



The Granite Belt Naturalist



Mail Address: Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc, PO Box 154, Stanthorpe Qld. 4380
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Web site <https://mysd.com.au/fieldnats/>

AIMS OF THE CLUB

1. To study all branches of Natural History
2. Preservation of the Flora and Fauna of Queensland
3. Encouragement of a spirit of protection towards native birds, animals and plants
4. To assist where possible in scientific research
5. To publish a monthly newsletter and post it to members



The Pyramids, Girraween National Park

Meetings: 4th Wednesday of each month at
Uniting Church, Small Hall, 113 High Street
Stanthorpe at 7.30pm

Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday
of each month

Subs: Single \$20.00, Family \$30.00 per annum, July
to June

CLUB OFFICE BEARERS – 2020/2021

President	Peter Haselgrove	46837255
Vice-presidents	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Leon McCosker	46811737
Secretary	Lyn Collins	0428810156
Treasurer	Gunter Maywald	46810674
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Carnell	46835268
Publicity Officer	K & M Carnell	46835268
Librarian	Laura Maywald	46810674

The Club thanks the Queensland Country Credit
Union for
their donation that enabled us to buy a printer.

Stanthorpe Field Naturalists is a group member of
Granite
Borders Landcare.

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



**SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS
ON NATS OUTINGS**

1. Flat, well-formed track, no steps, 5km or less. Clearly signposted. Suitable for wheelchairs with assistance.
2. Formed track. May have gentle hills and some steps. Clearly signposted. No experience required
3. Formed track, some obstacles, 20km or less. May have short steep hills and many steps. Some experience recommended.
4. Rough Track. May be long and very steep with few directional signs. For experienced bushwalkers.
5. Unformed track. Likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. For very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills.

Coming Up

Sunday 20th March: *Broadwater State Forest* with Peter & Lynette Haselgrove
Wednesday 23rd March: *Tongariro National Park, New Zealand* with David Wilson

**Deadline for next newsletter
8th April 2022**

Pre-Outing 20 March 2022 – Broadwater State Forest

Leaders: Peter and Lyn Haselgrove

Phone: 4683 7255

We will meet at Weeroona Park at 9 a.m. We should carpool as much as possible because parking is limited.

The walk will be in a similar area to the one in 2020 with Holly though on a partly different route. We can't give directions at this stage or final details as the weather has stopped us from doing a pre-outing. However, we expect the walk will be on a forestry track and not particularly difficult, and about 6 kms in length.

We will have smoko when we arrive and carry lunch.

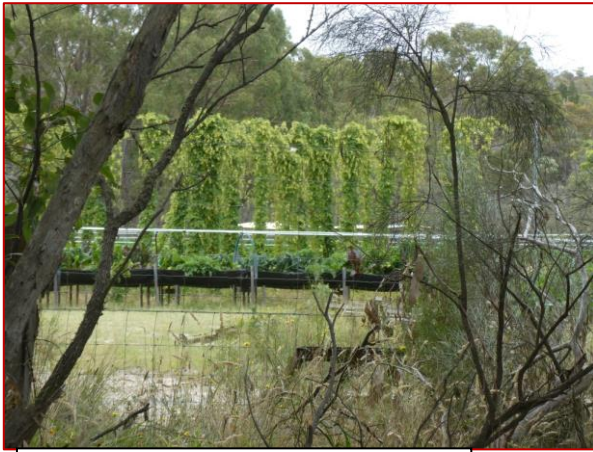
Outing Report – Driving Outing via Back Roads from Stanthorpe to Donnelly's Castle

Peach Bush – M. Carnell



On an overcast morning 8 cars containing 17 Nats met at Weeroona Park and travelled to West Road to re-assemble. We met adjacent to a broccolini patch which had gone into flower. Beside the road annual ragweed was growing. As we crossed the creek we noticed Blackthorn (*Bursaria spinulosa*) growing and swallows circling above the crossing which had a little water over it. Further along West Road there was *Cassinia* (dead finish), *Cryptocephalum apiculatum* (yellow buttons), and *Pimelea* sp. growing on the road verge.

In Texas Road and Marino Road there was honeysuckle, sprayed on the western side of Marino Road but not on the right. The Cootamundra wattle on Marino Road has spread for quite a distance, and there was Prickly Pear as well.

