

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.

Monthly newsletter of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist..

No. 46 February, 1974

P.O. Box 154, Stanthorpe.

Officeres and Committee 1973 - 1974

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Vice Presidents	Mr. R. Leiseman and Mrs. J. Harslett
Secretary	Mr. E. Walker
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Geology "	Miss. J. Westcott
Youth "	Mr. G. Marsden
Bushwalking "	Mr. R. McCosker

ACTIVITIES.

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION.

Single \$1.50 Junior (full-time student) 50c. Family \$2.00

PROGRAMME.

Field outings:

	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Sugarloaf		24th February, 1974	Mr. T. Spiller
Rivertree		24th March, 1974	Mr. R. McCosker

Meetings:

	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Natural history of			
Northern Cape York Pen.		27th February, 1974	J. Monteith
An entomologist's View			

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALISTS..

Minutes of general meeting held 24th January, 1974. Held at the Youth Hostel

Granite. 18 members were present with apologies being received from eight.

The meeting opened at 8.15.

Minutes of previous meeting. Moved Mrs. R. Marsden, seconded Mrs. F. Wilkinson that the minutes of the December be confirmed.

Inward Correspondence. (1) letter from Dr. T.H. Kirkpatrick advising that March 27th will be acceptable for him to attend our meeting.

(2) letter from Joan Orr tendering her resignation as typist editor of The Granite Belt Naturalist.

(3) letter from Mr. J. Puckey Sec. L.V.F.N.C. re car stickers

(4) letter from Mrs. M. Fauntleroy re some observations of Magpies which visit her home.

(5) letter from P.M.G. Dept. re change in rates for posting our publication.

(6) press releases from D.P.I.

(7) newsletters from other Nats. Clubs.

Outward Correspondence. Letter to Ms. D. Orr accepting her resignation with regret and conveying the clubs appreciation and best wishes.

Letter to Mrs. B. Krautz, expressing our appreciation and best wishes.

Moved Mr. W. Cathcart and seconded Mrs. W. Flinn that the inward correspondence be received and the outward adopted.

Business arising from correspondence. Moved by Mr. R. Marsden and seconded by Mrs. F. Wilkinson that the club place an order for 50 car stickers with L.V.F.N.C.

Treasurers Report. same as December;

Outing Report. Mrs. W. Flinn reported on the January outing to Mr. Haynes property, which was attended by 16 people.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m. after which Mr. G. Hamlyn-Harris outlined the history of the Youth Hostel Association followed by slides and description of the many Hostels in different parts of the world.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALISTS.Report on Outing, Sunday 20th January, 1974

Where else but in the Stanthorpe District could one find such a variety of contrasting beauty spots as the Nats found on Sunday the 20th? The stalwarts who braved the elements on such a bleak rainy Sunday deserved the treats in store for them, not a large party, just a mere 16 of us. The rain looked to be well and truly set in when a few miles out of town the skies cleared. First stop was at Puglisi's Winery to taste the wares and inspect the enormous oak casks - some of the more reticent sticking to Apple juice, but here again one cannot help but be impressed with the growing industry for the district. From the New to the Old on to Ballandean Station - perhaps "Old Hat" to many but quite a thrill for newcomers to see such a lovely spot so well cared for, most impressive being the lovely Granite Memorial for the Pioneers who arrived there in 1840.

From here on things began to get really exciting, the president stopped to erect a direction sign when - whoops - UPS A DAISY!!! who said that wine tasting was harmless???? Thence to the Haynes property to have a look at the Old Slab Hut originally on the Ballandean Holding. What a great thing it would be if this Cottage could be taken apart and rebuilt in the Stanthorpe area for all and sundry to visit. The great wide hand hewn slabs of timber are still in remarkable condition for their age, all nailed to the uprights with hand made nails. The only inhabitants these days are the rats who very much resented being disturbed I can assure you. The old stone fireplace was put together with mud from a nearby creek and was still also in good condition. It did not take much imagination to see the huge open fire place blazing away with the old iron kettle hanging on the hook above a few bits of copper sitting in the little nooks on either side of the fireplace. After lunching in this lovely old spot (not in side with the rats I might add) the party split into two groups with Susan Harslett leading one group up the mountain to see the magnificent view over to Nundubbarra in one direction and along the valley to as far as Wallangarra to the south. Hear tell it was not a bad climb especially with a few choice peaches wet the whistle on the way up. The second group meanwhile had adjourned to a nearby paddock to look for Quartz Crystals which were found and camera fans had a field day taking some unusual angles of rear ends. Luckily this was not the end of our interesting day as we all then set off on a back road through some very interesting hills for another property belonging to the Haynes family, this time a complete change of scenery to a spot on the Severn River. Only one slip in directions occurred, whoops that wine again! This is such a picturesque area that the camera bugs were hard at it for quite some time and I feel the area would be well worth a visit in spring time as the rocks all along the river are covered with native shrubs and bottle brush, lots of Bird Life was evident too and here there are quite a few big fish to be caught in the river too. Only one of the party was an optimist and came prepared for a swim, lucky girl the water looked great. Reluctantly we left this peaceful spot, again on back roads, finishing our trek at John Verri's property at Fletcher to have a look at the large Olive Trees and another first for us - a "Medla" Tree which appears to be a combination of an Apple and a Pomgranate. We all sampled a delicious new grape called the "Cardinal". You could not be blamed for thinking that was the end of a perfect day, but there was more to come - a quick look in the Railway cutting revealed a few small pieces of Olivine and some Quartz. As I said before where else could you find such a wonderful combination of old and new items of interest all within a radius of 50 miles but in the Stanthorpe Area? Who said living in the country was boring - NOT FOR THE STANTHORPE NATS ANYWAY !

