

North Queensland Naturalist

The Journal and Magazine of the North Queensland Naturalists' Club.

Vol. IV.

CAIRNS, JANUARY, 1936.

No. 40

NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS' CLUB

Meets at Girls' and Infants' School, Abbott Street, Cairns,
usually on second Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.

Next Meeting—Monday, 13th January, 1936.

Lecture by Mr. M. J. Manski, "The Structure of Orchids as Compared with Other Flowers."

Election of Members.

Father Norman, Yarrabah.
Dr. E. R. G. Sheil, Innisfail

Proposers Seconders

Mr. H. Purcell Mr. W. Morris
Mr. H. Purcell Dr. H. Flecker

Notice

Will those who desire to organise or participate in excursions at short notice, kindly communicate with the Hon. Secretary.

The November Meeting

There was a very good attendance of Scouters and Scouts and the various phases of Natural History Study were dealt with in detail. As a result of this meeting Natural History will be given more prominence in the training of scouts. One scouter even went so far as to say that the scouts may form a Junior Field Naturalists' Club of their own. In any case there will be co-operation between the Scouts and the Club, to the advantage of both.

Exhibits at the November Meeting.

Dr. Flecker—Herbarium specimens

listed in the December issue of the Journal.

Mr. Hunter—Two cases of *Lepidoptera* (moths and butterflies) caught or bred by him in the Freshwater district.

Capt. Fish—Large stoneaxe head, ploughed up in Atherton.

Mr. Morris—Seed-pods of *Mucuna gigantea*.

Rev. Rupp—Photo of the Proserpine orchid—*Zeuxine oblonga*.

Mr. G. Bates—Undescribed orchid from Eubenangee.

Mr. G. Brooks, L.D.S.—Two boxes of *Coleoptera* (beetles) collected in the Cairns district during the preceding month.

Observations of Nature

will be greatly appreciated and can be forwarded to J. G. Brooks, Box 545, Cairns.

SOME NOTES ON BIRD LIFE AT CAIRNS.

By E. S. HANKS (Victoria)

Two minutes from the Cairns Town Hall is a field for the investigation of bird-life unequalled by any of its kind so far visited by the writer. The particular types of birds to which I refer are those known as "Waders"—birds which follow the receding tides to feed on the shores, reefs and mud-flats.

Many of these waders nest in far Northern Asia, making a journey of nearly half round the globe to reach southern latitudes for our summer, and returning to spend the northern summer in the Arctic circle. What a journey for a small bird! And it is the careful observation of the coming and going—a census of the species present from week to week, which is so necessary to extend what is known of these migrations.

For this work the beach at Cairns is unexcelled and residents have a unique opportunity in a field where much remains to be done.

During a visit to Cairns recently, large numbers of birds were observed feeding along the beach. At the sandy edge were a number of Silver Gulls (*Larus novae-hollandiae*), overhead a Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) flew searching the shallows for small fish. This Tern has black legs and—unlike any other species of Tern—has a bill resembling that of a Silver Gull. In shallow water a large white Egret (*Egretta alba*) was manoeuvring a fish it had just caught into a suitable position for swallowing. Several of the gulls and a Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) hun-

grily watched the large white bird devour the morsel but dared not molest it. Not far off several specimens of the White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*) were prodding the mud with long black curved bills. Three other species noted also for long curved bills were at work on the mud-flats, namely the Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*), the Little Whimbrel (*Mesoscolopax minutus*), and the large sea-going Curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*). These species while easily separated from other waders by reason of the long curved bill, are not as easily separated from each other and the best guide is the respective sizes if they are together as on this occasion.

The Mangrove Bittern (*Butorides striata*) gave a remarkable demonstration of his ability to change the length of his neck; at times he would remain with it stretched out like a heron. A little later he appeared short-necked and almost tern-like. His burglar-like tread and sudden dart of the bill marked him as essentially a bird that lives by stealth.

