

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALISTMONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB.

Minutes of the meeting held at the C.W.A. Rooms on Wednesday, September 28th. 1983. at 8pm.

Present 14..... Apologies 11.

The President welcomed all to the meeting, several regulars were up at Blackdown Tabledown trip, making our numbers down.

MINUTES:-

That the minutes be taken as read was moved by T.Archer and seconded by B.Mc.Donagh and Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:-

- INWARD:-
1. Green Alliance re policy and constitution.
 2. Apple and Grape Festival re our 1984 involvement.
 3. National and Wild life, re Press releases.
 4. National Parks and Wildlife re Lamington National Park.
 5. Richmond Valley Nats Newsletter.. Sept 1983.
 6. Fund for Animals Newsletter Vol.3 No.2 Aug .1983

OUTWARD was sent to:-

1. 4QS. re tye outing and meeting programme.
2. Mrs.Caldwell "Mole River" station, Thank you for permission for the outing venue.

MOTION: Moved by J.Harslett and seconded by T.Archer that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed, Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:-

August 24th.1983 Cr. Balance forward..... 229.85

Receipts

Aug.24	Subs.....	33.00	
" 24.	Room Rent Coll.	4.93	
" 27.	Subs.....	8.00	
Sept. 5.	Subs.....	5.00	
" " 7.	Subs.....	5.00	
" " 14.	5.00	
" " 23.	5.00	70.93.
" " 25.	5.00	
			<u>300.78</u>

PAYMENTS:-

Aug.24	Room Rent.....	6.00	
Aug.24.	Mag.Dup.	5.00	
Aug.24.	Mag .Postage.....	8.03.	
Aug.24.	New Wrappers and Covers.....	88.68	
July 1.	Fed.Govt.Tax...	.50	
Aug. 1.	" " "	.20	
Sept.1.	" " "	.40.	<u>108.21</u>

THE GRANITE BELT FIELD NATURALIST

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD
NATURALIST CLUB.

NO. 148

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SEPTEMBER October 1983

MINUTES CONT.

FINANCIAL REPORT:-

September 28th. 1983 ..Credit Balance... \$ 192.57

Treasurer Dot Archer moved that this report be received and the following accounts be passed for payment. Room rent \$6.00, Magazine duplication \$5.00; Magazine Postage \$8.17. It was seconded by Brian Mc. Donagh and Carried.

OUTING REPORT Jean Harslett gave an outing report on her trip to the Mole River area. Due to school holidays we were pleased to have so many children, who obviously enjoyed themselves. Rain-fresh pastures and clear streams were refreshing, and birds activities showed it was nesting time. Highlight was the large carpet snake seen.

NEXT OUTING:- This will be to Mr. John Dart's property at Willson's Downfall on October 23rd. Leaders the Wilkins-
-ons.

NEXT MEETING The Frank Wilkinson's will take us to New Zealand. It will be Wednesday 26th. October, at the C.W.A

SPECIMENS We had a large display from the outing, of wild-flowers, and Brian Mc. Donagh had a specimen of nine different species of orchards found near his house, while Dore Mc. Cosker had more wildflowers including Eriostemon myoporoides. She also had for display a section of a native bees nest, found in a hollow log from the woodheap.

BUSINESS. The club will not be participating in the 1984 Apple and Grape Harvest Festival, as a club.

Lawrie Jeffrey is to be contacted re the November camp-out to the Severn River Falls. on Nov. 19th-20th.

Request that the National Parks and Wild-life Press releases be sent monthly.

Comment was made on the T.V. series showing the Pilliga Scrub. Explanation for the heavy undergrowth now present is the killing off of kangaroo rats, which used to eat the seedlings.

President John reported attending the Dalby Seminar by Wildlife Preservation, which constituted different people giving their opinions of co-existence between agriculture and nature.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10 pm. after which Roy Werner showed slides and gave a talk on Mornington Island and the Wellesley Group of islands. Those fish were an enticement for anyone.

Joan Stevenson

Hon. Sec.

