



THE
**GRANITE BELT
NATURALIST**



Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club



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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB

P.O. Box 154,
STANTHORPE, Q., 4380.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1985 - 1986

PRESIDENT	JEAN HARSLETT B.E.M. (833 185)
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COMMITTEE	FRANK WILKINSON DON LIGHTFOOT COLIN HOCKINGS LYLE THOMPSON ESME LACEY JOAN FERRIS
HON. AUDITOR	

MEETINGS 4th WEDNESDAY of each month at the C.W.A. ROOMS at 8 p.m.

OUTINGS The SUNDAY PRECEDING the 4th Wednesday of the Month.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Singls - \$6.00

Family - \$ 10.00

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 newspaper.

Minutes of General Meeting - October 23rd, 1985.

Present 16 Apologies 7

President Jean opened the meeting welcoming all present and gave a special welcome to Lena Johansson of Sweden and Mario Pennisi and hoped they would enjoy the meeting and program.

Minutes Moved by Don Lightfoot and seconded by Bob Lacey that the minutes be taken as read in the Newsletter. Carried.

Correspondence - Inward received from A. Newsletters from Q'ld Naturalist Club; Richmond Valley Naturalist Club; Darling Downs Naturalist Club; National Parks. B. Rainforest Rescue Newsletter and request for funds. C. Govt. in Focus Vol 2 No. 10; D. Press Releases from Peter McKechnie 1. re camping on Whitsunday Island 2. re official opening of Lawn Hill National Park 250 K N.W. of Mt. Isa sheets a & b 3. re Red Kangaroos sheets a & B 4. re environment protection on Beddow Island in Mary River at Maryborough 5. re Fraser Island Access Bill to control number of visitors. 6. Re increase in Budget for Q'ld. National Parks and Wild Life Service.

Outward - Summit State School P & C re Magazine cover copying; Mr. & Mrs. Fletcher re Rivertree Outing. Attah Frompon of West Africa.

4QS re Outing and Meeting notices.

Moved by Robin McCosker and seconded by Esme Lacey that the Inward Correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. Carried.

Treasurer's Report

<u>Receipts</u>	Subscriptions	12.00	<u>Expenses</u>	Room Rent	6.00
	Room Rent Collec-			Mag. Duplication	7.00
	tions	3.10		Mag. Postage	13.00
		15.10		" Cover Photocopy	20.00
					46.00

Balance as at 20.9.1985

242.53

Less Expenses

46.00

Balance as at 23.10.1985

211.63 Cr.

Moved by Treasurer Joan and seconded by Don Lightfoot that this report be received and the following accounts passed for payment

Oct. Room Rent 6.00; Mag. Duplication \$7.00 and Mag. Postage 13.00

Carried.

Outing Report - re Campout at Wattle Farm Texas was given by Millie Marsden who reported that 21 campers attended including 6 children. Sat. A.M. there was a trip to the Forestry - 21 Wild flowers were seen In the afternoon they walked along the River - birds were really good and the children had fun swimming. Sunday a.m. Philip Donges showed members around the Tobbacco areas - barns etc. Weather was fairly good and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Secretary asked to write a letter of thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Ian Campbell for allowing the camp on their property and Philip Donges for his Sunday morning program.

Next Outing - Mt. Cordeaux on Sun. Nov. 24th.

Next Meeting - Wed. Nov 27th - Tom Archer will take us on his South African Trip via his slides.

BREAK UP PARTY - was discussed and will be held at Jean Harslett's home on Sunday, December 8th.

Specimens - Bill Goebel spoke on an Acacia speciment 'Benervata' the only one known to be growing here and unfortunately is dying due to

Specimens continued - the heavy snow fall last year. He hopes to get some seeds from it as it is blooming now. Jean brought a very dainty white flower for identification but noone recognized it.

General Business - Jean spoke of a letter from the Youth Committee re a representative from our Club. Geoffrey Walker is to represent us at the Youth Dinner.

John Walter sent Jean a Nature Calendar which can be ordered by anyone interested.

Robin McCosker spoke on a Wild Flower Key that has been compiled at Girraween around the Junction area.

