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June 1973.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

Monthly Newsletter of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club.

No. 39

June 1973

P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe.

Officers and Committee 1972 - 1973.

President	Mrs.R. Harslett	Ph.Amiens 5U
Vice Presidents	Mr. W. Cathcart and Mr.F.Wilkinson	
Secretary	Mr. E. Walker	Ph.888
Treasurer	Mrs.R.Leisemann, Cwth.Bank Bus.Hrs.	
Editors	Mr. I. Jackson and Mrs.D. Orr.	
Newsletter Sub-Committee	Mrs.B. Krautz and Mrs.W.Cathcart.	
Librarian	Mrs.Z. Newman	
Publicity Officer	Mr. F. Wilkinson	
Bushwalking "	Mr. R. McCosker	
Geology "	Mr. P. Higgins	
Flora "	Mrs.W. McCosker	
Fauna "	Miss J.Westcott	
Youth "	Mr. G. Marsden.	

Activities.

Meetings	4th Wednesday of each month
Outings	C.W.A. Rooms 8 p.m. Sunday preceeding 4th Wednesday.

Annual Subscriptions.

Single \$1.50	Family \$ 2.00
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Programme.

Field Outings:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Leader.</u>
Texas and Riverton Caves Camp-out	16th-17th June	Outing with Dalby Nats.& M. Wilson.
Paddy's Flat	24th June	E. Walker.

Meetings:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker.</u>
Photographing Wildflowers	29th June	Mr. M. Hodge.
"Remember Last Year"	25th July	Film Night.
Basic Geology	22nd August	Mr. P. Higgins.

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Remember the date change for June Meeting and the Camp-out!!

--oOo--

June 1973.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Minutes of General Meeting held 23rd May, 1973.

Forty members were present with apologies being received from 8.  
Minutes of previous meeting: Moved Mrs.Z.Newman, seconded Mrs.D.

Orr that the minutes be accepted as read in the Newsletter.

Inward Correspondence: (i) A book "The Case Against the Pike  
 Creek Dam"

(ii) Receipt for \$12.00 and letter of thanks  
 from the Lade Pedder Action Committee.

(iii) Press releases from the D.P.I.

(iv) "The Queensland Hosteller".

(v) Newsletter from associate Nats. Clubs.

Outward Correspondence: (i) Letter to Adult Education with details  
 of outings and meetings for advertisement.

Moved Mr.D.Orr, seconded Mr.W.Newman that the inward corres-  
 pondence be received and the outward adopted. Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Credit Bal.

\$30.14

Duplicating March & April \$ 4.00

" May 2.00

Postage April 1.23

" May 1.40

Stationery, staples etc. 4.20

Credit Balance 12.84

\$17.30

Moved Mrs.G.Leisemann, seconded Mrs.A.Wilkinson that the  
 Treasurer's Report be accepted and accounts passed for pay-  
 ment. Carried.

Outings Reports: Mr.R.Leisemann reported on the April outing to

Basket Swamp Creek Falls and Mr.R.McCosker on the May outing  
 to Castle Rock. The special outing to Texas and Riverton  
 Caves with the Dalby Nats. Club on the 16th & 17th June was  
 outlined by the Secretary, who also spoke of the regular  
 June outing to Paddy's Flat.

General Business: Due to inadequate response to the proposed badge  
 for our Club (30 more orders required) it was suggested by  
 Mr.W.Newman that we look into the costs of a car sticker.  
 The Toowoomba Nats.Club is to be contacted re the cost of a  
 "standard" sticker with our own name inserted.  
 Mr.W.Newman suggested that at this time of the year we should  
 follow up the burning off procedure and contact the Rural  
 Fires Board seeking information for advertisement in the  
 local paper. This was seconded by Mr.R.McCosker.  
 A call for contributions for the magazine was made by Mr.I.  
 Jackson.

Mrs.Flynn moved that we contact a representative of the  
 Mining Warden regarding the restoration of old tin mines in  
 the Stanthorpe area. This was seconded by Mr.T.Spiller.

The meeting closed at 9 p.m. when Mr. Lance Cockburn of "Brook-  
 vale Park" gave an illustrated lecture on "Shrubs and plants of  
 the desert regions of Australia."

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Did you know: Listening is wanting to hear?

--oOo--

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.Report on outing to Castle Rock on 20th May:

This outing proved to be quite popular with some 22 members attending, and I feel sure we all enjoyed the day.