Turnstones (*Arenaria interpres*) were noted in several places and a number of Red-capped Dotterels (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) ran almost at our feet. A single

specimen of the Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*) passed quietly by; this was the first ever seen by the writer and it remained under observation for over half an hour. Godwits (*Limosa sp?*) though plentiful did not come very close in, and whether more than one species were present was not determined. White-faced Herons (*Notophox novae-hollandiae*) popularly but incorrectly called "Blue Cranes" were in evidence the whole way along the beach and large flocks of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (*Erolia acuminata*) gave splendid demonstrations of company flying. Many other species of waders were present but were not identified and several individuals were noted in mottled plumage, perhaps not fully moulted from their northern phase for many of these quiet-plumed waders have a quite bright coloured phase up north in the breeding season.

A number of birds seemed to be finding sustenance on the beach in addition to the ordinary species. A pair of Mangrove Kingfishers (*Halcyon chloris*) made frequent excursions using a boat as a vantage point. A pair of Magpie-larks (*Grallina cyanolenta*) and a flock of Peaceful Doves (*Geopelia placida*) also fed on the sandy edge of the beach.

"FOSSILS AND THEIR MEANING."

Synopsis of Lecture given to the North Queensland Naturalists' Club by F. S. COLLIVER, Esq., Hon. Sec. Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria.

(Continued from Page 6)

Often these organic remains are replaced by mineral matter, and thus the fossils consist of quartz, limonite, barite, vivianite, etc., taking on the same shape and in some cases the internal structure also of the organic original.

The variety of fossils is amazing, practically all living families are represented and by far a greater number of now extinct groups, in some cases little change is noted from the earliest types to those of the present time; e.g., a lamp shell or brachiopod (*Lingula*) found in the Silurian deposits of Victoria differs little from the living form found in Mission Bay, North Queensland; generally speaking, however, transition stages can be noted and family histories from beginning to end may be traced.

Back in the earliest strata (Pre-cambrian) lower types of life as radiolaria, mollusca and crustacea are found only. In Silurian times the first fish made their appearance, and the crustacea become more numerous; as the fish increase in size and number the (crustacea) Trilo-

bites decrease and finally in Carboniferous times become extinct.

In Silurian time too, the first land plants make their appearance. It is interesting to note that Victoria has produced specimens of the oldest land plant in the world. These come from the lower Silurian of the Matlock district; at the Carboniferous era the amphibia apparently have their beginning; the reptiles follow on and the first mammals appear in the Oligocene, whilst Man in his early stages begin about the pliocene.

Some of the groups reached their maximum development quickly and just as quickly declined e.g.: the reptiles in the Jurassic age were characterised by their tremendous size and variety of grotesque form. Some of the animals reached the length of 80 feet and were 20 feet high. Other types were smaller but more fearsome looking, and remains of several of these have been found in Queensland deposits of Jurassic age. Then in the Eocene these animals had declined to only a remnant of what they were. (To be continued)

CENSUS OF NORTH QUEENSLAND PLANTS (Continued)

(Figures after plants indicate flowering months)