Errol Walker reported that the diver Tony Keane was coming up to explore the Texas Caves.

Program for Nov. 1st and 2nd Arts in Action at the Civic Centre was discussed and it was decided to hold a meeting to arrange this at the home of Archer's on Tuesday, October 29th.

Meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Program - Jean introduced Millie & Ray Marsden and Esme & Bob Lacey who gave us a very interesting program on their trip to Salvator Rosa National Park and its wonderful rock formations and flora and Fauna. Robin McCosker moved a vote of thanks which was carried by acclamation.

* * * * *

Report of Camp out to Wattle Farm Texas on October 19th and 20th.

All told, thirteen adults and six children camped at Mavis and Ian Campbell's property on the Dumeresque River, and two made the trip for the day. On the Friday afternoon only four people travelled out at the appointed hour, they spent some time in Texas with old friends Joy and Lawrie Jeffery. Having told the rest of the party, who were leaving at 4pm, that the fire would be lit when they arrived, we found we only just struck the match in time. However it was not long before the billy was boiling and all housing erected.

The campsite was only a few miles from where Alan Cunningham crossed the river on his trip to explore the country to the west of the Moreton Bay Settlement. It was on this trip that the Darling Downs was discovered. It proved to be a popular site with both children and adults there was plenty of bird life, lots of fast moving water, shady trees and easy walking tracks on the river banks, both upstream and down. The children found a tiny duckling to which they gave much tender loving care, despite this the little one failed to survive the cold night.

Several fishing enthusiasts tried their luck with line and sinker, with varying degrees of success. Several carp were seen feeding in the shallow water close to the banks, two platypus were seen in the distance. Lots of small fish were seen leaping about in and out of the water. On Friday night we all gathered around the camp fire and the Campbells joined us for an hour or two fellowship. (Mavis Campbell, Jean Harslett and Millie Marsden were in the same class at the Glen Aplin State School - just a few years ago.)

On Saturday morning we went up to Mavis and Ian's home from where we set out for a drive through the State Forest to the Glenarvon Fire Tower. The weather conditions were very unsettled and we experienced several showers during the morning. There were still many wildflowers blooming in the forest and about twenty varieties were listed as we drove along. We made frequent stops to look at flowers and I think the Campbells thought we were quite mad. The delight of the day was the lovely pink Calytrix longifolia, which does not grow in this district. The lovely shaped seed pods of the woody pear tree caused a lot of interest too. The forestry timber is mostly white cyprus and iron bark. When we finally arrived at the tower many of the more hardy individuals climbed to the top. However visibility was not good and little more than the tops of the trees was seen, the tower swayed quite noticeably in the stiff breeze.

On Saturday night the Campbells were our guests at dinner and we had the camp fire group afterwards and indulged in the ceremony of the damper and associated fun. The early mornings were very rewarding with the bird calls and sightings, several species were noted at the nest, including the willy wag tail and pardalote.

On the Sunday morning we travelled the few miles to Glenarvon where Mr. Philip Donges (relative of our local home grown variety at Severnlea) was waiting to give us a conducted tour of the Glenarvon Estates. We were joined Joanne Maddern, a visitor to the Campbells from Alice Springs. Philip told us that during the boom days of tobacco growing, there would have been about 40 share farmers - multi national - who would cultivate from 4 to 6 acres of tobacco. The firm supplied the farm and the water and the share farmers retained about 2/3rds of the profit. The whole area was under flood irrigation from the river, which is about 20 feet deep in that reach of the river. A sawmill on the property cut the timber used for the homes and other buildings, this was washed away in the flood of 1956. The bricks used in the construction were also made on the spot. A butcher and baker called three times a week and the sport of bocca was flourishing. Philip showed us through the school which catered for 20 to 30 pupils and also housed the teacher. The school was provided by the company and the teacher appointed by the education department. Philip's father attended this school. Later a state school was built in Glenarvon and has only recently closed.