With such perfect weather, no one seemed too keen to break any records in reaching the top of Castle Rock, and after a late start we finally arrived there a little after noon. Having soaked up the views of the familiar Wyberba landscape, we returned via a different route to the top of the ridge where we left our packs. Then we walked along this ridge, through some interesting rock formations and chasms and stopped for lunch in a large cave which someone aptly dubbed, "the Dining Room"!

After lunch we continued south along the ridge to the Sphinx, and then after exploring this marvel of nature, on to Turtle Rock. With a great deal of persuasion we all managed to reach the top, and were rewarded with the spectacular views - east to Mt. Norman, north to the Sphinx, Castle Rock and the Pyramids, and away on the north-east horizon, the peaks of Mt. Barney could be seen between large coastal storm clouds.

As the day was beginning to wane, we made our way down from the top, and headed towards the setting sun, with Bill Goebel setting the pace and picking the easiest path through the thick undergrowth.

We reached Ramsey's Creek, near the caves, then followed it down to the cars to complete a rather large circuit through what is, in my opinion, some of the most scenic parts of the Girraween National Park.

ROBIN McCOSKER.

--oOo--

Outing to Texas and Riverton Caves (Camp-out).

Join the fun around the camp fire with Malcolm Wilson and the Dalby Nats. at the Texas Caves.

Meet the Dalby Nats. at the site of the old Pikedale home-  
stead at 12 noon Saturday 16th June.

We have permission to enter the Riverton Caves and will be doing so on Sunday 17th, after camping at Texas caves and exploring their passages on Saturday.

Caving expert from Warwick, Mr. David Bludhorn and his wife will be guiding the party and will be able to answer questions we may have about the formation of caves etc.

A rather dirty, but interesting weekend is assured!!

--oOo--

Two things to remember about forthcoming outings etc.-

(1) Meeting date changed to 29th June (a Friday night)

(2) Departure time for regular outing to Paddy's Flat is  
9 a.m. SHARP, from Weeroona Park.

--oOo--

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.They went that way--

How often have you travelled or hiked along a track and when someone asks you "What did you see?" or "What was there?", you are lost and have to reply "I do not really know".

At first this may sound rather vague, but many a time we miss the most important or interesting parts because we seem to be in such a hurry to 'get to the end' or 'to reach the top'. You don't like to stop too long to admire the scene or study a specimen because you will be left behind. On the other hand you have seen it, or thought you had, so many times you feel that 'they' would not be interested in that!

It seems that there are 3 types of bushwalkers.

The first group are those who are always looking for their fortune on the "road of gold" upon which they walk.

Then there are those who are in two parts - their feet taking care of themselves while the top half is interested in the surroundings.

Lastly we have those who are part of the first and part of the second. Watching where they walk, but at the same time enjoying the world.

The first group always seem to be in such a hurry they cannot afford to lift their eyes, while the second always seem to be trailing behind or falling in holes or over stumps.

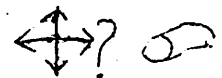
I like to be in the last group, but it is often those in the first group who prevent me and those who like to do likewise from doing so. Set your own pace and keep to it, if you are left behind remember it is the responsibility of the leader to keep the tail in sight, but do not hold up the party unnecessarily. A leader is a leader, not merely a person to bring up the rear, and a group is a group, not singles joining occasionally.

Some step high and some step low,

While others wander to and fro.

But it is those who think they know the way  
Who oft into the bush do stray.

They went that way



R.A.D.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.PADDY'S FLAT - 24.6.73.

This full days outing should be a day with a difference. We shall leave Weeroona Park at 9 a.m. sharp to allow a leisurely days driving to enjoy the variety of scenery and interest offered by the country cradling the headwaters of the Clarence River.

Lunch time will find us on the banks of the Clarence at Paddy's Flat, after travelling via Tenterfield and Drake to Pretty Gully with its tall palms and figs overlooking a charming rural setting.

The road from the Brixner Highway to Pretty Gully is good gravel followed by a steep section down to Paddy's Flat.

After lunch we shall continue north with views of the Obelisks and Mt. Lindsay after climbing from the Clarence River valley. A diversion of 14 miles on the trip home will enable the Tooloom Falls to be viewed, but this attraction could be a days outing in itself and was visited by the Nats. about 18 months ago.

