographs of the changing landscape. With the loop was completed, we parted company and headed for home, cheered in knowing a new peak had been bagged. *David Wilson*

Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria st, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 23rd May 2012

Meeting opened: 7.32 pm

Attendance: 17 Apologies: 4 as per attendance book

Minutes of the previous meeting:
confirmed by C Smallwood seconded by M Jeffries carried

Business arising from the minutes: nil

Correspondence: as per folder

H Kruger moved correspondence be accepted seconded E Walker carried

Financial Report:

C Smallwood moved that the financial report be accepted seconded A Walker

Outing Reports:

Weekday outing: 4th May Sugarloaf, N & B Hill

Sunday outing: 20th May Warwick area D Wilson

Pre-outings reports:

Week day outing: 8th June Severn acre rock M Muller

Weekend outing: 24th June Yelarbon J Campbell

General Business:

L Hazelgrove to help as Publicity officer until new elections.

Next Meeting: 27th June 2012

Meeting closed: 7.55 pm

Presentation: D Wilson US National Parks (wonderful presentation).

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MAY 2012.

INCOME

BALANCE C/F \$469.61

Bilby Foundation 52.00
Member donations

TOTAL INCOME MAY \$52.00

BALANCE \$521.61

Less expenditure 50.00

BALANCE 23/5/2012 \$471.61

EXPENDITURE

Room Rent CWA 50.00
2months

TOTAL EXPENSES \$50.00

Cash book balance of \$469.61 reconciles with the Bank Statement of \$509.61 on 15/5/12
With \$40.00 banked 8/5/2012. Carol Smallwood.

END NOTES

1) The AGM will be at the July meeting so be prepared to pay your subs! The form for subs is on the Subscriptions page of the web site at <http://granitenet.com.au/groups/environment/fieldnats/subs> and will be attached to the next Newsletter.

2) Michael Müller would like a lift to and from Cunningham's Gap from anyone doing a day trip to Brisbane or Ipswich, no time-limit on this!

3) **Errata:-** I should have said 'Slip Rock' not 'Split Rock' in the last newsletter; Brownie points to those who noticed! MGJ.