As tobacco growing became less profitable, the families left the district and now empty homes, barns, sorting sheds and the vast irrigation system are the only reminders of the industry. The area is now under wheat, barley and soya beans, the nine or ten pine tobacco barns are a silent reminder of the hey days of the Glenarvon tobacco industry. The Glenarvon Weir is adjacent to the settlement and is complete with fish ladder, Philip says they have often watched as fish negotiated the ladder.

Philip was thanked for his time and for giving such an interesting account on the settlement. Mavis and Ian were sincerely thanked for their hospitality and for all the help given over the weekend. Members went back to camp to spend a happy time in the warm water of the Dumeresque before dismantling their temporary accommodation before setting off for home. A brief visit to the Beebo Weir was very rewarding, seen in sunny conditions, this was a picturesque scene on the Dumeresque. Hope everyone enjoyed the camp out as much as we did.

On a recent Bennie trip to Eulo and Yowah there were nine members of the Stanthorpe Field Nats.. We saw a great many birds on this trip and I thought I would include the list, we were happy to have the knowlege of Arthur Salter of Ocean Shores to identify many of the birds. The list is comprised of Hooded Robin, Painted Honey eater, Magpie, Blue Faced Honey Eater, White Browed Tree Creeper, Blue Bonnet Parrot, Mulga Parrot, Mallee Ring Neck, Crow, White Winged Chough, Black Faced Wood Swallow, Grey Warbler, Singing Honey Eater, Bourke Parrot, Zebra Finch, Rufus Whistler, Restless Fly Catcher, Pallid Cuckoo, Little Friar Bird, Red Backed Kingfisher, Spotted Bower Bird, Brown Tree Creeper, Red Browed Pardalote, Yellow Throated Miner, Willy Wagtail, Pied Butcher Bird, Spiny Cheeked Honey Eater, Crested Pigeon, White Winged Triller, Crested Bellbird, Brown Goshawk, Jacky Winter, Red Capped Robin, Chestnut Rumped Thornbill, Golden Bronze Cuckoo, Rufus Song Lark, Brown Honey Eater, Apostle Bird, Noisy Friar Bird, Mistletoe Bird, Pelican, Fairy Martin, Magpie Lark, Common Bronze wing, Pipit, Cockateil, Kestrel, Little Corella, Welcome Swallow, Forktailed Kite, Whistling Kite, Major Mitchell Cuckatoo, Dusky Wood Swallow, White Breated Wood Swallow, Rainbow Bee Eater, Greenshank, Ibis, Grey Butcher Bird, Pink Eared Duck, Grey Teal, Black Duck, White Eyed Duck, Little Grebe, Black Fronted Dotterel, Varigated Wren, Red Capped Dotterel, Darter, Silver Gull, Black Swan, Brolga, Double Barred Finch, Emu, Striped Honey Eater, White Plumed Honey Eater, Buzzard, White Necked Heron, Royal Spoonbill, Freckled Duck, Red Winged Parrot, Kookburra, Peaceful Dove, Crimson Chat, Black Backed Wren, Reed Warbler, Grey Thrush, Galah, Peregian Falcon, Chestnut Tailed Thornbill, Spotted Nightjar, Eastern Whiteface, Varigated Sitella, Sacred Kingfisher, Grey Crowned Babbler, Little Black Cormorant, Striated Pardalote, White Browed Honey Eater, Budgerigar, Chestnut Breasted Quail Thrush.

Members are disturbed by the news that Past President John O'Donnell is a patient in Royal Brisbane Hospital. John took ill in England and has been in hospital in Brisbane for a few weeks now. Latest news is that John is to be transferred to Prince Charles Hospital for an operation on 15th November. Our thoughts are with John and Gabrielle in this time of trouble and we trust that John is feeling much more comfortable.

Congratulations are extended to Ian Jackson and Sue Quinlan on the announcement of their engagement.

Next Outing on Sunday 24th November. The venue for the next meeting has been changed to Leslie Dam. Arrangements have been made to leave Weeroona Park at 11am and travel a back route to Leslie Dam. Lunch will be at the Dam and general sight seeing during the afternoon. If the weather permits, we may indulge in swimming.

Next Meeting November 27th we will "Travel in South Africa" with Tom Archer.