



# The Granite Belt Naturalist



Stanthorpe Field Naturalist 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.

Web Edition

If you have downloaded this from our web site but are not a member of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club 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.

*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*

Thank you.

## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2012/2013

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 Andrewartha	46812913
Publicity Officer:	Lynette Haselgrove	46837255
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

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November: BoonooBoonoo River on Harrigan's Lane. The Walkers.

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Breakup at Trish and Rob McCosker's.

February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, first walk of New Year: see next newsletter.

**Deadline for next newsletter:**

**15<sup>th</sup> January 2013**

## 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

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November: Boonoo Boonoo River crossing on Harrigan's Lane, NSW.

The details are to be finalised as the organiser is away at the time of writing but gather at 9am at Weeroona Park as usual! If later information comes to hand it will be on the web site.

Christmas Break-up Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December.

All members are welcome to our annual Christmas Break-up to be held this year at Rob and Trish McCosker's property "Shortlands" 75 Jones Road, Severnlea.

We will be taking a short walk at 3.00pm to a neighboring property for views across the Severn River valley to return around 5.30pm for our usual BBQ in the garden.

Directions- heading south from Stanthorpe turn right into Reid Road at the Blue Topaz Caravan Park. Continue until the T junction with Lofaros Road and turn right. Take the next left into Jones Road and continue to number 75, the first turn on the left.

The gas BBQ will be available from about 6.00pm, bring your own food and drinks and a chair, and if the weather is unkind we will re-locate to the shed.

Hope to see everyone there.

*Rob McCosker.*

This is the LAST newsletter till late January, Please note contributions for the first newsletter of 2013 should be with the Editor by 15<sup>th</sup> January.

The first walk of 2013 is scheduled for Friday February the 1<sup>st</sup>. It should appear in the next newsletter which will appear in the week of 20<sup>th</sup> January (all being equal).

# *Vale Janet Hockings*

*Sadly Janet passed away on the 2nd of September.*

*Janet and Col arrived in Stanthorpe in 1977 to take up teaching positions and very soon became involved in the newly formed Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club. They brought with them a strong interest and knowledge of natural history particularly, in Janet's case, of birds.*

*Janet held positions on the Naturalist Club committee for many years including Secretary and Publicity Officer, a position she held until recently.*

*We were fortunate to share her company on outings and meetings for over thirty years and to join them on their property "Pinaster" on the many occasions when they hosted our Christmas Break-up, to enjoy the garden with its native plants and nesting birds in the shrubs all around the house.*

*We will all miss Janet's positive and cheerful outlook of life in spite of suffering serious illness for such a long time.*

*Our condolences go to Col, Peter, Emily and first grandchildren, twins, Archer and Michelle and to Robert and Sal.*

*The Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Members*

## OUTING REPORTS

Friday October 7<sup>th</sup>: Up Mt Marlay.



On a completely clear and mild morning, 7 Nats gathered for the walk up Mt Marlay. Parking at the end of Alice Street we walked onto the granite slopes below the water treatment plant where the *Calytrix tetragonia* were in full flower and covered in bees with some hover-flies. Wandering about on the slopes, gradually going uphill some early donkey orchids, *Diuris* sp, were coming out and a couple of very small flowered sun orchids, *Thelymitra* sp were found. Once past the treatment plant the climb was in the wooded slopes with the usual selection of trees and shrubs. The hillside is dry with plenty of old grass cover. The path from

Alice Street to the top was reached and another orchid, *Pterostylis nutans* was spotted by Col. A dollar-bird was seen, the first of the season for most. At the top of the path drinks were taken and the hovering flies admired; none would come within range of the net! Walking up to the transmission towers, Carol spotted a possum curled up on a branch. Several hill-topping butterflies were chasing around the crowns of the *Eucalyptus* and *Callitris*. A photo that Kris was able to take showed that they were Blue Triangles, *Graphium sarpedon*, not a species I have seen on the mountain before. We then walked round the path to the lookout carpark, admiring the climbing orchid, *Erythrorchis cassythoides*, on the way, also in flower. At the lookout we admired the clear view and those living nearby set off home down the road while the rest of us walked down the Alice Street track to our cars seeing and hearing a party of south bound wood-swallows pass by. *Michael Jefferies*



Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> October: Northern Boundary; Girraween N.P.

Ten members, including three new members, met for the walk along the northern border fence line of Girraween N.P. starting from Pyramid road and heading west. The day was hot but intermittent cloud cover kept the temperature down as we headed up the steep incline through deep, dry leaf litter to reach the jumble of huge granite rocks at the top of the hill. On the side of one of these rocks, sits a lyre bird nest about 3 metres above the ground, and although not in use, looked to be well maintained. A tagged wombat burrow with fresh evidence of wombat activity was seen amongst the rocks and there were King Orchids still flowering on some of the rocks, although most had finished flowering. The leafless climbing orchid was seen at a rock base on the top of the hill.



From the top of the hill is a slashed fire trail which heads down to a dry gully, then up another incline. Along this gully in the creek bed was an extensive area of *Rulingia hermanniifolia* in full bloom. Halfway up the incline was growing a prostrate form of *Mirbelia speciosa*, thought by Mr Hocking senior, to be a toss up between subspecies *ringrosei* and *Mirbelia*

*rubifolia*. The plant often forms a mat in places that may be wet in the wet season. There were several plants in a small area and they appeared to be only in the slashed area on the trail. Late “early Nancys” were also in bloom along this section of the trail which was shaded and still damp after the rain some weeks ago. Another wombat burrow under a burnt fallen tree was seen and photographed as there was evidence of activity, with fresh scats but quite a bit of debris in the entrance, so it may not be in current use. Morning tea was taken on a large rock slab at the top of this incline, looking east and south towards Bald Rock and Mt Norman. A group of Dusky Wood Swallows were darting about in the air as we approached the rock and a swarm of insects were busy above one of the flowering gums at the front of the slab.