The homeward journey will take us through the famous Tooloom Scrub and then along the Mt. Lindsay Highway to Legume and Amosfield. The day will be a full one but should prove enjoyable with something to interest all age groups.

On the pre-outing trip, encounters with wild life were plentiful and several eagles were disturbed at close range. The number of wallabies with their young at heel (or tail), had to be seen to be believed.

The upper Clarence is rich in gold mining history and at our lunch spot there is an heavily laden bush-lemon tree standing faithfully beside a 19th century inscribed gravestone rather sadly adorned by a much neglected rose vine.

Don't forget to fill up the petrol tank, load the camera and be at Weeroona Park for a 9 a.m. departure. 9 a.m. PLEASE!

Road directions will be given at Weeroona Park, but if members intend coming later or wish to join the outing en-route, please contact me for details before the day.

ERROL WALKER. PH.888

--oOo--

Mr.L.Cockburn, owner of "Brookvale Park" west of Toowoomba, and a member of the team with Malcolm Wilson, who crossed Australia from East to West, was our guest speaker at our last meeting.

"The flowers and shrubs of Australian Desert Regions" was the topic for the night. Mr.Cockburn often makes trips into Central Australia studying the flora of the regions. He has grown successfully many of the desert plants and shrubs at his park.

An illustrated discussion was the format of the evening, proving an interesting follow on from Malcolm Wilson's talk previously.

An interesting point raised by Mr.Cockburn was his view on the expansion of the desert regions - Australia as a continent is gradually drying out.

Many interesting slides were shown, providing us with a greater knowledge of our often unseen flowers.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.CHESTNUT- BREASTED FINCH:

Recently a pair of Chestnut-breasted finches - LONCHURA CASTANCOTHORAX - were observed on a number of occasions in the company of a large mixed flock of Double-bar and Red-browed finches near the Eukey Road in the Ballanran area. These finches have not been recorded in two quite comprehensive bird lists of this district which I have seen so it would be interesting to know if they have previously been recorded from any part of the district.

The Chestnut-breasted finch is also known as a bull-finch or barley-bird. In the C.S.I.R.O. index of Australian Bird Names its range is given as Northern and North-eastern Australia although another authority suggests it ranges and breeds as far south as Sydney.

This finch inhabits tall grasses and reeds bordering swamps and streams and with the increase in the use of irrigation the species has thrived in the improved living conditions in Northern Queensland and North-western Australia. With Yellow-rumped finches they breed in large colonies in canefields and show a preference for the half-ripe grain of rice, barley or other cereals, where those are available. It has been suggested that because of their switch from native plants and grasses to cultivated crops these two species could pose a problem for agriculture.

An interesting footnote is that in far Northern Queensland the introduced Asiatic Spice Finch now outnumbers the Chestnut breasted finch and at the present rate of progress, will eventually replace the native species.

Z. NEWMAN.

--oOo--

MEETING FRIDAY 29.6.73.

Note change of meeting date. "Photographing Wildflowers"

This month we reach a climax in the array of distinguished guest speakers kindly financed by the Toowoomba Board of Adult Education.

March - Mr.C.Cameron, Chinchilla.

April - Mr.M.Wilson, Dalby.

May - Mr.L.Cockburn, "Brookvale Park".

and for June we have the pleasure of seeing a smooth film programme exhibiting the photographic skills of Mr.Merv.Hodge.

Mr. Hodge of Brisbane has extensively travelled most Australian States and over many years has sought out and photographed the flora and fauna of our great continent.

He has a keen interest in all forms of conservation having been President of the Brisbane S.G.A.P.(Society for the Growing of Australian Plants) and the N.O.S.Q. (Native Orchid Socy. Q'ld.).

The programme for Friday night will be a cross section of Mr. Hodge's transparency collection featuring native orchids and grevilleas as well as the landscapes where these wild flowers flourish.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

How many people read the "Granite Belt Naturalist"?

Perhaps I should ask, how many members actually read our Newsletter from cover to cover?

One often wonders...

At the last meeting an appeal was made, asking members to contribute articles to our production. The editors try to make each issue as interesting as possible, but this can prove a difficult job. Copyright etc. often prevents us from publishing many articles from other sources.

We feel we could achieve a better standard if we had more original material available. Authors do not need to be learned people to have their work in print. Perhaps you have been to an interesting place recently, or saw something unusual last weekend. Why not tell us about it? If requested your name need not be printed, perhaps you would prefer a pen-name.

