



# THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST



**Monthly Newsletter of the  
Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club**

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## OFFICERS OF CLUB FOR 1991-92

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Publicity Officer	Frank & Patience James	811853
Librarian	Esme Colley	812927
Management Committee	President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer.	

Meetings: 4th Wednesday of each Month at Q.C.W.A. Rooms at 8 p.m.

Outings: The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each Month.

Annual Subscriptions: Single \$8.00 Family \$15.00 per annum July to June

Rent: Donation per family per meeting.

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## SCALE OF DIFFICULTY FOR WALKS ON NATS OUTINGS

1. Flat walking road or track.
2. Road or track gentle hills.
3. Track some hilly sections
4. Track some steep sections
5. Cross country easy open forest, gentle slopes.
6. Track steep section common, with steps.
7. Cross country some hills, some thick undergrowth.
8. Cross country steep section with scrambles over rocks etc. Some thick undergrowth.
9. Cross country steep, hilly, rough, thick undergrowth.
- 10 Mountain climbing, hard going, higher level of fitness or plenty of time required.

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## 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 & plants.
4. To assist where possible in scientific research.
5. To publish a monthly newsletter and post it to members.

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## ADDRESS CHECK

Could all members please check that their address is correct, and if not notify the secretary immediately.

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OUTING REPORT FOR APRIL 26th

I am very pleased to report that everyone made it to the waterfall on Racecourse Creek, all 46 of us. Only 12 decided not to continue along the gully to the track near West Balk Rock, where 6 more turned back, leaving 28 to conquer the mountain.

We had some very anxious moments at the start of the day when I thought I had lost most of the convoy. Luckily everyone soon arrived at the right place, some travelling via Ballandear, and others via Wyberba. As soon as people were safely transferred to high clearance vehicles we drove to the White gate for a cuppa and a surprise presentation of a Birthday Cake for Val.

With the overcast conditions we were keen to start the walk and warm up, so we made good time along the tracks to the creek crossing. We had only gone a little way along the watercourse before coming across a number of purple-tops, *Burmania disticha*. I had seen these on the pre-outing a fortnight before and was hoping they would still be in bloom. They are something of a rarity in Girraween, and are not on the National Park Plant list.

The watercourse was interesting to follow as it changed from open swampland to a narrow stream we aring its way through sculptured granite, to placid waterholes beneath tall gums, then to disappear with a gurgle beneath huge boulders at the waterfall, where it emerges again as if by magic to cascade some five metres to a shallow rock pool. We had lunch at the top of the waterfall then set off along the gully to the south. Although dry and open at the start, the gully soon closed in as we scrambled over fern covered banks. A lyrebird was heard in the distance ahead and the word was passed back to keep quiet so we could all hear it, but alas we only heard it mimicking our silence. Further onward the gully became a stream with delightful rock pools and cascades which were a little difficult to negotiate. We left the gully then and walked to the track which goes to the base of West Bald Rock, where the non-climbers left us.

The route we took up the rock was different, to say the least. On the pre-outing we climbed the northern side, which required a little chimneying and rope work, then descended the southern side. On this trip we were somewhere in between on the western side, which proved a bit tricky at one spot and a rope was used to help people up, but saved some time in reaching the top. The overcast sky persisted all day so views were not the best and the chilly breeze soon had us on the move, this time down the southern side to the track, then back to the cars as daylight was fading. The people who had returned to the cars earlier had a small fire, and the mournful howls of a dingo in the distance, for company while they waited. By the time we travelled back to the Eukey Road and the rest of the cars it was almost dark, the end of a very full day since those who climbed the rock had to walk some 14km as well.

Robin McCosker

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PRECIS MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1992 MEETING OF THE STANTHORPE FIELD NATURALIST CLUB INC. HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29TH AT 8.00PM AT THE CIVIC CENTRE.

Opening: Kris Carnell, Chairman of the meeting, opened the meeting and welcomed all present, particularly those visiting.

Present & Apologies: as per attendance book.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a correct record on the motion of Val White, seconded by Rob McCosker and carried.

Correspondence: Errol Walker moved, Patience James seconded that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted. Carried.



