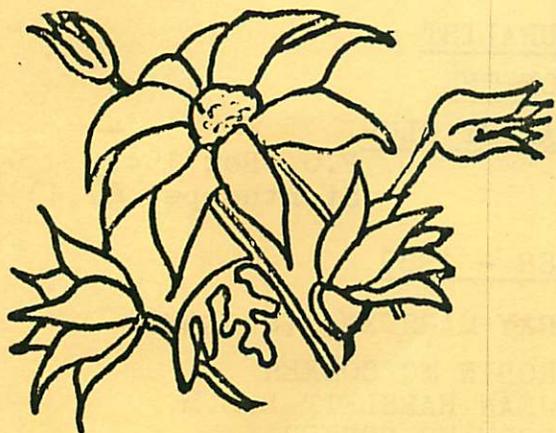


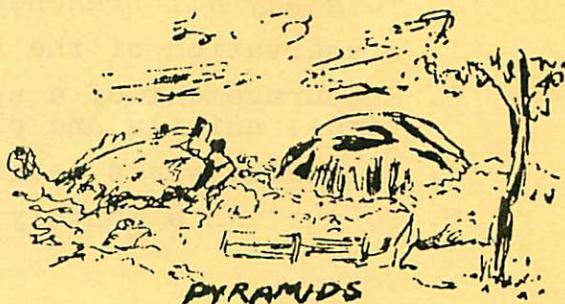
12 FEB 1989



THE
**GRANITE BELT
NATURALIST**



Monthly Newsletter of the
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club



Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. **QBH 1824**

PRICE 40c

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

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

OFFICERS OF CLUB FOR 1988 - 1989

PRESIDENT	RAY MARSDEN (811 593)
VICE-PRESIDENTS	ROBIN MC COSKER JEAN HARSLETT B.E.M. DORE MC COSKER
SECRETARY	DOT ARCHER (811754)
TREASURER	JOAN STEVENSON
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	MILLIE MARSDEN
NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE	DORE MC COSKER AILS A WILKINSON FRANK WILKINSON
PUBLICITY OFFICER	TOM ARCHER
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GEOLOGY OFFICER	COL HOCKINGS
YOUTH OFFICER	ROBIN MC COSKER
BUSHWALKING OFFICER	ERROL WALKER
LIBRARIAN	VAL WHITE
HON. AUDITOR	JOAN FERRIS

MEETINGS - 4th WEDNESDAY of each month in the Q.C.W.A. Rooms
at 8 p.m.

OUTINGS - The Sunday PRECEDING the 4th Wednesday of the month

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Single \$6.00 Family \$10.00
Rent donation per family per meeting

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.

Minutes of the general monthly meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club held in the Q.C.W.A. rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe on Wednesday January 25, 1989 at 8pm.

Present 34

Apologies 2

Opening.

President Ray Marsden opened the meeting and welcomed all present with a special welcome to the guest speaker David Hockings of Brisbane and new members Jean and Bruce Fink and Kevin Seaby.

Minutes.

Moved by Rob McCosker seconded by Brian McDonagh that the November meeting minutes be taken as read in the January Newsletter and confirmed. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Inward: 1. Queensland Recreational Areas Board,
2. Minister for Environment, Conservation and Tourism
3. Australia Conservation Foundation 4. State Library
5. Aerosol Packers 6. National Parks Assn.
Journals and Newsletters from: 1. Toowoomba Field Naturalists, 2. Chinchilla Field Nats., 3. Qld. Naturalists 4. Toowoomba Bushwalkers Club 5. Richmond Valley Naturalists.

Outward forwarded to ; 1. Ray Klenk, 2. Pat Bancroft, 3. Glenn Leiper, 4. 4QS Xmas Party 5. 4QS January Outing and Meeting notices.

Moved by Jean Harslett seconded by Esme Lacey that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed. Carried.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Julie Brown read her report which showed credit balance as at 23/11/88 \$33836

Receipts	Subscriptions	\$6.00	
Room Rent	Collection	9.30	15.30
			<u>353.66</u>

Expenses

Room Rent	8.00	
Magazine postage	17.00	
Magazine covers	15.00	
Magazine duplication	6.00	
Stencils	26.24	
Federal Tax	1.95	74.19
		<u>\$ 279.47</u>

Outstanding cheque \$17
Bank Balance as at 25/1/89 \$296 . 47
Julie moved the adoption of her statement and that the following accounts be passed for payment: Magazine postage \$17, duplication \$6, rent \$8, Petty cash for secretary \$10. This was seconded by Kel Dominey. Carried.