ON PEAKS.

Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle;

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALISTS.THE TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS.

The tragedy of the commons develops in this way. Picture a village with a pasture open to all -- this is the common. Each herdsman may put as many cattle as he wishes on the common; in fact it is to his advantage to do so. To begin with each herdsman only has a few cattle due to frequent losses from disease and poor management. As a result the number of cattle on the common remains well below the carrying capacity of the land.

With time however, disease is controlled and management improved. Each herdsman finds he can now increase the size of his herd and does so. Slowly the total number of cattle on the common increases until the time arrives when the common is fully stocked. Any more cattle on the common will now result in loss of condition amongst those animals already there. What is a herdsman to do in this situation? If he puts an extra beast on the common there are two consequences.

- 1 The herdsman has one more animal to sell.
- 2 There is a slight loss in condition of all the animals on the common so they will each sell for slightly less.

Thus if one herdsman owned all the cattle on the common there would be no advantage in adding the additional beast. However, with the shared system under which the common operates, the herdsman who adds the extra beast gets all benefits from the beast but the disadvantageous effects are shared by all the herdsman. The rational herdsman concludes that the only sensible course for him to pursue is to add another animal to his herd. And another; and another..... But this is the conclusion reached by each and every rational herdsman sharing the common. Herein lies the tragedy. Each man is locked into a system in which the logical means of pursuing his own best interests ultimately leads to ruin.

The sad thing is that there are many such tragedies occurring around us today. A "common" can be viewed as any facility shared by everyone. Your favourite campsite is a common. So are the beaches, the river, the roadsides, the parks and the air we breathe. It is a tragedy of the commons when these suffer due to selfish acts by individuals i.e., when PRIVATE GAIN comes at COMMUNITY EXPENSE.

Thus such a tragedy is enacted when people discard litter on the roadsides and beaches. They save themselves a trip to the rubbish bin but the community has to suffer the unsightly consequences and pay someone to pick it up. It is a tragedy of the commons when people buy drinks in cans when reuseable bottles are available. Cans are convenient but as few are recycled they cause disposal problems and represent a permanent loss of useful material to mankind. It is a tragedy of the commons when factories dispose of waste into the rivers or into the air where the disastrous consequences are suffered by everyone.

While you are on this earth we hope you will care for the commons-- that you will give some thought to the consequences of your actions and not follow the selfish and easy way if this adversely affects some feature of the environment or society at large.

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Thought for the month.....

"WATCH..... AND YOU WILL BE REWARDED".

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALIST.LEAF AND SPIKE DESCRIPTIONS.

Many of us have looked at and admired those Golden colours of leaves as they flutter to the ground in Autumn, or have pulled a leaf from a tree and studied it, before tearing it into little pieces. But did you know leaves have certain descriptions?

No. 1 is known as OVATE in outline - meaning egg shaped in overall appearance.



No. 2 ELLIPTIC PARALLEL VENATION - shaped like an ellipse with veins parallel.

No. 3 DEEPLY SERRATE - the edge is toothed like a saw but deeply.

No. 4 is SERRATE - saw edged.

No. 5 DENTATE - which means the leaf is toothed.



No. 6 OVATE- egg shaped. this one different to ovate in outline in that the whole of the leaf is egg shaped and not just just the general outline.

No. 7 is a LOBED leaf - that is the leaf is in divisions.

No. 8 is a SPATHULATE leaf - being spoon shaped .

With leaves one often finds those nasty things plants have, called "Spikes " or "Prickles".



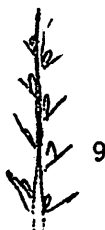
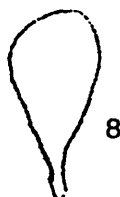
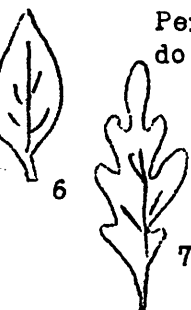
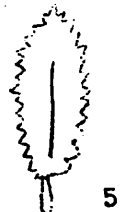
No. 9 is a SPIKE, which is an indefinite inflorescence of sessile (without stalk) flowers.

