



# The Granite Belt Naturalist



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



**Meetings** 4th Wednesday of each month at QCWA Rooms, Victoria Street, Stanthorpe, at 7.30pm  
**Outings:** The Sunday preceding the 4th Wednesday of each month (Saturday outings as pre-arranged)  
**Subs:** Single \$20.00, Family \$30.00 per annum, July to June

## CLUB OFFICE BEARERS - 2013/2014

President	Rob McCosker	46835371
Vice-presidents	Kris Carnell	46835268
	Jeff Campbell	46811420
Secretary	Halina Kruger	46835206
Treasurer	Leslie Saunders	
Newsletter Editor	K & M. Carnell	46835268
Publicity Officer	Errol Walker	46812008
Librarian	Trish McCosker	46835371

The Club thanks the Queensland Country Credit Union for their donation that enabled us to buy a printer.

The Club acknowledges the support of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund in the purchase of a data projector.

Stanthorpe Field Naturalists is a group member of Granite Borders Landcare.

*Management Committee: President, Vice-Presidents,  
Secretary, Treasurer*



**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 sections common, with steps
7. Cross country, some hills, some thick undergrowth
8. Cross country, steep sections with scrambles over rocks, etc., and 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

**Coming Up**

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November:** Twin Peaks with Michael Mueller

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November:** *Incredible Iceland* with David Wilson

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December:** Break-up at *Orana* – Kris & Margaret Carnell

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017:** Camp-out Washpool N.P. with Jeanie Wylie

**Deadline for next newsletter  
8<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

**Mt Mitchell from the South**

I have to postpone this walk because my rock climbing accident is still preventing me from doing the necessary pre-outing.

*Michael Mueller*

**Pre-Outing Report - Twin Peaks Circuit and Ruins – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

**Leader: Michael Mueller**

Meet 9.00 Weeroona Park or 9.45 Mt Norman Rd Picnic Area. If you decide to arrive via the northern end of Mt Norman Rd I recommend to check water filled wheel ruts with a stick before driving through, as one of them is 40 cm deep and may give an unpleasant surprise.

We will do a loop walk with great views over both West and East Twins. Apart from the Round House which many of us already know, we will visit another ruin and an old homestead site, both little known. Total walking distance app 4-5 Km About 300m may be classified grade 8 (with one low 10 spot).

**Pre-Outing Report – Break-Up – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

The break-up this year will be at *Orana*, 374 Back Creek Road, Severnlea. It will commence with afternoon tea at 3.00pm, followed by a leisurely walk around the Land Care block which is close to the house. In 2006 we had a grant of 760 tube stock trees, so you can see how they've grown in 10 years. We will also walk down to the creek and have a bit of a ramble there. Nothing strenuous is planned.

There will be a barbeque available to cook your food and we will provide tea and coffee. If the weather is unkind, we will set up the barbeque in the shed. Please bring a chair.

*Kris and Margaret Carnell*

### Outing Report – Girraween Lodge and Rock Slab – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016



Brown Beaks

A small group of five Nats joined with the Rare Wildflower Consortium for a walk at Girraween Lodge. After the mandatory safety warnings we split into three groups and walked across the open paddock to the start of the Rock Pools Walk. As we walked across the paddock interest was shown in the evening primroses which were in flower. Not far into the walk, we saw our only *Boronia amabilis*.

There were quite a few different flowers along the walk, including several *Hakeas*, *Leptospermum* (tea tree),



Fruit Salad Plant

*Spyridium scortechinii*, *Lypernthus suaveolens* (brown beaks), *Glossodia major* and *Dockrillia linguiformnis* (tongue orchids). There were a number of plants of *Davesia latifolia* and the white-flowered *Prostanthera nivea* (snowy mint bush), as well as *Leionema ambiens* (fruit salad plant). We crossed the creek twice and ended up at a picturesque rock slab where there were lots of flowers on the eastern side. We admired *Kunzea obovata*, *Grevillea viridiflava*, *Stypandra glauca*, more fruit salad plant, *Ozothamnus diosmifolius* (rice flower), *Leionema rotundifolium* (round-leafed Phebalium).



Round Leafed Bossiaea

We then made our way back to our starting point via the Circuit Walk and saw *Dodonea sp.* (hop bush) and a couple of *Persoonias* in fruit, and *Diuris sp.* (yellow donkey orchid), *Zieria compacta* and *Bossiaea rhombifolia* in bloom. Native violets were all along the track. Galls on *Acacia venulosa* caused a lot of discussion until one was cut open to see the little grub on the inside.