Outing Report. Christmas Breakup. This was a very successful outing to the Harslett property at Amiens. Ray thanked the Harsletts for their hospitality. In spite of the showers there were a few insects found and the bird life on the dam was enjoyed. The family of black swans (this is the first nesting on the dam) created a lot of interest. While the rain fell, the members browsed through the large selection of nature books available in the Harslett home and viewed Jean's butterfly and insect collection.

January outing. On January 22 thirty three members started the walk at Britannia Street crossing, where possible along the creek bank. Past the bypass bridge the walk was able to go along the creek as both sides had been cleared by the Water Resources Commission. Seen along the way were water birds, chestnut breasted finches and yellow tufted honeyeater. Two camps were seen, one very primitive. Due to rain the walk was shortened but was enjoyed by all who attended. Ray Marsden led this outing. Rob McCosker took the opportunity at the meeting to thank Ray for leading the walk. This had not been done on Sunday, due to everyone scattering because of the rain.

Next Outing.

Rob McCosker will be the leader to Beehive Dam Valley. Cars will leave Weeroona Park at 9am others may join at Lions Park at Wallangarra if they wish. Morning tea will be at the Beehive Dam and a lunch is to be carried.

Specimens.

Jean had a bird book on display for information on the chestnut breasted finch. Leila Hermansson brought along a bird's nest for identification.

General Business. After some discussion, it was decided that new members joining now will pay \$3 single or \$5 family. This will cover them until the end of the financial year.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

After Meeting Program.

President Ray introduced guest speaker David Hockings who gave a most interesting slide program on a trip he had done to Cape York with the Queensland Naturalists. He showed many scenes and his flower slides were exceptional. He also showed some of Thursday Island where he grew up and pointed out the changes made since he lived there. Ray thanked David for his most interesting and informative program and the vote of thanks was carried by acclamation.

Dorothy Archer,
Hon. Sec.

January Outing.

by leader

Ray Marsden.

The walk along Quart Pot Creek from Britannia Street to Petrie's Crossing on January 22 began as a leisurely Sunday afternoon stroll and ended as a race against the elements.

Thirty three participants of all ages, assembled at the starting point in bright sunlight and began walking along the western side of the stream. Under the by pass traffic bridge many fairy martin nests were seen. The sewerage plant, on the eastern side of the stream was working perfectly and the water from this mingled with the stream and flowed on in unity.

A dump, from the old slaughter yards, was inspected and several items of great interest to the Historical Society members were discovered, including large vats used for boiling tallow (the orchardists also used these for sprays) and some hubs from dray wheels. Particular interest was shown in the method of fencing across a wide expanse of granite.

Both sides of the creek had been cleared by the Water Resources Commission and this made walking very easy. Bird life was quite good and many ducks were seen as well as other water birds. Colonies of chestnut breasted finches, fire tailed finches and double bars were also seen. The yellow tufted honeyeater was also seen.

It was quite a surprise to come upon the camp of an elderly gentleman, quaintly constructed among a cluster of large rocks. He has been in residence for some time and said he did not mind if a group of people walked close to his camp. The summertime aspect of his camp was very pleasant but it did not seem that he had enough protection from the elements when the rains came or for the rough Stanthorpe winter months. Further downstream, another camp was seen, though not in use at the moment it was obvious that the owner will be back. Everything was well battened down.

The land is farmed right to the river bank for a considerable distance from West Road. Grateful thanks are extended to the Lancubas Girardis and Cannavas for allowing us to walk around the edges of their vegie patches.

Further downstream there is much evidence of the great mining activity of bygone days - many diggings over a wide area perhaps as the river has changed course somewhat over the years, several quite lengthy water diversion channels and the more permanent site of a drege. The river banks become very overgrown with blackberry and honeysuckle which makes it very difficult to get close to the waterway. The river flows between great granite slabs and it is quite picturesque in these areas. Many items of things washed down during recent floods were seen - honey boxes, drums, plastic containers of all types etc.