Precis Minutes contd.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report showed a cred balance at 29/04/92 of \$485.63.

Julia Brown moved and Ray Marsden seconded the adoption of the Treasurer's report and the accounts to be passed for payment as follows: Room rent \$10.00; Magazine Duplicating \$6.00; Magazine postage \$30.00. Carried.

Grant from the Environment Department: After discussion of the recommendation from the management committee, Frank Wilkinson moved that we agree in principle to accept the \$1000.00 from the Department of Environment and Heritage for the cost of the photocopier, and that the final decision be left with the executive. Seconded Colin Hockings and carried.

Outing Report: Robin MCCosker reported that the outing to Racecourse Creek was successful.

Next Outing: will be to Wellington Rock on 24th May, leaving Weeroona Park at 9am.

Next Programme: Brian and Noela Dodd will bring us a programme - Parks and Canyons of Western U.S.A.

Programme: Fred Simpson took us to some very interesting places in the North and Centre by Air. Thank you Fred for a very enjoyable programme.

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### OUTING TO WELLINGTON ROCK 24th MAY

Leaders Kris & Margaret Carnell

For the outing on the 24th it would be appreciated if membes and friends could meet at Weeroona Park at 8.45 a.m. for a prompt 9.00 a.m. start. We will travel via Sugarloaf Rd, Mt Lindesay Rd and Lindbrook Rd to the Timbarra Trig where we will have smoko. Weather permitting we should have good views of the Tenterfield area and Wellington Rock. Conventional vehicles will be able to travel part of the way from the trig to Wellington rock, depending on weather conditions. The 4WD vehicles will then ferry everyone to the rock. There is probably more to explore at Wellington Rock than time will allow.

When we get to the rock the scale of difficulty ranges from 4 to 8 depending on what you want to do, but everyone will be able to come.

The best view of Wellington Rock is from a ridge about 400m to the south where I was lucky enough to spot a peregrine falcon.

On the pre-outing we were lucky enough to find 6 different rock orchids (one in flower), one ground orchid and a zieria in flower. Also of interest were a couple of unusual berry bushes.

Bring your aerogarde as there is the odd leech about.

Margaret and I intend to have a barbeue tea at the Basket Swamp rest area before coming home. Other members are welcome to join us.

Kris

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If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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I would like to thank Narelle Crawford for the following article on orchids.



ORCHID SIGHTINGS AT GIRRAWEEEN

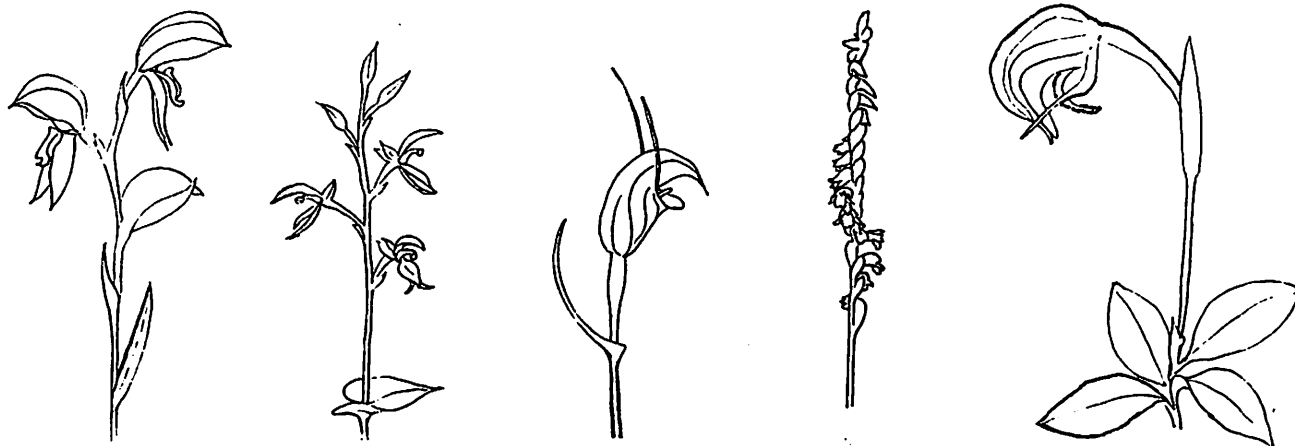
A number of Girraween's autumn-flowering ground orchids generated interest on the club's last outing in the Racecourse Creek area. The most conspicuous of these were ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes sinensis*), which were scattered at intervals along the vehicular track in the first few kilometres of walking. Although the individual flowers are tiny, their bright pink and white colouring makes them easily visible, and the unusual arrangement of the flowers, which wind spirally around the stem, attracts attention.