After lunch at the Day Use Area the Nats drove to the start of the Mt Norman Road and parked beside the road before walking up the big rock slab. Our first interest was the fact that at the bottom of the slab the *Leionema ambiens* (fruit salad plant) was well out while the *Leionema rotundifolium* was just starting, which seemed to us to be the wrong way round. A little way up the rock you get a really good view to the north and the boulder covered hill. Plants that we hadn't seen in the morning

included *Philothea epilosa* (formerly *Eriostemon*), *Eucalyptus prava* in beautiful colour and flower, *Calytrix tetragona* (fringe myrtle), *Prostanthera phyllicifolia* (purple mint bush), *Bulbine bulbosa* (Bulbine lily), *Stackhousia viminea*, *Acacia granitica* and *Calochilus robertsonii* (bearded orchid).

When we reached our point of return Peter pointed out an interesting small area where dirt and rocks appeared to have been thrown out and some rocks were upside down. We came to the conclusion it was probably caused by a lightning strike. We walked back to the cars at Nats pace and headed for home.



Pink Kunzea

Kris Carnell

**Flower List:** *Acacia granitica*, *Acacia venulosa*, *Boronia amabilis*, *Bossiaea rhombifolia*, *Brachyscome stuartii*, *Bulbine bulbosa* (Bulbine lily), *Calochilus robertsonii* (purplish beard orchid), *Caldenia carnea* (pinkies), *Calytrix tetragona* (fringe myrtle), *Clematis glycinoides*, *Correa reflexa*, *Craspedia uniflora* (billy buttons), *Davesia latifolia*, *Dendrobium speciosum* (king orchid), *Diuris sp* (Yellow donkey orchid), *Dockrillia linguiformnis* (tongue orchid), *Dodonea sp* (hop bush fruit), *Drosera peltata* (tall sundew), *Eucalyptus prava*, *Glossodia major*, *Grevillea viridiflava*, *Hakea laevipes*, *Hibbertia sp.*, *Hybanthus monopetalus*, *Kunzea obovate* (pink Kunzea), *Lagenophora stipitata* (mauve daisy), *Leionema ambiens* (fruit salad plant), *Leionema rotundifolium*, *Leptospermum sp* (tea tree), *Leucopogon muticus*, *Lomandra longifolia*, *Lypernthus suaveolens* (brown beaks), *Melichrus urceolatus*, *Olearia gravis*, *Ozothamnus diosmifolius* (rice flower) *Persoonia sericea*, *Persoonia sp* (fruit), *Philotheca epilosa* (formerly *Eriostemon*), *Prostanthera nivea* (snowy mintbush), *Prostanthera phyllicifolia*, *Solanum ambylmerum* (kangaroo apple), *Spyridium scortechinii* (pepper and salt), *Stackhousia viminea*, *Stypantra glauca*, *Tricoryne elatior* (yellow rush lily), *Viola betonicifolia*,

### A Good Year for Orchids



Spotted Doubletails

We have been fortunate this year to have an incredible flowering of orchids. I guess they liked the winter rain. It started with *Glossodia major*, followed by *Pterostylus rufa*, a few *Microtus*, yellow *Diuris sp.* (possibly *chrysantha*) and spider orchids *Caladenia dilatata*. There were hundreds of donkey orchids or spotted doubletails, and spider orchids – more than we've ever seen on our property before and one *Pterostylus woolsii* in bud. Then Kris went for a walk up the mountain to look for a king orchid (*Dendrobium speciosum*) on our neighbour's property and found a climbing orchid (*Erythrorchis cassythoides*) as well.



Spider Orchids

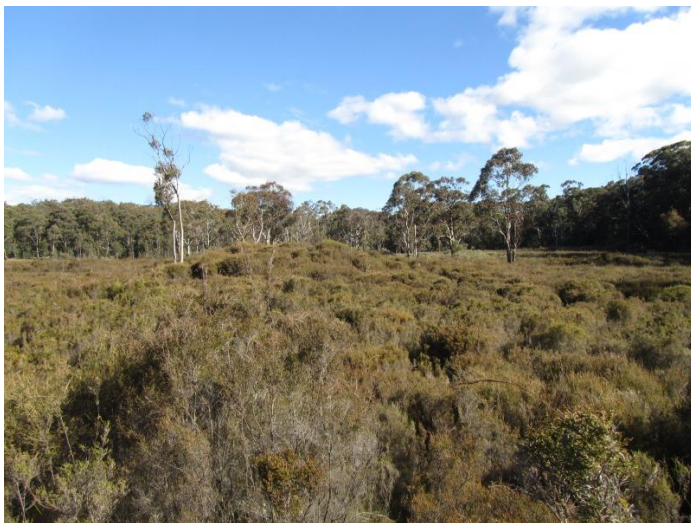


Climbing Orchid



King Orchid

### Montane Peatlands and Swamps of the New England Tableland



When we had our camp-out at Torrington in September, Marg and Aki offered to send us a copy of the report of the NSW Scientific Committee, established by the Threatened Species Conservation Act about the Montane Peatlands and Swamps. We found the swamps fascinating, especially the one with the mound springs. All of the swamps on the property are different. These swamps are at their northern and western limits. They are not really peat bogs in the European sense as the decomposing material is different. The scientists referred to them as “peat” anyway.