At this stage the fast approaching storm lent an air of urgency to continue to where a car was in readiness to bring drivers back to the starting point to collect their cars and then return for their passengers. We were not able to get to Petrie's Crossing because of time. The crossing is formed by hard slabs of granite and was used as a crossing for many years. An original "town dump" is situated on the western side of the crossing and it has proved an interesting 'dig' for old bottles and things in use in the early days of the town. Once again we were beaten by rain, perhaps this could be the venue for a future outing, the adjacent Ghost Gully used to have a wide variety of wild flowers. Since the road works it could be interesting to see what remains.

Chestnut Breasted Mannikin.

Some information on the birds seen on the recent walk from Readers Digest Complete Book of Australian Birds.

A typical reed finch or mannikin, the chestnut breasted species forms flocks up to several hundred birds. They pack into tight aerial groups, executing all manoeuvres in unison. They also feed, drink, rest, sleep and sing together. They inhabit rank grasses and reeds on the margins of swamps and rivers. They mostly eat half-ripe grass seeds, which they first remove from the spike. They land among the upright stems, reach out for a laden spike, pull it down and clamp it with one foot while they remove the seeds one by one. When one spike has been stripped they climb nimbly up or down the stem to repeat the process. In some districts they are known as barley birds and have become a minor pest by damaging crops as they land on the grain stalks and bend them over. Chestnut breasted mannikins drink by scooping up a bill full of water and tilting the head back and swallowing. The birds breed in dense colonies with small nests only a few metres apart. Other names are Chestnut breasted finch, barley bird, barley sparrow, chestnut finch, duncoloured finch, bull finch and chestnut breasted munia. They breed in all months though mostly in summer and autumn. The nest is spherical and made of dry blades of grass and lined with fine grass stems and are built in dense clumps of grass or reeds, they usually have four to six eggs

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News from Aerosol Packers.

"All aerosol cans are not harmful to the ozone layer. Only chlorofluoro-carbons(CFC's) are considered so. Only a few products are now harmful to our environment, so check the back of the can. Hydrocarbon, CO₂, Dimethyl ether are ozone friendly. Buy them with confidence."

The next time you go to the supermarket, check the back of the can and see what the propellant statement reads. If the propellant is Hydrocarbon, CO₂, or DiMethyl Ether, then you can buy that product with confidence, as the propellants are bio-degradable totally. Should the propellant statement read Chlorofluorocarbon or Chloro-hydrocarbon, these products are considered environmentally undesirable.

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Extract from National Parks Association letter which may be of interest to some member.

"The National Parks Association of Queensland (Inc.) is host organisation for National Parks Day weekend 1989.

It is desired to confirm in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the venue will be at Freshwater Campground in Cooloola National Park over the weekend of August 26-27, 1989.

So that we may gain an idea of the organisations likely to be represented, would you kindly advise the Hon. Sec. N.P.A.Q.I. P.O. Box 1040, Milton Centre Q 4064 at your earliest convenience so further information may be forwarded in due course."

It was interesting to note that the Richmond Valley Naturalists Club Newsletter of December had included articles written by our members. Rob McCosker's article on the leaf cutter bees and Col Hockings article on the white tailed spider.

This should whet the appetite of other writers, please send in more articles, we need to have a greater input from members for our magazine. You now know that articles are appreciated by members other than those of the Granite Belt group.

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Next Outing.

The outing will be to the Beehive Valley, Wallangarra with Robin McCosker as leader. Cars will leave Weeroona Park at 9am and members may join at Lions Park in Wallangarra if they wish. On arrival at Beehive Dam, morning tea will be taken before moving off with a packed lunch to be carried. This valley used to have greater owl so Rob hopes we may be lucky on Sunday February 19 and perhaps someone may spot this feathered friend.

February Program.

The after meeting program on Wednesday February 22 will be presented by Wal Cathcart and will illustrate a recent trip to Central Australia by Ness and Wal. Wal has presented many programs in the past and his standard of photography is well known. It is expected that a large attendance will be present on February 22.

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Little bit of trivia - I recently had this 'citation' presented to me and thought it should be shared. I am sure a lot of you will relate to it.

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HAVING BEEN LED BY THE
KNOWING, INTO DOING THE
IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE
UNGRATEFUL
FOR SO LONG,
AND HAVING DONE SO MUCH
WITH SO LITTLE
AM NOW HIGHLY QUALIFIED
TO DO ANYTHING WITH
NOTHING.

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