SEPTEMBER OUTING TO THE MOLE RIVER by JEAN HARSLETT

We set off from Stanthorpe quite a small though gay contingent, missing we knew 17 regulars, including those at the Blackdown Tableland the Mc.Cosker clan, so we expected to be a very small party. However we kept gathering friends along the way and by the time we reached Wallangarra rendezvous we were approaching the forty mark. Brian Mc.Donagh had paused at the lovely display of flowers at the Devil's Elbow, and we decided there and then to make it a port of call on the way home. At the Mole River turn off the Langdon's and their New Zealand friends caught up with us from their Sundown Campout, and we descended into the valley enjoying the vistas beyond.

School holidays meant that there were many younger people who enjoyed the pleasures of water and sunshine, and the kids made a bird list for the day, and it was quite a thrill for me to see them looking them up in the Readers Digest tome, and noting the pages for others, and their list is included later. There were enough different kinds of birds nests found to provide further interest, and a dear little 'Jacky Winter' sat on her tiny nest (no bigger than a soup spoon) and watched us eat lunch. Every now and then she popped off the nest to somersault, and at the same time catch an insect or two for her lunch. Bee eaters flapped their golden wings and displayed forked tails, a huge wedge-tail eagle circled far above giving a casual eye to the odd "two-legs" far down below in the grass. Tom-tits were busy making a double decker nest, with a place for "dad" upstairs. A vivid flash of red, and a golden straw nest, and yes, it proved to be a Fire Tailed Finch leaving home.

Lunch on the riverbank, and no-one making any special moves, but there was "movement on the station" when Don arrived back from a short walk and casually asked if anyone would like to see a carpet snake. There he was "gorged" and in the sun and very loathe to move, worthwhile size, well patterned, and proved to be the "piece de resistance" for the day.

We all walked to the top of the hill along an old road, with bowers of clematis and huge old "Notelaea" trees along the way. We returned along the river bank, until the valley closed in, and we climbed up the steep rocky hillside, back to the old road. In a cave above the river Harry found some interesting skeletons and almost convinced that a huge cod stranded by the flood, had chocked on a wallaby. Only young Alex, with a twinkle in his eye, could excel Harry in imaginative stories.

In the same cave co-habiting were welcome swallows, a nest of half bowl shape and made with pellets of mud., and next door were Fairy Martins with their bottle shaped nests clinging to the roof.

We proceeded down along the valley, the next long river crassing bluffed some, so we parted, some proceeding found a handsome display of hops and a good example of "salting". problems. Some of us met again at "The Devil's Elbow", flower worshipping.

It was an ideal outing fitting the pattern of school 'hols'

SEPTEMBER MOLE RIVER OUTING REPORT CONT.

And the bird list which follows is the childrens effort, complete with the page numbers they found them on in the book. In particular it was done by Joanne, Sheree and Lisa. Since it is a day mixed with water fun too I think its a pretty fair effort to see as many as they did.

- 1 Kookaburra P.319..We all knew him.
- 2 Starling P.546. It was a surprise through the glasses in colour.
3. Wattle Bird P.461 Funny red earrings, yellow chest.
4. Sparrow P.540 Near the shop at Ballandean.
5. Magpie P.575. Dressed in a black and white suit.
6. Welcome Swallow P.339. On the telephone lines.
7. Crow P.581. all black.
- 8 Eastern Rosella. P.279. Pretty
9. Pee wee P.566. A little magpie, mud pudding bowl nest.
10. Fairy Martin. P.341. Down near every bridge.
11. Butcher bird. P. 573.
12. Kestrel P.135. Hovering.
13. Galahs P.256. Pretty grey and pink, seeds on side of the roads.
14. White Robin P.367.
15. Ground Lark P.345. walking quickly away from the road.
- 16 Fire tail Finch. P 529.
17. Bee Eater P.320.
18. Double Bar Finch. P.528. Call like a kitten.
19. Blue Wrens. P.408.
20. Brown Tree Creeper P.456.
21. Red Winged Parrot P.267. Prettiest one we saw bright green
- 22 Willie Wagtail. cup nest three eggs. 1/2 and bright red.
23. Dusky Woodswallow P.571. neat grey and white.
24. Mickey P.471.
25. Apostle Bird... P.565.
26. White Winged Chough. P.564.
- 27 Rufous Whistler P.122 Could hear it but could not find it for a while.
28. Sacred Kingfisher P.322 near the river.
- 29 Plover P.171. Fair on the wall of the dam.
- 30 Blue Jay P. 344 .High in the trees in the gully.
- 31 Currawong P.576. Less white than magpie.
32. White Plumed Honeyeater, near the river P 588.
33. Red Rumped Parrot .P.283 feeding on the ground.
- 34 Leatherhead. P.464. Odd shaped head.
35. Black Shouldered Kite ~~flying~~ flying high. P.116.