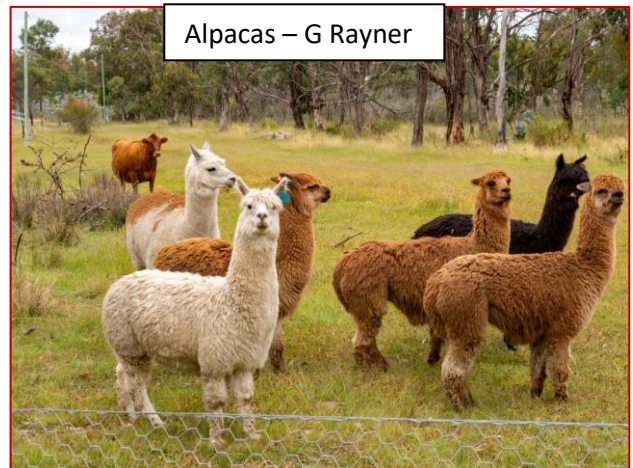


Hops at Possum Lane – M Carnell

As we travelled along Twin House Road we saw a flock of Eastern Rosellas and a couple of Pee Wees. Boyce Road had masses of tea tree in the paddocks and on the roadside and some privet as well. We stopped at Possum Lane Enterprises to look at the first hops grown in Queensland. The McCoskers dry them at Severnlea, so they are a very local crop. Rob picked a specimen of a Eucalypt in bud and it was decided it was a *E. blakleyi*. There were cobbler's pegs beneath it. Further along Boyce Road there were some lovely *Angophora floribunda* (rough-leaved apple) trees, Yucca growing in the scrub and blackberry that had been sprayed. One landholder had planted *Eucalyptus scoparia* and other natives beside the driveway.

After turning into Nundubbemere Road we passed Schulte's sawmill which has an interesting stone building on the fence line. It was a forge at one time. There was purple loosestrife growing beside the creek and some rice flower further on. We passed Sweet's Strawberry Runners where there is the first exclusion fencing erected in the district to keep deer out of the strawberries.

We stopped to look at the remains of a spinning gum plantation that supplied the nursery trade (*eucalyptus perriniana*). A flock of alpacas were standing near the fence and posed nicely for photos. There were banksias on the roadside and feral lilies. Where we stopped to look at some granite tors there was *acacia betcheri* (red tip wattle), *Eustrephus latifolius* (wombat berry) and dodder (*Cassytha pubescens*), as well as a sedge and a dainty lobelia (*lobelia andrewsii*). Shortly after we crossed the grid between the granite and traprock we stopped for smoko. The poplars near the homestead at Leighton were starting to turn yellow. While we had smoko we were able to look down the valley to the Roberts



Alpacas – G Rayner

Range in the distance.

Continuing on we noticed, rose hips ripening, casuarina, peach bush in flower, wild cotton with fluffy seed and scotch thistles. In Bendee Lane there were a lot of Bendee wattle plants, a couple of apricot trees on a fence line and regrowth ironbark trees. We stopped at the old wooden signpost pointing to Springdale Road with property signs and distances displayed. Peter was able to show us the remains of the 14 wire fence that was erected many, many years ago with the



Signpost Springdale Road Corner – K. Carnell

fencers being paid by the number of ties they made between the wires. Most of this old fence has been removed and this section on Bendee will be replaced by exclusion fencing fairly soon.



14 Wire Fence at Bendee – K Carnell

Donna, one of the owners of *Bendee* came to talk to us, accompanied by her dog. She was telling us that there a number of quolls that live in the area and cover a huge area where they have numerous dens. The Bendee Woolshed had paling fences in front of it. There was Mugger Ironbark growing close by. Further along the wet weather shed was visible close to the fence and there were grebes swimming on a dam on *Midlothian*.

We passed gum trees with smooth bark, some of them Mountain Orange Gums (*E. prava*), box trees, ironbark, and *leucochrysum albicans albicans* before turning into Texas Road, where we passed the old *Mallow* shearing shed. I don't know if the property has always been called

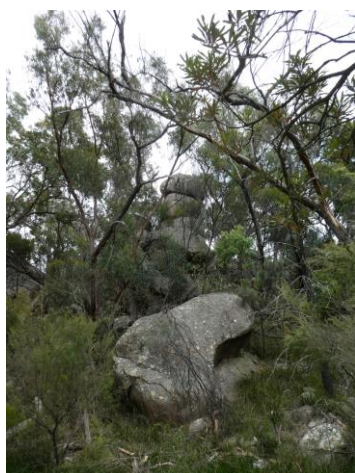
Mallow. Near Cascade Lane there is a strip of bitumen of a different colour where the dingo spur fence used to cross the road. There were a few plants of *Styphelia viridis* (five corners) in bloom beside the road.

After turning into Browns Lane we were driving through black cypress (*Callitris*) and there was a lot of sedge growing in the gutter. There were also more mountain orange gums along here and some *podolepis arachnoidea*. We were curious about a property with very high security fencing around it.

When we turned into Spring Creek Road we passed Rugby Farms where there were acres of brassicas growing. There was also a lovely white grevillea cultivar in a garden. A lot of huge exotic pine trees were growing on the road verge in the vicinity of the locality of Messines. In Quirks Road there was blackberry on the road verge along with aniseed, and apples, pears, plums were being grown and goats raised. Taylors were growing lettuce and we saw cultivated soil hilled high beside freshly planted seedlings, as well as lettuce that were ready to harvest and a plot that had recently been cut.



Lunch at Donnelly's Castle – K Carnell



Back on Amiens Road there was hail netting with apples beneath. We turned into Donnelly's Castle Road and stopped for lunch in the shade of some trees with a picnic table. We had a leisurely lunch and chatted about all sorts of things before some people went for a walk to the lookout. There is a memorial to Gino Zanatta on the way up that has been put there by the Lions Club. Most of us were feeling lackadaisical so we made our way home at our leisure.

