

THE NORTH QUEENSLAND.

NATURALIST.

The official Journal and magazine of the North
Queensland Naturalists Club.

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March 1933.

PROGRESS.

Speaking generally and in regard to the administration of the Club, we may say that there has been definite progress during the past month. The Committee has dealt with a number of matters with success. There was the establishment of a museum in Cairns, which has won the ear of the City Council and a number of timber people and cabinet makers are donating the cases. The matter of Guides at Green Island is referred to in this issue and there is a project (half completed) of publishing a Guide Book to Green Island which will embrace the geology as well as the many other features that make it of interest as a Coral Island. The Club is offering a book prize also for the encouragement of School child naturalists. A good working syllabus.

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THE NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALIST CLUB.

Meeting Rooms: The Anzac Club, Esplanade, Cairns.

General meetings are held on the second Monday in each month and committee meetings are held on the first Monday, both meetings at 8 p.m.

Agenda Paper - Minutes, Correspondence, Reports
Nomination and election of Members (New members are nominated at one meeting and elected by ballot at the following monthly meeting.)

Excursions - Members are invited to submit plans and suggestions for outdoor excursions to the meetings.

Exhibits - It is desired that members having interesting specimens to exhibit at general meetings shall also make a few explanatory remarks upon them and hand a written summary of the remarks to the Secretary (Mr. J. Wyer) for inclusion in the Club's books. This request is also made to the lecturers at the meetings.

Lecture and adjournment - After the ten minute interval Mr. V. Kennedy will deliver a lecture upon "Geology of the Barrier Reef".

Date of Meeting - Monday March 13th, 1933.

CLUB OFFICIALS: President, Dr. H. Flecker; Vice-Presidents, Capt. W. P. Fish and Miss Hooper; Secretary, J. Wyer; Executive Committee, the foregoing with the addition of M. J. Manski and W. H. Grant; Treasurer, R. J. Gorton; Editor and Librarian, Victor Kennedy.

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CAIRNS INLET AND THE MULGRAVE RIVER.

A problem that continues to interest geologists is the original course of the Mulgrave River and the beginnings of the Cairns Inlet. The inlet runs directly into the coast between two mud flats and as it widens a mud island (Admiralty) arises in its delta. Then the apparent stream stops abruptly and becomes merely a sea inlet. Continue the line along the alluvial valley from the head of the Inlet and you come upon the Mulgrave River which has been at some time diverted southward in a peculiar manner to join the Russell River. Both flow into Constantine Bay together forming an estuary "curiously inadequate to the capacity of such strong streams" according to the late Chas. Hedley F.L.S. North of Cairns the Barron River has been powerfully building up its delta in Trinity Bay. Yet despite its power and the undoubtedly long period in which it has been working, there is more alluvium in the Cairns Inlet (C. Hedley's "Riverless estuary") than the mighty Barron River has deposited. At some time a river must have found its way to the sea through that Inlet. The view of W. H. Bryan supported by Hedley, was that the Mulgrave River entered at that point and continued through the reef at Trinity Opening near Cairns. Dr. R. L. Jack suggested that the Mulgrave has been turned from its original course by a flow of basalt. Hedley however, substitutes for the basalt flow a volcanic eruption which threw up Green Hill into the ancient course of the Mulgrave. Dr. J. V. Danes has also formed the same theory, independently of the other investigators. His "La region des Rivières Barron et Russell" was published in Annales de Géographie in 1912. More recently, Dr. C. M. Yonge, discounted the Mulgrave as the origin of Trinity Passage although that it originally flowed into the Inlet seems to be proven.

BIRDS OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF.

Chief amongst the many attractions of the Great Barrier Reef are the thousands of birds that breed on its cays and islets. The following list is taken from a paper by W.B. Alexander, M. . . Vice-President (at the time) of the Royal Australian Ornithologists Union, and Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists Union:-

Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Puffinus Pacificus*) breeding on Rains Is. Willis Is. and the Capricorn group
Booby or Brown Gannet (*Sula leucogaster*) Booby Is. Bramble Cay, Ashmore Banks, Raine & Willis Islands.
Masked Gannet (*Sula dactylatra*) Raine & Willis Is.
Red-footed Gannet (*Sula piscator*, Raine Island.
Lesser Frigate-bird (*Fregata ariel*) Raine Is.
Red-tailed Tropic bird (*Phaethon rubricaudus*) breeding on Raine Island.

Noddy Tern (*Anous stolidus*) Bramble Cay, Raine & Willis Is., Upolu Reef, Howick Is. and Oyster Cay.

White-capped Noddy (*Anous minutus*) Quoin Island and the Capricorn Group.

Widow-tail or Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) Booby Is., Bramble Cay, Raine & Willis Is., Upolu Reef, Oyster

Brown-winged Tern (Breeding on a great number of islands from Torres Strait to the Capricorn Group.

A number of others associate with the foregoing and include:- Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) Crested Tern (*Sterna bergii*) Lesser Crested Tern (*Sterna bengalensis*) Black-naped Tern (*Sterna sumatrana*) Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*) Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) and Silver Gull, (*Larus novae-hollandiae*). These, however, are found on the coast throughout the year while the ten above-mentioned disperse over the oceans except during breeding season.

GUIDES ON GREEN ISLAND.