- Terminalia**
- pterocarpa**, F.v.M. Sweers I. (J. F. Bail.)
- melanocarpa**, F.v.M., 2, 12. Mt. Mulligan (Flecker), Snapper I. (Cunn.), Dunk I. (F.M.B.), Pt. Denison (Fitzalan), Edgcombe B. (Fitzalan).
- seriocarpa**, F.v.M. Ngo-go-ro. C. Bedford (F.M.B.), Cooktown (F.M.B.), Bloomfield R. (F.M.B.)
- Muelleri**, Benth. Eandi. Batavia R. (F.M.B.), C. York (M'Gillivray), Is. of Howick's Gp. (F.v.M.), Is. off C. Bedford (F.v.M.), Is. off C. Flattery (F.v.M.), Rockingham B. (F.M.B.), Edgcombe B. (Dall.) var. **minor**, Benth. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.), Endeavour R. (B. and Sol.)
- platyphylla**, F.v.M. Durin. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.), Flinders R. (Palmer), Thursday I. (F.M.B.), Mornington I. (Macgregor), C. Bedford (F.M.B.), Cooktown (F.M.B.), Bloomfield (Roth).
- microcarpa**, Dcne. Draipute. Gulf Country (F.M.B.), Pennefather R. (F.M.B.)
- grandiflora**, Benth. Is. of G. of Carp. (F.M.B.)
- Lumnitzera**, Willd. **coccinea**, W. et. Arn. 7. Edges Mangrove Swamps, C. York (F.M.B.), Endeavour R. (B. and Sol.), Wah Day Cr. (Flecker), Mangrove Swamps, Rockingham B. (F.M.B.)
- racemosa**, Willd. 12. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.), Cairncross I. Torres Str. (M'Gillivray), Daintree R. (Kajewski).
- Macropteranthes**, F.v.M. **montana**, Ra., F.v.M. Newcastle Ra. (F.v.M.)
- Fitzalani**, F.v.M. Pt. Denison (F.v.M.)
- Gyrocarpus**, Jacq. **Jacquinii**, Roxb. Gilbert R. (F.v.M.), Pt. Denison (F.M.B.)
- Family MYRTACEAE**, Adans.
- Darwinia**, Rudge. **Thomasii**, Benth. Head of Cape R. (Bowman).
- Porteri**, White. Mt. Mulligan (Flecker), Watsonville, nr. Herberton (Porter).

- Verticordia**, DC. **Cunninghamii**, Schau. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.)
- Calytrix**, Labill. **microphylla**, A. Cunn. Is. of G. of Carp. (R. Br.)
- leptophylla**, Benth. 4. Geraldine Gorge, Mt. Mulligan (Flecker), Newcastle Ra. (F.v.M.)
- laricina**, R.Br. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.)
- Homalocalyx**, F.v.M. **ericaeus**, F.v.M. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.)
- Thryptomene**, Endl. **oligandra**, F.v.M. Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.), Lizard I. (M'Gillivray), Endeavour R. (B. and Sol.) var. **parviflora**, F.v.M. Gilbert R. (F.M.B.)
- Baeckia**, L. **crenulata**, DC. var. **tenella**, Benth. Pt. Lookout (Banks), Endeavour R. (F.M.B.)
- Agonis**, DC. **lysicephala**, F.v.M. Lloyd B. (Gulliver), Yarrabah (Michael).
- longifolia**, White and Francis. Endeavour R.
- Leptospermum**, Forst. **fabricia**, Benth. C. York (Hill), Lizard I. (Cunn), Endeavour R. (B. and Sol.)
- flavescens**, Sm. Tanton. 7 to 10. Walsh's Pyramid (Miss O'Hanlon), Pt. Denison (Fitzalan).
- stellatum**, Cav. Rockingham B. (F.M.B.)
- wooroonooran**, (F.M.B.) S. Peak, Bellenden Ker (F.M.B.)
- Kunzea**, Reichb. **calida**, F.v.M. Flinders R. (F.v.M.)
- Callistemon**, R.Br. **citrinus**, DC. Crimson Bottle-Brush. Upper Barron R. (Fitzel), Mulgrave R. (F.v.M.), Purdekin P. (F.v.M.), Edgcombe B. (Dall.)
- Polandii**, F.M.B. Bloomfield R. (Po'and)
- rigidus**, R.Br. Endeavour R. (Banks).
- viminalis**, Gaertn. 5 to 12. Barron R. (McAuliffe), Range Rd. (Kajewski).
- Melaleuca**, L. **acacioides**, F.v.M. Is. of Torres Str. (F.M.B.)

symphyocarpa, F.v.M.
Is. of G. of Carp. (R.Br.), Torres
Str. (F.M.B.)

angustifolia, Gaertn.
Endeavour R. (B. and Sol.)

linariifolia, Sm. Poorga.
Mt. Mulligan (Flecker).
var. *trichostachya*, Benth. Tee-
doo.
Gilbert R. (F.v.M.), Dunk I.
(F.M.B.), Burdekin R. (F.v.M.)

