

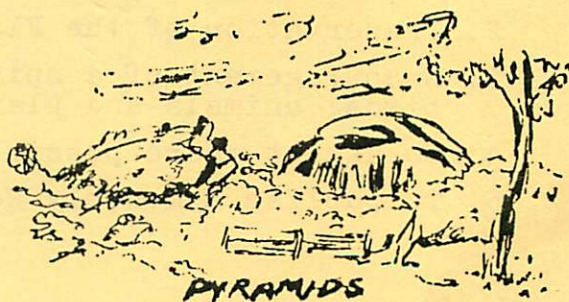
66 MAR 1989



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 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 AILSA WILKINSON FRANK WILKINSON
PUBLICITY OFFICER	TOM ARCHER
FLORA & FAUNA OFFICER	BRIAN MCDONAGH
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, at 8pm on Wednesday February 22, 1989.

Present 27

Apologies 5

Opening.

President Ray Marsden opened the meeting and welcomed all present, especially newcomers Bill and Joan Ratcliffe and visitors Kerin Bos and Tinkek Van Derheide.

Minutes.

It was moved by Ailsa Wilkinson and seconded by Rob McCosker that the minutes of the January meeting as in the February Newsletter to be taken as read and confirmed.

Carried.

Correspondence. Inward was received from 1. Field Naturalists Club of Victoria 2. Letter and posters re Glenrow Station Camping Centre. 3. Hewan Gibson re new date for Hunters Hill outing. Publications received from - 1. Darling Downs Naturalist 2. Toowoomba Bush Walkers Club. 3. Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club Inc. Outward forwarded to 1. Queensland Naturalists Club 2. 4QS Round the Ridges re meeting and outing. Moved by Diana Holley and seconded Brian McDonagh that the inward correspondence be received and the outward endorsed.

Carried.

Treasurer's Report. The report was read by Julia Brown and showed a credit balance of \$270.12. Julia moved that the report be accepted and the following accounts be passed for payment: Room Rent \$8.00, Magazine postage for March \$17.00, Magazine printing for February \$6.00. This was seconded by Frank Wilkinson and carried.

As more copies of the magazine are now being printed, it was decided that the president should see Nev Strutt, who does the duplicating, to decide on a reasonable amount of payment for same. It was generally felt that the \$6.00 now being paid was not sufficient.

Outing Report. Robin McCosker, leader of the February outing on 19th to Beehive Gully reported that 33 people attended the very relaxed and enjoyable outing with beautiful weather. The powerful owl was not sighted but Robin found a feather from one.

Next Outing. Leader Errol Walker to Sun Valley leaving town at 9am. The outing will take place on March 19th, as Errol was not present at the meeting details will be in the March Magazine.

March Program. Will be presented in the Q.C.W.A. on March 22nd when Tom Archer will present a slide program entitled "Here and There".

Specimens.

Col Hockings spoke about a night marauder that had been attacking his chickens. He set a trap to catch the culprit which he assumed was a fox. Unfortunately next morning he found that it was not a fox but a wild tiger cat.

Dore McCosker specimen was a bronze cuckoo which had accidentally killed itself.

Brian McDongah reported that another turquoise parrot pair are nesting in his grape post strainers.

General Business.

Kel Dominey handed in a design for a cover for the magazine which he had produced. Millie Marsden moved a vote of thanks to Kel for the work he had done on this and asked that members look at it and decide at the next meeting if they wish to change the cover of the Granite Belt Naturalist. Seconded Doris Spence.

Carried.

Colin Hockings spoke on the abattoir planned for the Sugarloaf area. He had visited the site and found that a rare (for this area) *Grevillea9tri nervia* which will be destroyed if the plans go ahead. Brian McDonagh moved that Colin Hockings and the president, Ray Marsden, be authorised to use the influence of the Stanthorpe Naturalists Club in the best possible way to preserve the grevillea at Sugarloaf. Seconded Frank Wilkinson
Carried.

As Hewen Gibson has asked that the proposed April outing to Hunters Hill be put off until October or November, a suggestion was put forward that the April outing be The Tops at Undercliffe. This will be investigated and reported to next meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm.

After Meeting Program.

President Ray Marsden introduced and welcomed the guest speaker Wal Cathcart and his wife Ness. Wal was a very early member of the Stanthorpe Nats. and has led many outings and presented programs in the past. Wal took the group on a most interesting trip via his slides to the Centre calling in at Longreach, Mt. Isa, Alice Springs, The Rock and many other places. All present thoroughly enjoyed the presentation and on conclusion expressed their appreciation by acclamation.

Dot. Archer. Hon. Sec.

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REPORT ON FIELD NATURALISTS OUTING HELD ON FEBRUARY 19, 1989.

By Leader Robin McCosker.