The track continues to follow the fence line up another incline where we encountered a greenish brown snake making a hasty retreat away from us. At the top is a large granite slab extending south for several hundred metres, broken up into parallel corridors by erosion. These eroded areas were full of wildflowers, predominately *Leptospermums*, *Philothea*, *Dodonaea*, and *Stylidium laricifolia*. There were many other species, some of which had finished flowering and some bottlebrushes just about to bloom and others we couldn't identify. A truly wonderful sight. The slab gave us 360 deg views but we couldn't quite make out Mt Barney due to the haze. Wombat activity was also evident in some areas on this slab of rock. Lunch was taken here and several fast moving lizards were seen on our way back to the track as we headed back to the cars.

**PLANTS in FLOWER.** *Diuris chrysantha* (Donkey orchid), *Dendrobium speciosum* (King orchid), *Erythrorchis cassythoides* (leafless climbing orchid), *Rulingia hermanniifolia* (wrinkled kerrawang), *Wurmbea biglandulosa* (early nancy), *Dodonaea hirsuta* and *triquetra*, *Hibbertia*, *Actinotus helianthi* (Flannel flower), *Brachyscome stuartii*, *Solanum amblymerum* (Kangaroo apple), *Philothea epilosa* (Waxflower), *Ziera*, *Leucopogon melaleucooides* (Snowbush) and *microphyllus*, *Mirbelia speciosa*, *Stackhousia viminea* (slender stackhousia), *Drosera peltata* (tall sundew), *Calochilus robertsonii* (Bearded orchid), *Poranthera corymbosa*, *Seringia hillii*, *Patersonia glabrata* (Wild iris), *Leionema ambiens* (Fruit salad plant), ?*Phebalium*, *Boronia*(? species), *Petrophile canescens* (Conesticks), *Hakea*, *Leptospermum novae-angliae*, *Pultenaea hartmannii* (Stanthorpe pea), *Goodenia*, *Choretrum candollei* (Sour bush), *Clematis glycinoides*, *Stylidium graminifolia*, *Lomandra longifolia*, *Melaleuca pallida* (yellow bottlebrush), *Stylidium laricifolium*, Flowering eucalypt.

**BIRDS (seen and heard).** Dusky wood swallows, satin fly catcher, crimson rosella, rufus whistler, wedge tail eagle, grey thrush, scarlet robin, and king parrot.

NOTE:- I understand the identity of the *Rutulia* species in the area is the subject of change. The Girraween species is not likely to be *hermanniifolia* as this is a species from the sandstone around Sydney. (MGJ).

Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.  
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Meeting opened: 8:38pm

Attendance: 18 Apologies: 4 as per attendance book

**Minutes of the previous meeting:**

confirmed by P Kerr seconded P Andrewartha carried

**Business arising from the minutes: nil**

**Correspondence:** as per folder

H Kruger moved correspondence be accepted seconded M Muller carried

**Financial Report:** \$1086.87

C Smallwood moved that the financial report be accepted seconded M Jefferies

**Outing Reports**

**Weekday outing:** Mt Marley, M Jefferies

**Sunday outing:** Girraween North Fence, C Smallwood

**Pre-outings reports:**

**Week day outing:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. Dalcouth Rd, Ken Hazeldine's patch

**Weekend outing:** 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. River Crossing Harrigan's Lane, E Walker

**General Business:**

Breakup BBQ is on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**Next Meeting:** 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012 Presentation by E Walker 'Mt Buffalo Vic'

**Meeting closed:** 7:55pm

**Presentation:** Peter Kerr, 'Pilbara Parks'

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR OCTOBER 2012.**

<u>INCOME.</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE.</u>	
<b>BALANCE C/F.</b>	<b>\$1046.87.</b>		
Subscriptions	80.00	Magazine Stamps	60.00
Donation. A & G Cameron	20.00		
INCOME OCTOBER	\$ 100.00	EXPENSES	\$60.00
BALANCE	\$1,146.87		
Less Expenses	60.00		
<b><u>BALANCE 24/10/12</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,086.87</u></b>		

**Other events, information and whatever.**

**The Solar Eclipse on 14th November.**

At new moon the (then invisible) moon usually moves to the north or the south past the sun, because its orbit is tilted by 5 degrees relative to the Earth's. Subsequently the small shadow misses Earth most of the time. However when the moon moves exactly between the earth and the sun we have a solar eclipse. The total eclipse is only visible in the narrow path of the sweeping shadow which covers only about 1% of the earth's surface and lasts only 2 minutes. This time it can be seen best anywhere between Gordonvale and Port Douglas. To the north and south of that area we just have a partial eclipse. In Stanthorpe the partial eclipse will start at 5:59am , 77% of the sun will be covered by 6:56am and finish will be at 8:00am. In Brisbane the coverage will be 81% and all the times will be 3min earlier.

The next total eclipse on the Australian landmass will be 2023 in the Exmouth area. However in 2028 the path of the moon's shadow will cross the whole continent from the Kimberley to the Sydney area. *Michael Müller*

*A safe and happy holiday season to all.*