leucodendron, L. Brown Tea-tree.
3 to 12.
Is. of G. Carp. (R.Br.) Mitchell
R. (Palmer), Palmer R. (Roth),
Up. Barron R. (Pritzel), Ather-
ton Plat. (Swain), Betw. Cairns
and Townsville (Swain), Palm I.
(Herbert).
var. *Cunninghamii*, F.M.B.
Murraba. 2 and 9.
Mt. Mulligan (Flecker). Thursday
and other Torres Str. Is.
(F.M.B.).
var. *mimosoides*, Cunn. 7.
Rechter's Cr. Mth. (Flecker),
Range Rd. (Kajewski).

lasiandra, F.v.M.
Musgrave (Jacobson).

genistifolia, Sm. Prickly-leaved
Tea-tree. 6 to 12.
Mt. Elliott (Fitzalan).

minutifolia, F.v.M.
Flinders R. (Bowman).

foliosa, Cunn.
C. Flinders (Cunn.).

Eucalyptus, L'Her.

capitellata, Sm. Brown Stringv-
bark. 12 to 2.
Rockingham B. (F.M.B.)

scabra, Dum-Cours. White St.ingy-
bark. 1 to 12.
Herberton (F.M.B.)

triantha, Link. White Mahogany.
8 to 3.
Stannary Hills (Blakely), Ather-
ton Plat. (Swain), Rockingham
B. (Dall.)

carnea, Baker. Thick-leaved Ma-
hogany. 10 to 1.
Range Rd. (Kajewski), Atherton
(Blakely), Rockingham B. Blake-
ly).

paniculata, Sm. Grey Ironbark. 1
to 12.
Atherton Table. (Swain).

microcorys, F.v.M. Tallow Wood.
5 to 2.
Cleveland B. (Hill).

ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

- Vol. 1, no. 10, p. 8. *Acronychia parvi-
flora* Add loc. Mt. Bartle Frere
(Flecker) and no. 10.
- No. 11, p. 7. *Poranthera micro-
phylla*. Add loc. Atherton Table.
(Flecker) and no. 9.
- P. 8. *Phyllanthus simplex*. Add loc.
Mt. Mulligan (Flecker) and no.
4.
- Glochidion Ferdinandii*. Add. loc.
Bartle Frere (Flecker).
- No. 12, p. 7. Before (*Trema*) *sam-
boinensis* add (*T. aspera*), var.
virgata, 4. Mt. Mulligan (Flecker)
- Vol. 2, p. 6. *Atalaya hemiglauca*. After
Gilbert R. add (F.M.B.). Add loc.
Pentland (Priest) and no. 10.
- P. 16. *Alternanthera angustifolia*.
After loc. add (F.M.B.)
Before *Gomphrena* add (*A*) *re-
pens* (L.) O. Kuntze. Trop.
and Subtrop. Amer. Khaki
Weed. 4, 12.
Mt. Mulligan (Flecker)
- Gomphrena decumbens*. For In-
troduced read Mexico and
Trop. Amer.
- P. 22. Before Family NYCTAGI-
NEAE, add (*P*) *decandra*, L. 10.
Bartle Frere (Flecker).
- Vol. 3, p. 3. Before *Gastrobium* add
Aotus, Sm.
- villosa*, Sm. 10. Betw. Torrens
Cr. and Pentland (Priest).
- Hovea longifolia*. Add loc. Pent-
land (Priest).
- P. 15. *Lamprolobium fruticosum*.
Add loc. Mt. Mulligan (Flecker)
and no. 4.
- P. 23. Before (*Desmodium*) *A.
trichostachyum* add (*D.*) *nemo-
rosus*, F.v.M. 10. Bartle Frere
(Flecker).
- P. 27. *Glycine tabacina*. Add loc.
Proserpine (Macpherson) and
no. 5.
- P. 40. Before (*Cassia*) *Sophera*
var. *schinifolia* add (*Cassia So-
phera*; L.) 6.
Daradgee (Priest).
- Cassia occidentalis*. Add loc. Darad-
gee (Priest) and nos. 6 to 11.
- Vol. 4, p. 7. *Aristolochia Thozettii*.
Add loc. *Proserpine* (Macpherson)
and no. 10:
P. 17. Delete P. 7, bottom of page
et seq.