The size of your contribution is no barrier, a few short lines on an observation can be very useful and interesting. The Editors also point out that they try to keep all detail as correct as possible. Sometimes it is not easy to describe a certain process etc. in a couple of lines, but we try to do our best. If any member feels that something printed is not correct, or could be expanded, let us know.

Perhaps an article could set the matter right.

It is your Newsletter, let us keep it that way.

MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION NOW!

It is requested that all correspondence for the Newsletter be sent or handed to Mrs.D.Orr, C/- National Bank, Box 300, Stanthorpe..4380.

Eds.

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THE SPINY ANT EATER - SOME INTERESTING FACTS:

The spiny ant-eater is the nearest living relative of the platypus, sharing its distinction of being the only furred animal to lay eggs.

The name 'porcupine' is actually very inappropriate, for true procupines are rodents related to rabbits and rats.

The name "echidna" is based on the Latin for the genus of eels. The genus name Tachyglossus refers to the rapid action of the ant-gathering tongue. The name spiny ant-eater indicates both appearance and diet of the animals.

The spiny ant-eaters are not tunnellers and differ from the platypus in that the female carries its egg in a pouch formed during breeding seasons. Nature has provided the defenceless spiny ant-eater with an armoury of sharp spikes. They have a remarkable capability of clinging tightly to the ground and digging rapidly downwards into the earth if the surface is suitable. This digging action is for protection only and not for finding food. Enlarged claws and rotary action of the powerful limbs make this possible.

The Ant-eater does not have teeth, but numerous horny serrations on the back of the tongue, which work against hard ridges on the roof of the mouth.

R.A.D.

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THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.AUTUMN LEAVES:

Winter has come!

At last all the autumn leaves have fallen and been cleared away. No longer do the deciduous trees bear their dress of many colours.

Have you ever wondered why these trees become so colourfully dressed in the Autumn?

In the summertime you see only one colour - green. Oh, I know there are many shades of this green, but it is as if the whole scene were painted with one brush.

This green colour of leaves is due to chlorophyll, which makes up two-thirds of the colour of the leaves (their pigmentation). There are other colours in a leaf too, but during summer there is so much chlorophyll we can't see them.

Some of these other colours are:-

"Xanthophyll, a substance consisting of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, and is coloured yellow. This makes up about 23% of the pigmentation of a leaf.

Carotin, the substance which colours carrots makes up another 10% and

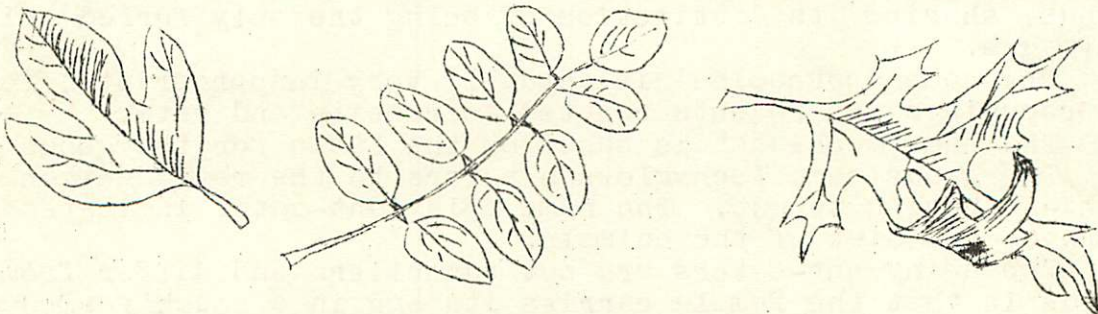
Authocyanin, which gives maples and some oaks their bright red colours, the remainder.

When it becomes cold, the food stored in the leaf begins to flow out to the branches and trunks. Since no more food will be produced in the wintertime, the chlorophyll disintegrates, and as it disappears the other present pigments become visible.

The leaves become all those beautiful colours we love to photograph!

Most evergreens do not shed all their leaves at the approach of winter, but lose them gradually throughout the year so are always green.

J. ORR.



---oOo---

As we are approaching the end of our business year, put on your thinking caps and decide if you would like to become a member of the committee, when the positions fall open, become vacant, I should say.

---oOo---