

AN EARLY SOCIETY.

A Cairns Field Naturalists' Club was formed at a meeting in the School of Arts on March 13th 1905, and the following officers were appointed:-
 Chairman; E.M. Cornwall; Vice-Chairman: J.G. Fearnaley;
 Hon. Secretary-Treasurer: E. Allen; Committee: Hyland,
 D. Dean, F. Ingram, J. Anderson, J. Brewer, F. Barrett.
 Subscription Fees were fixed at 5/- for adults and 2/6 for Juniors. Several excursions were held and apart from being successful were of value to science. Through investigations by the first Chairmen, a fruit pigeon, until then unknown to ornithologists, was discovered in the Cairns District. On the first excursion on April 9th some rare butterflies were obtained and a dragonfly which was also new to science. Mr. J.G. Fearnaley placed the s.s. "Vigilant" at the Club's disposal for a marine excursion to Green Island on Oct. 22nd. That was a very instructive outing as was one held at Edgehill in conjunction with St. John's Mineralogy Class. Two papers were read to meetings - "The Rhopalocera of Cairns and District" by Mr. J. Brewer and "An Introduction to Entomology" by Mr. E. Allen who used lantern slides. Mr. Cornwall left for Mackay during the year but before his departure he was presented with a pair of rare "Atthis" moths by the Club. A credit balance of £5/7/4 existed at the end of the year.

For the second year the officials were: Chair-
 man; W.H.J. Meyers; Vice-Captain; D. Dean; Hon. Sec. Treasurer,
 E. Allen. Committee: P. Hocking, F. Ingram, J. Griffiths, E. Moody, A. Atkinson and J. Anderson. The Club did not live through this year, although some of the members are still in the district.

THE NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALIST.

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

Vol. 1 No.2

November 1932.

Hon. Editor: Victor Kennedy.

The author of each article or other contribution in THE NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALIST is wholly responsible for the opinions or conclusions set out therein.

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"The North Queensland Naturalist" is for free distribution amongst members of the Club and may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary (C/- Cairns Harbour Board) or the Hon. Librarian. Postage One Penny.

NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS CLUB

Rooms. Cairns Harbour Board Office, Lake Street
Business Paper for Monthly Meeting at 8 p.m.
November 15th.

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports also Nomination
and Election of new members.

Forthcoming Excursions: Members are always requested
to bring suggestions for new excursions.

GENERAL BUSINESS.

Remarks by exhibitors: it is desired that
members having interesting specimens to exhibit at the
meeting should make a few remarks on them and
furnish the Hon. Secretary (Mr. J. J. Wyer) with written
particulars concerning them inclusion in the
Clubs Minutes or other books of reference.

INTERVAL TEN MINUTES

Subject for the evening: Lecture by Mr. M. J. Mansky
on the Ferns of North Queensland.

NATURE NOTES CONVERSAZIONE

The notice of meeting published on this page in
each issue of the NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALIST is the
only notice of meeting which will be issued to members.

THE NORTH QUEENSLAND
NATURALIST.

Vol. 1 November 1932 No. 2.

EDITORIAL.

The club is increasing in membership and in
importance. Already in the Cairns district, it is making
itself felt as a force. We think that the force is
one for the good of the district, otherwise the
club would never have been born. Unfortunately there are
those who think otherwise, too. They resent the new
body's activities as being calculated to disturb
preconceptions or established ideas. Viewing the matter
dispassionately, but at the same time remaining aware
of psychological principles, we reach the conclusion
that the resentment is dictated by constitutional
weakness in unprogressive minds which reveals itself
as a fear of anything that was not done aforetime. There
are other critics, of course, who offer an honest dif-
ference of opinion and who seek to support it by
the agitation fostered against a simple request that
the natural flora of the Far North should be regarded
as a heritage to be protected. A Naturalists Club
would certainly have no right to exist if it made no
spirited protest against the perpetuation of past
errors in this regard. The obliterating of a district's
natural vegetation, and fauna, is not a weakness so much
as a wickedness. It has not only its aesthetic or
academic evils, but also its economic and intellectual
wrongs. The club may well go seriously into the matter of
having reserves of national character actually nation-
alised in the matter of control. Local boards admin-
istering state reserves are an anomaly. The trusteeship
of such tracts and parks should be, as far as possible,

removed from any suspicion of parochial influence. These are matters that have proved to be rocks of controversy in the paths of the North Queensland Naturalists Club already, but rocks, we may confidently hope, that will not be regarded as a serious menace to the safe voyaging of the ship. The good sense of the public supports the members who have also the undivided sympathy of all associations devoted to the care and study of Nature, and especially the preservation of the indigenous in our landscapes. The club is feeling its way in other directions too, and doubtless its early endeavour will be to decide upon a definite syllabus to which it may devote its consistent energies.

The Editor.

THE LIBRARY. It is the hope of the North Queensland Naturalists Club to establish a library of scientific works for the use of its members. Naturally no great progress can be made if reliance is placed solely upon the subscription fees of members, and consequently the Executive would greatly appreciate donations of books, papers, etc for this purpose. Meanwhile, in addition to acknowledgements in last month's issue of this Journal, the Hon. Librarian wishes to acknowledge receipt of "The Animals of Australia" (A Melbourne Sun Book) Dr. H. Flecker the "Illustrated Tasmanian Mail" from Mr. A. B. Cummings, with illustrations of Tasmanian Native Flowers.

CLUB EXCURSIONS.