No. 10 is a RACEME which is prostrate (laying flat on the ground) or subterranean stem.

No. 11 is described as a PANICLE - an inflorescence (a general arrangement of flowers) in which the axis is divided into branches.

No. 12 is a simple UMBEL which is an indefinite inflorescence, branches all starting at the same point.

Perhaps this will help when someone quotes a leaf or other term you do not understand. g.' :XXX ?/: ' for spikes



R.A.D.



"YANDERRA"
GIRRAWEE PARK.
7/12/73

Feeding and watching wild birds is very instructive. Two pairs of Magpies visit regularly, they are often in a group and apparently never out of touch. Like humans the two females are often on their own while the males enjoy a little freedom. One female in particular is very quarrelsome, and bullies her sister and the males unmercifully. In the breeding season the females insist on the males feeding them, as if they were themselves nestlings. The males get a very hunted look.

A pair of Butcher birds even come inside the house looking for me and food! they will perch on the arms of chairs. Yesterday they were sitting on the fence. The male flew down and picked up a titbit from the grass, and returned to his mate. She commenced fluttering her wings in a peculiar motion, which he imitated, then swiftly placed the food in her beak. No doubt this feeding of the female corresponds to the feeding of human 'birds' with chocolates when favours are desired.

I have noticed that now and then advertisements appear in Qld country papers asking for supplies 'of all types of native birds'. This would of course be directed to bird trappers. It is known a great proportion of trapped wild birds die (probably fortunately for them to be spared a life of cage misery). The public should be educated NOT to keep native birds as pets. I have seen peachfaces kept in a small cage, and the owner had allowed their small water container to dry out. Most small cages have no provision for the unhappy little prisoner to wash itself. As there is no supply without demand it would be a good idea for schools to start with the young, and impress on them the undesirability of the barbarous custom of keeping caged birds' as pets. Another great cause for the disappearance of both birds and native animals is IO80, which effectually disposes of everything But the rabbits.

M. Fauntleroy.

DID YOU KNOW: that tiny animals very like to-days little Australian Marsupial Mice, were probably the stock from which all the Marsupials (pouched animals) of Australia sprang? As fierce and bloodthirsty as their larger relatives, the Tiger-Cats and the Tasmanian Devils and Wolves, Marsupial Mice are also related to the American Marsupial the 'true' Opossum.

The Fat Tailed Rat, among many of the species, known in West Australia as the Dunnart, is the commonest and the most widespread. It lives in caves and hollow log but can climb trees with great agility.

This 3 inch carnivore eats not only insects but will attack spiders, lizards and centipedes. Its tail swells in good seasons with stored fat to tide it over the lean times. 6 to 10 babies are carried in the backward opening pouch until old enough to travel clinging to the mothers back. Its main enemies are Owls and Snakes and their larger relative, the Tiger Cat.

THE GRANITE BELT NATURALISTS.THE COAST BANKSIA.

This a tree which is slowly, unfortunately, disappearing from many beaches and shores. In certain near the beach, which are totally unsuitable for settlement and unattractive to holiday-makers, *BANKSIA INTERGIFOLIA* is more than holding its own. But where the foreshore abounds with visitors during the summer months, the young plants that should be growing up do not have the undergrowth and the wood-boring larvae of beetles making ravages on the mature trees.

The tree itself, sometimes growing to a height of about fifty feet, can, in middle age, be picturesque, and has large striking flowers of the bottlebrush type, coloured deep cream. these yield nectar profusely and are strongly attractive to birds of the honey-eating type...the plant is often known as Coast Honeysuckle.

The antics of wattle birds and white-bearded honeyeaters are interesting to watch with all the signs of being "under the weather" or honey-drunk. The white-bearded honeyeaters are normally belligerent birds, but when they take a few extra sips of honey they become full of flight and will feriously chase and tackle any other bird that comes within reach, irrespective of size. ONE bird once seen had evidently taken just that one sip too many; with beak drooping and neck and feathers stuck together with nectar, he could just stand upright on a branch.

The *BANKSIAS*, named after Sir Joseph Banks, botanists with Captain Cook on the "Endeavour" and father of Australian botany, belong to the family *PROTEACEAE* which includes the *Hakeas*, *Grevilleas*, etc.

B. integrifolia is no exception to the rule of having flowers in long cone-like spikes. The leaves, dark green on the upper surface and white with strong veinings underneath, are usually symmetrical. although occasionally some are irregularly toothed. The timber is dark and suitable for decorative work. Endemic to Australia there are about fifty species of *Banksia* all told, ranging from Victoria to Queensland, and they are an ornamental adjunct to our coastal flora.

NEXT OUTING.

To date we do not have any details on the next outing except that it will be to the Sugarloaf area, and is to be lead by Mr T. Spiller. Watch the Border Post for details.

Remember please be on time for outings as a late start could mean we miss out on the full programme which the leader has planned.