The following information is taken from the report:

“Montane Peatlands and Swamps of the New England Tableland and other parts of New South Wales is the name given to the plant community associated with accumulated peaty or organic-mineral sediments on poorly drained flats in the headwaters of streams. It occurs on undulating tablelands and plateaus, above 400-500m elevation, generally in catchments with basic volcanic or fine-grained sedimentary substrates or occasionally granite. “(The Torrington area is granite). “Montane Peatlands and Swamps are characterized by the assemblage of species comprising a dense, open or sparse layer of shrubs with soft-leaved sedges, grasses and forbs. It is the only type of wetland that may contain more than trace amounts of *Sphagnum spp.*, the hummock peat-forming mosses. Small trees may be present as scattered emergent or absent from the community.”

“The species composition of a site will be influenced by the size of the site, recent rainfall or drought conditions and by its disturbance (including grazing, land clearing and fire) history. At any one time, some above ground individuals may be absent, but the species may be represented below ground in the soil seed banks, or bulbs, corms etc.”

“The Montane Peatlands and Swamps typically has an open to very sparse layer of shrubs, 1-5m tall, including species of *Baেকেa*, *Callistemon* and *Leptospermum*, and a dense groundcover of sedges, grasses and forbs.” Botanist, Dorothy Bell from UNE said “There is a paradox involving fire sensitive, drought-tolerant plants in a wetland. The peat is anoxic (totally depleted in oxygen) and the high levels of Iron and Manganese make it toxic to the plants so they can’t take up too much water. They protect themselves from absorbing toxins by having a layer of oxygen around their roots and very sclerophyllous leaves to minimize moisture loss.”

“Some of the threats to the swamps are land clearing, grazing, trampling and soil disturbance caused by feral gigs, goats, deer horses and domestic livestock; damage to vegetation by off-road vehicles, peat mining, frequent or high-intensity fires; and pollution from urban areas. Common weed species in the Torrington swamps include cocksfoot, fleabane, cat’s ear and *Lotus uliginosus*. They are at a high risk of becoming extinct in nature in NSW unless the circumstances and factors threatening its survival or evolutionary development cease to operate”

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Inc.  
Held in QCWA Rooms, Victoria St, Stanthorpe on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

**Meeting opened:** 7.38pm

**Attendance:** 19 Apologies 3 as per attendance sheet

**Minutes of the previous meeting:**

K Carnell moved minutes M Mueller seconded carried

**Business arising from the minutes:** Nil

**Correspondence:** as per folder

H Kruger moved T McCosker seconded

**Financial Report:**

Due to the Treasurer being away, her forwarded financial report will be viewed in the newsletter.

**Outing Reports:**

Wildflower Walk with the Rare Wildflower Consortium held on 16<sup>th</sup> October at the Girraween Lodge. Kris reported only five members participated.

**Pre-outings:**

20<sup>th</sup> November M Mueller to Twin Peaks not Mt Mitchell.

Michael report that because of an accident on a recent walk he will not be able to manage the more strenuous walk he had planned to Mt Mitchell from the southern end, but feels he would be recover enough to lead the walk to Twin Peaks circuit walk instead.

Best wishes for a full and quick recovery.

**General Business:**

We had a couple of queries about plant identification from the public which Kris and Rob were able to reply to.

Reminder Christmas Break up on the 11 December.

Special Day is planned to Mt Cordeaux in April (date to be advised) to spread the Ashes of Peter Kerr a long time member of our group who passed recently.

Boxes of reference books have been kindly donated by Peter's sister to our Library reference collection for members use.

Millie Marsden suggested an interesting sight for an outing in the future.

**Next Meeting:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016

**Next Month's presentation:** David Wilson "Incredible Iceland"

**Specimen of interest:** Rob brought in a little white egg which was ejected from a nest on his property (could not be identified conclusively).

**Meeting closed: 7:59pm**

**Tonight's Presentation:** Gloria Lancaster-Kelly explained with enthusiasm her love of photographing our Bird Life at home and on her travels. Showing us her photos, equipment and some things that she feels are just so necessary to take with you.

The identification can be tricky but she said that there are a lot of likeminded people willing to help on the internet.

**Financial Report**

					<b>\$1,209.85</b>	<b>Balance as per 16/09/2016</b>
	<b>Oct-16</b>					
M Compton		\$40.00				
E&A Walker		\$30.00				
Bank Interest			\$0.01		\$70.01	
					\$1,279.86	
CWA room rent					<b>\$50.00</b>	
					<b>\$1,229.86</b>	<b>Balance as per 10/10/2016</b>