The official trip was made to Green Island on Sunday February 26th. It was the first instructional trip and was the means of advancing the proposed guide service another step. Those present included the President (Dr. Flecker) Mrs. McManus, Miss Hooper; Messrs. W.H. Grant, W.H. Coleman, A.W. Halton and G.L. Mills. Several apologies for unavoidable absence were also received. In perfect weather the receding tide was nevertheless rather high so an inspection of the vegetation was made. It was noted that the Club's request to the City Council to preserve the undergrowth had been faithfully carried out. Although many of the plants were identified many more were not. It is hoped that ere long labels will be placed on some of the trees. Wading out to the reef enabled the party to inspect the various kinds of coral, fish, live shells, crabs, sea urchins, beche-de-mer which exist so plentifully on the reef. Unfortunately, as the tide was at its lowest it was time for the visitors to depart for Cairns. This consideration of the tides is one that will engage much attention in future tourist seasons. The guide service proposal was pushed further at a meeting at which Mr. Charles Hayles of the "Merinda" Green Island service met a Club Sub-Committee comprising Dr. Flecker, J. Wyer (Secretary) and V. Kennedy. Mr. Hayles was cordial and volunteered much useful advice. It was established that the Club and Hayles Bros. could cooperate in the matter. There were several features of the service that, it was agreed, would be of mutual advantage. . . . A suggestion that came out of the meeting was that the Club approach the Council for permission to take over, stock and run the museum at present on the Island. The Club could place one of its guides in charge and so make the museum an attraction and source of instruction for tourists.

FISH OF THE BARRIER REEF.

At the February meeting, Dr. P. S. Clarke submitted an interesting paper upon the fish of the Barrier Reef. Unfortunately the Doctor could not be present, and his paper was read by the President (Dr. Flecker). The paper was well studied and Dr. Clarke had sent some lantern slides that added to the interest of the paper.

The lecture was divided into two sections, the first of which was of much interest to practical fishermen, and was of particular value to one used to fishing in other waters. He described the special phases of the Reef, the difficulties of net fishing, and the virtues of line fishing over coral beds. There was much information upon the kinds of hooks and the classes of baits to be used for particular fish. He dealt with almost all the fish found along the reef, paying particular attention to such as the proper, the various cods, bream, ling, snapper and even shark. The Doctor had studied the habits and physical characteristics of all the fish he referred to with a result that those present who had never been on a fishing trip were interested from the purely "natural" point of view.

Members who exhibit natural objects at the monthly meetings of the Society are growing in numbers, but unfortunately the rule that such exhibitors should also supply the Secretary with a note upon the exhibits has not been adhered to. Many of these notes would be useful for inclusion in the journal. In regard to this "practical" matter members are asked to cooperate with the Editor by supplying him with matter for publication. The Journal does not desire to be merely one of general notes and news, so much as a record of the Club's research activities.

S E A S E R P E N T.

A sea serpent which was snared by Dr. Clarke has been handed to the Club. An interesting radio-graph of the serpent, which is just four feet long, and twice the thickness of snakes was taken by Mr. A. B. Cummings, X ray technician and member of the club. This picture discloses perfectly all the serpent's internal organs, including a float bladder, which proves beyond doubt that the sea snake is an air breather. Three small fish and a shrimp are easily discernible in its stomach. The serpent and the radiograph, as well as other X ray pictures of a crocodile and a tortoise, will be exhibited at the next meeting of the Club.

NEW MEMBERS. Three new members are and three nominations were recorded at the last monthly meeting. This illustrates the steady progress in regard to membership made by the Club. Each meeting since the inaugural one has accepted new names into its membership list. One member now in London, is a member of the South London Entomological Society. More recent members are Mr. Edmund Allen who was the secretary of the old Cairns Field Naturalists Club referred in our first issue, Mr. W. R. Coleman an ornithologist of Yungaburra, and Mr. W. Hagerdorn, tobacco planter of Koah, who was ten years a rubber and coconut planter in Samoa. He studied at the Halle University and is a member of Corp Agronomia, Halle.

PROTECTED QUEENSLAND PLANTS.

The following is a list of plants declared "Protected" under the Native Plants Protection Act 1930. The list appeared in the Government Gazette, Feby. 25th, 1930. A copy was received at the March Meeting of the North Queensland Naturalist Club.

FERNS.

<u>Botanical Name</u>	<u>Vernacular Name.</u>
<i>Adiantum lunulatum</i>	Kidney Maiden Hair Fern
<i>Asplenium laserpitifolium</i>	Johnstone River Maiden Hair Fern.
<i>Lygodium</i> spp.	Climbing Maiden Hair Ferns, all species.
<i>Ophioglossum pendulum</i>	Ribbon Fern.
<i>Pteris</i> spp. (all species)	
<i>Vittaria elongata</i>	Bootlase Fern.

ORCHIDS.

<i>Cymbidium Sparkesii</i>	Black Orchid
<i>Dendrobium Johannis</i>	Golden Orchid
<i>Dendrobium Smilliae</i>	Bottle Brush Orchid
<i>Dendrobium Toftii</i>	
<i>Eria Fitzalani</i>	
<i>Oberonia</i> spp.	Soldier's Crest Orchid, all species.
<i>Phalaenopsis amabilis</i>	
<i>Phalaenopsis Rosenstromii</i>	
<i>Pholidota imbricata</i>	Banana Orchid.

MISCELLANEOUS PLANTS.

<i>Dischidia nummularia</i>	Button Orchid
<i>Eurychorda amboinensis</i>	Cairns Lily or Cardwell Lily
<i>Lycopodium</i> spp.	All Lycopods & Tassel Ferns.
<i>Myrmecodia Antonii</i>	Ant Orchid.
<i>Selaginella</i> spp. (All species).	