Thank you girls for a pretty good list, especially as the bird watching had to be balanced by some fun in the water and other activities.

HOW FAR DO THEY TRAVEL ?

Frank Wilkinson was recently out at Angus Mc.Dowell's property at Meandarra. A pile of old brigalow sticks was being burnt off and it was about half a mile from the water. Unbeknown to everyone some tortoises had been "hibernating" or sheltering amongst and were unfortunately burnt. Of course this would not have happened had there been any sign of their being there. However, upon thinking about the nearest water, the question arose, how far do they travel ? Does anyone have any answers ?

TENACITY !!

Recently while Dore was gaily mowing the sidewalk outside her garden fence, right in town, she suddenly halted when she saw a miniature forest of greenhoods (*Pterostylis mutica*). They are in Railway Street, a well used thoroughfare and the area in question, would have been cleared, graded, bulldozed, dug up for telephone cables dug up for water mains, all coming at different times. Another upheaval when the curbing was done, and finally walked on regularly and mown. How is that for gallant little natives to survive(?) to bring pleasure to the nature loving owner over the fence.

OCTOBER OUTING Latest news from our leaders:-

VENUE Mr. John Dark's property

DATE:-Sunday 23rd October.

LEADER:-Wilkinsons Telephone 811225.

Lunch:- At the cars.

TIME. 9.30 am. Weeroona Park.

I have been asked to put into this bulletin brief plans for the camp-out in NOVEMBER (Note not to be confused with this month's outing) The Campout will be on the Severn River Falls in N.S.W. (not our Severn River Falls by the same name) News to hand at this date a map will be in the next bulletin Leader Lawrie can't leave Texas until noon on Sat. so either wait for him, or proceed with other locals or when you wish with aid of map, which will be in the appropriate bulletin. General description, the site is on a water-hole 50 metres wide and several hundred metres long, ideal for canoeing or boating & but not with outboard motors, many rocks.) All interesting walks are along the river, and most of this involves rock climbing. Take repellent, mosquitoes busy.

THE SEPTEMBER PROGRAMME

Not many of us have the privilege of having lived for periods on the islands in the Wellesley Islands Group in the Gulf of Carpentaria, the principal of which is Mornington Island. There are many other smaller islands, mostly without water, but having much of interest for the visitor.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAMME CONT.

Strangely in our small membership, we have three members, Roy and Beryl Werner and Judith Pfrunder have, in different capacities and forms of service have lived there for some years and have at different times brought us in story and pictures some of their interesting experiences, and we feel privileged for this.

Last month the former brought us selections of their several years residence in this region. The healthy appearance of the indigenous people, displaying their skills and pleasure in boating and fishing and water life was interesting to note, as well as the comments by Roy and Beryl, who spoke of them with respect, but not forgetting their problems. One got the impression that Roy and Beryl rather looked back with a little longing for the life so free of pressures, though Beryl certainly had some pressures in carrying out her responsibilities, in primitive conditions.

As a Sister-in-Charge Judith has over the years made us aware of the difficulties of another side of life, which required a special serenity, I'm sure, to carry out.

The pleasure of tropical waters of the unbounding variety of fish of every size and colour, pictures of proud fisherman holding up their giant catches, made the thought of life there in small doses look pretty good. On the other balance their pictures depicting the complete ruin after the visitation of an unusual cyclone was a very sobering thought.

They sprinkled their programme with a few pictures with of tropical plants, with heady looking flowers, but mainly the landscape gave the impression of being quite sparse. Indeed where the air strips had been cleared they had almost an air of desolation, as did some of the housing, made of what could be gleaned. One found ones eyes and thoughts turning to the tropical waters for aesthetic pleasures.

Thank you Roy and Beryl for giving us a picture of this area, and building on previous thoughts we've gleaned in earlier times from Judith, and perhaps we are lucky to have a better understanding through our club members than the average.

Jean Harslett.