The outing to Beehive Dam Creek at Wallangarra was blessed with a particularly fine day. After meeting at Weeroona Park, and competing for parking spots with the people attending the swimming carnival, we drove to Wallangarra. A few more people were collected at Lions Park and the group drove on to park at Beehive Dam for smoko. We were met there by a few more participants who had driven the long way round via Racecourse Creek road in 4WD vehicles, bringing the total to 33 people. We were surprised to find a shaded picnic table with seats and also toilets at the dam, provided by the owners of the adjoining property, the Springborgs. We were very thankful to them for their allowing us access to their property.

Before setting off on our walk, Jean Harslett showed us a tawny progmouth which she had picked up on the Amiens road, evidently killed by a speeding car. It was interesting to note the camouflage colours and the very soft, fine feathers which allow soundless flight when diving on prey.

We eventually set off, amid confusion as to the best track, around the placid waters of the dam. Upon reaching the gully, quite dry due to lack of rain, we slowly ambled upstream, in awe of the splendid gum trees towering above. All around the ground had been both deeply upheaved by feral pigs as well as shallowly scratched over, presumably by lyre birds. Certainly a lyre feather was found, though no lyrebirds were sighted or seen. Wombats had also been digging around in the ground not long before our arrival. We continuously craned our necks hoping to sight the powerful owl which is known to inhabit this area. Unfortunately, once again the nearest we saw of it was a feather and some droppings.

When we reached the end of the gradual incline of the gully, we decided to leave our lunch packs and to walk on up the steep hillside to catch some views and also to work up an appetite. Everyone agreed that it was worth the climb and perhaps worthy of another trip to explore further. Lunch was had in the shade of a couple of large granite boulders topped with king orchids. We returned the way we had come, down the gully. On reaching the dam we all returned around the northern side to inspect the concrete wall. Two brave, rather nerve-less characters chose to walk across the spillway!! Back at the cars, the balmy afternoon induced several children to take a plunge in the clear water, while the adults enjoyed a "chin-wag" and cuppa to finish off a rather relaxed day in the bush.

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March Pre-outing Reportby Leader Errol Walker.

The March outing will be one with a difference. We will not be tramping through virgin bushland to arrive exhausted at the top of a peak lordly to photograph the magic vista.

Instead we will quietly appreciate how a family has blended into the land on which they live. They have learnt to compromise productivity with conservation and partly restore a sad landscape.

March Pre-outing(continued)

We Will meet Ian and Judy Reed on their NSW property "The Haven" which was originally part of "Sun Valley". The property is adjacent to Bald Rock National Park. There will be some surprises and the outing should have interest for all age groups.

Just bring a picnic lunch(not to be carried) and your walking shoes. An easy day.

Depart Weeroona Park 9am Sunday March 19.

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In the Archer Garden.

Our bird family has now a return visit from a flock of Rainbow Lorikeets, who make their presence known as they eat from the trays of seed on our patio. While watching their antics last week, we noticed two different birds amongst them. They did not have the blue heads of the rainbows and we were able to name them on looking up our bird book. They are the scaly breasted lorikeets, scaly yellow and green below and red underwing.

The king parrots have to be content to eat seed over on the rocks as the lorikeet family has taken over the patio feeding trays and make this clearly known.

How enjoyable it is to watch the birds as we have our breakfast.

Dot Archer.

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Some information on the tawny frogmouth as shown by Jean Harslett. The tawny frogmouth is not often seen as it is active by night and when roosting by day, blends in so well with its surrounds that, even when pointed out, it is hard to see. It sits stiff and upright, its head upturned and eyes narrowed to slits, keeping the intruder under close scrutiny and looking like a broken branch. They usually roost on a branch close to the trunk of a tree, often a rough barked tree. They roost singly, in pairs or even in family groups and a pair will live in the same area year after year. Tawny frogmouths fly silently and slowly, flapping their broad wings. Their wings look very pale when the birds are seen at night in car headlights. They fly down to seize prey illuminated on the road and are often run over.

The powerful owl, though not seen on this outing, roost by day also. They roost in the tall forest trees which gives them a commanding view of their surroundings. At night, they prey on birds and mammals, it tears its prey apart and eats it by the piece. Sometimes it will take the rear end of the animal back to its roost, carefully place it on the branch and hold it all day in its talons, then eat it before leaving the roost in the evening. We saw this on a previous outing in Horan's Gorge. A possum was the prey in that instance.

The powerful owl live in pairs and are strongly territorial, each pair has a number of roosting trees, though roosting on different trees on different days, and not always together, the pair are always within calling distance of each other. The birds nest in large tree hollows at least 15m above the ground in dense forest. The female lays two eggs and incubates them for 38 days. (Readers Digest.)