The moist, sheltered conditions in the gully we followed after lunch were ideal for greenhoods, and three species were identified. Most prolific were the nodding greenhoods (*Pterostylis nutans*), which were growing in colonies along the creek banks. The relatively large, rounded flower, leaning well forward, makes this greenhood distinctive. More difficult to discern amongst the grass were the tall greenhoods (*P. longifolia*), which have numerous small flowers on a long spike. In these greenhoods, which tend to grow as scattered individuals rather than in colonies, the lateral sepals drop down, exposing the tongue. Both these orchids have long flowering periods, being found at Girraween from autumn to early spring. The blunt-tongue greenhood (*P. obtusa*) was less common: a dainty pair was growing in isolation on a mossy rock. These greenhoods are readily identifiable by the bulging sinus with the tongue just protruding beyond it.

The unique feature of greenhoods is the fusion of one sepal and the adjacent petals to form a hood, which aids the orchid in temporarily trapping insects for the purpose of pollination. Insects land on the orchid's sensitive tongue which springs back at the least disturbance, flicking the insect into the base of the flower and imprisoning it. To escape, the insect has to crawl upwards, taking a load of pollen with it.

Although many colonies of leaves of the mosquito orchid (*Acianthus exsertus*) were noted during the walk, few flowering specimens were found. There are a number of flowers on a stem but they are quite small, and their dull purplish colouring makes them difficult to detect. They are best found by identifying the distinctive heart-shaped leaf - dark green on top and purplish-red underneath - then searching for the flowering stems.

The following weekend several additional greenhoods were seen on the tracks radiating from the information centre: the tiny greenhood (*P. parviflora*); *P. daintreana*; long-tongued greenhood (*P. longicurva*); and (I think) the autumn greenhood (*P. revoluta* (*reflexa*?)). Girraween is rich in orchids, with over 50 being listed for the park by the M.P.W.S.





## WOOLOOL WOOLLOOLNI

WELLINGTON'S LOOKOUT spans 370 ha and is clearly visible from the Bruxner Highway 18 klms north east of Tenterfield. The peak, rising 1040 metres above sea level, is an outcrop of stone with one mushroom shaped rock standing above the other boulders. It was from the rock's resemblance to the hat worn by Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo that the rock so derived its name. Now a dedicated Aboriginal Sacred Site, Ceremonial activities were once enacted there, although the exact location is forgotten. This site is a good example of a natural feature which has religious and mythological importance to Aboriginals.

### A SPECIAL PLACE.

WOOLOOL WOOLLOOLNI is a centre of spiritual power, a "JURAVEEL", in the Bundjalung language. This includes conception and birth sites, as well as places for increasing plants and animals, and sending magic, like sickness and sleep. Aboriginal people believed that when they died their spirit would return to their "JURAVEEL", and cause some change, a water hole to dry up or a tree to die. It is said that when Woolool died, one of the rocks toppled over and fell into the valley below.

In traditional law, this site was owned by the Aboriginal clan which later took the name of Donnelly. Members of this Clan came here to strengthen their ties with the land. There is a special song about the site which is still known to some of the Old People from the Woodenbong area.

Recent interpretations of the site by Aboriginal people have suggested that it may be linked with ULURU in Central Australia. Today, sites serve as a focus of pride in the Aboriginal community providing links with the past and symbols of Aboriginal identity.

### A PROTECTED PLACE.

WOOLOOL WOOLLOOLINI is protected as an Aboriginal Place under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. Since 1960 information that is available on this site comes from research carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Services and members of the GIDABEL and BUNDJALUNG tribes to the east of this area.

We are privileged to visit this site, so if you intend to visit, please respect this place of great natural beauty and spiritual value.