Margaret Carnell

Rock Stack – M. Carnell

**General Meeting
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.
23rd February 2022**

Meeting opened: 7.32 pm

Attendance and Apologies: as per Attendance Book

Welcome guests: Peter welcomed Andrew Pengelly, Nameer and Barbara Davis, and John Salini, who joined us on our last outing.

Minutes of November meeting:

Confirmed Lyn seconded Lesley carried

Business arising from the minutes: Christmas Break-up Report – this was an afternoon bar-b-que held at the Haselgrove's home, and a good opportunity to socialize.

Laser Printer no longer required – no leads on any clubs to which we could donate this printer, which is taking up space in Kris's office. We will look at this again next month.

Correspondence: as per folder

moved Lyn seconded Gunter carried

Financial Report: Gunter reported a Bank Balance of \$2,254.24 plus Petty Cash of \$82.25.

moved Gunter seconded Rob carried

Outing Reports: Goldfields Road drive – Kris reported on a good day out, being a drive on the backroads off Texas Road. Of interest were: a hop farm, a spinning gum plantation with resident alpacas, a collection of interesting granite tors, remnants of a 14-wire fence, drove past Rugy farms and Taylor's lettuce at various stages of growth. We finished our day at Donnelly's Castle where we had lunch under the trees, after which some members walked up through the rocks, and others headed for home.

A most enjoyable day, and Peter thanked Kris for his re-hash of the trip in such a short time, as his first attempt saw many of the roads washed out after the rain.

Pre-outings: Broadwater State Forest – This time we will enter from the North East end, to see how the area has changed since our last trip. It will be an easy walk of about 6 km along a dirt track. Full details in the Newsletter.

General Business: SDRC – Stanthorpe's 150th Anniversary. Peter asked members for any suggestions on an event relevant to our Club. This will be brought up again at the next meeting.

Club Library: As Laura and Gunter are leaving in a few months, Rob will be taking over the Library. It was all brought in, and members asked to take what they wanted.

Any historic Club records will be kept, and the rest will be sorted, and older, no longer relevant books disposed of. In the future, Rob is happy to bring a selection to each meeting for people to borrow/take.

Next Outing: 20th March – Broadwater State Forest

Next Meeting: 23rd March

Meeting closed: 8:00 pm

Presentation: Peter Haselgrove – Native grasses

Peter gave a very illuminating talk on grasses, which are actually a herb, of which there are approx. 10-12,000 species in the world. There are 1,000 species in Australia, of which about 830 are native, the rest being introduced. Growing up to 40 metres high, Bamboo is the world's largest member of the grass family, and the fastest producer of bio-mass. There are approx. 80 species of grasses on the Granite Belt, and about 18 weed species, including serious invasive weeds, eg. African Love Grass, Whisky Grass, etc.

Grasses have varying means of spreading their seeds, some being dispersed in the wind, by animals and birds, others falling to the ground and laying dormant until an environmental change, then there are those seeds which twist and screw into the ground. One of these, Black Speargrass (*Heteropogon*) was partially responsible for eliminating sheep from our eastern seaboard, because the seeds worked their way through the wool and into the skin of the sheep, causing a slow painful death.

Indigenous people made use of grasses as a source of carbohydrates, by harvesting, threshing and grinding grass seeds to make 'johnny cakes' or 'damper'. They used native reeds for basket weaving, light spears, for fishing, thatching, etc.

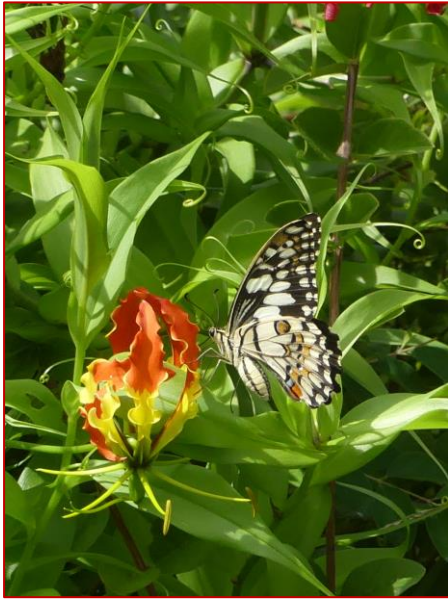
This talk was enhanced with many detailed images of native grasses, and Kris thanked Peter for the work he put into his presentation. All agreed.

Peter then identified some grasses that Sue had brought along, and we also looked at grasses that Andrew Pengelly had collected from his property.

Spottings



Lyn Collins sent this image of a Channel-billed Cuckoo, which she saw at the Girraween picnic area just prior to Christmas. Her brother Jim took the photo. The Cuckoo was noisily harassing a Currawong, which we assumed was its 'parent'



Left: A chequered swallowtail on a *Gloriosa superba* flower at *Orana* – *K Carnell*

Below: Three photos of The Junction at Girraween National Park taken with a drone by Ken Cooke. Kris saw these photos on Facebook and contacted Ken who gave us permission to publish them.