The Club has conducted two field excursions since the formation, although as far as numbers were concerned neither excursion was satisfactory. The second outing was held in conjunction with the Cairns Alpine Club when the number of Naturalist Club members was larger than on the first excursion. As most of them belonged to both clubs, the capacity in which the majority attended was in doubt. However the result was as desired. An instructive outing was enjoyed on each occasion, members bringing back interesting natural specimens for study.

Green Island Excursions.

This was the first Club outing and took place on October 9th, 1932 in glorious weather. The moon had reached the first quarter two days earlier, so the tide was low during practically the whole of the time the party was on the island. The attendance of visitors was much greater than that of club members, but numerous apologies for unavoidable absence were received. From numerous members and indicated that larger attendance could be expected at future excursions. An inspection of the outer edge of the reef was made first and the coral on the far side noted in all its wonderful beauty and variety of form. Various other zoological forms molluscs, crabs, echinoderus, holothurians, starfish and a host of other creatures were noted. The Fungia Danai, the single large mushroom coral, was particularly examined as it differs from the other corals in-as-much as, its brown tentacles were extended in broad daylight, giving the organism a totally different appearance to what it bears when dry. A very unusual sight was that of a large bailer shell (Melo amphora) extending a large mass of eggs capsules almost as large as itself. The egg capsules were cemented together into the form of a large hollow cylinder with the consistency and the appearance of cartilage.

Excursion to Buchan Point:

The second excursion was to Buchan Point.

excursion, that combined with the Alpine Club, was held on October 16th. The weather was again very fine, the omnibus taking members through the scrub north of the Barron River where attention was drawn to the vividly crimson flowers of the mistletoe (*Loranthus*) growing on the tall gums. The conveyance halted at a point on the beach a mile or so beyond Buchan Point. The party then walked onward. Objects on the beach, such as shells, were much battered and of no great variety, but the vegetation was of decided interest. The very handsome golden orchid (*Dendrobium undulatum*) was noted growing on some of the granite boulders. The white flowers of the mistletoe - wild jasmine were in bloom and many other plants unknown by name to the majority of members were seen.

It is hoped that as these excursions become more popular, members will have a better opportunity of identifying many of the more common yet beautiful trees and shrubs.

The Club Officials.

The following officials were appointed at the first general meeting of the North Queensland Naturalists Club on September 12th, 1932.

President: Dr. H. Flecker; Vice-Presidents, Capt. W. P. Fish and Miss Hooper; Secretary, J. Wyer; Executive Committee M. J. Mansky, Treasurer, R. J. Gorton. Librarian and Editor, Victor Kennedy.

The executive committee meets on the first Monday in each month and the general meeting of members is held on the following (the second) Monday, at 8 p.m.

The Lecture adjournment at the October meeting of the North Queensland Naturalists Club was occupied by Mr. Edmund Jarvis of Meringa, his subject being "The Protective Coloration and Mimicry in Insects". Allusion was made by the lecturer, after he had complimented the Club upon its decision or organization for its stated purpose, to the refining influences induced by contemplation of the beauties and wonders of animal and plant life, and especially to the wide scope for nature study afforded by the tropical surroundings of Cairns. Of the supposed three-quarter millions of insects said to occur on the earth, he said, not one of plant or insect had yet received exhaustive study. The origin of coloration of insects was either structural or pigmental or a combination of both. The combination was due to the iridescent and metallic tints. Protective coloration related to the adaptation of a color scheme by an insect to its nesting place or environment in such manner as to render it almost invisible to its enemies. Examples were the grasshopper, moth, and leaf butterflies. Species were fixed although varieties of them may be produced by natural selection or artificial selection. Instances of artificial selection in plants were double apples and roses from the common dog rose or crab apple. The lecturer also referred to the question of reversion to the parent species by these plants, as was believed by Darwin and other Naturalists, should man suddenly cease to foster and cultivate them. He also discussed the protective coloration in Queensland insects such as the bark mantis, "Stick insects" Plant bugs and beetles. There were also warning colors, usually cardinal red, vermilion, orange, chrome or combinations of yellow and black, red and black, or vivid blue. They were seen in assassin bugs, wasps, and insects that were nauseous to the taste. There were also the

warning colours in the caterpillars of insects; and those of large hawk moths that so resembled small snakes THAT little birds, mistaking them for snakes, flew away frightened by such defensive characters and by the "eye" spots of warning coloration. Many insects were also armed with stinging hairs of a poisonous nature. He referred also to a moth, very common in Victoria, that frequented parts of the bush through which bush fires had gone. The coloration was such that as they came to rest upon the burnt bark or the stump of a tree, it could hardly be distinguished from the surroundings. The lecturer illustrated his remarks with cases containing insects in situ on their protective surfaces of bark, leaves etc., the Indian leaf butterfly and insects adorned with warning colors.

NATIVE FERNS.

At the last meeting of the N.Q.N.C., Mr. M. Mansky brought forward a matter that might well be considered further, especially by the local authorities in the Cairns District. He said he had been up the gullies at Mount Whitfield and noticed that, of the magnificent King Ferns that grew luxuriously there at one time, hardly any remained. He proposed that the Government department might consider the protection of all ferns and might issue licenses to bona fide collectors for the carrying away of ferns, orchids, etc., from the Northern Scrubs. The licenses would be a source of revenue and would also minimise the careless or wanton destruction of the native plants. The desirability of replanting native ferns in place of those that had one thrived was also discussed.