

Heathy Dry Forest

In the Goulburn Broken Catchment

32% of Heathy Dry Forests have been cleared. 15% of what remains is on private land.



Photo: Sue Berwick

Figure 1. An example of Heathy Dry Forest in good condition.

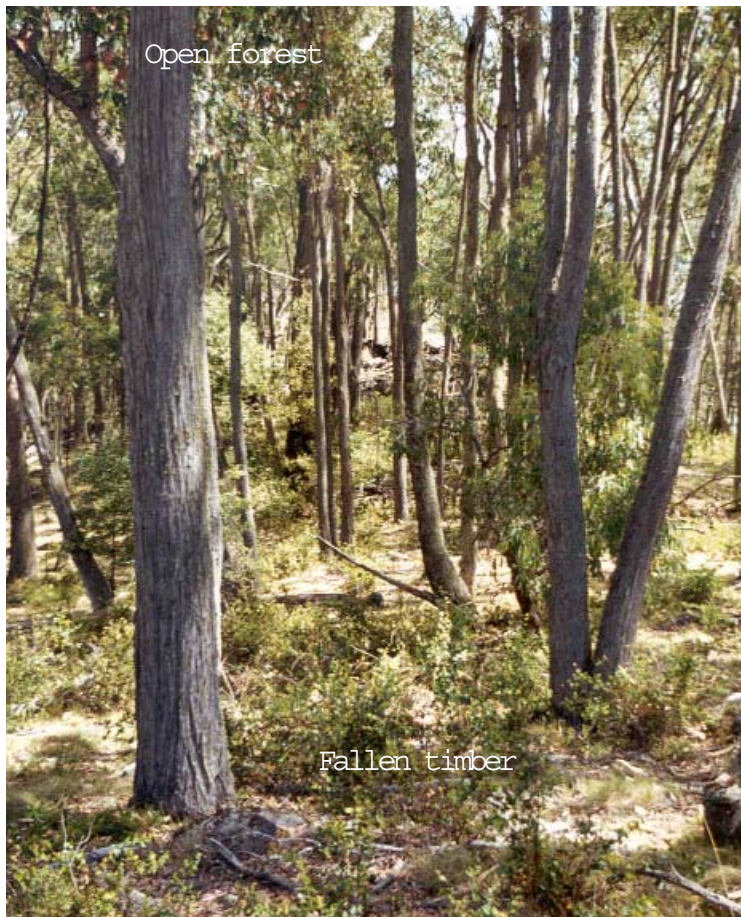


Photo: Jim Blackney

Figure 2. An example of Heathy Dry Forest in good condition.

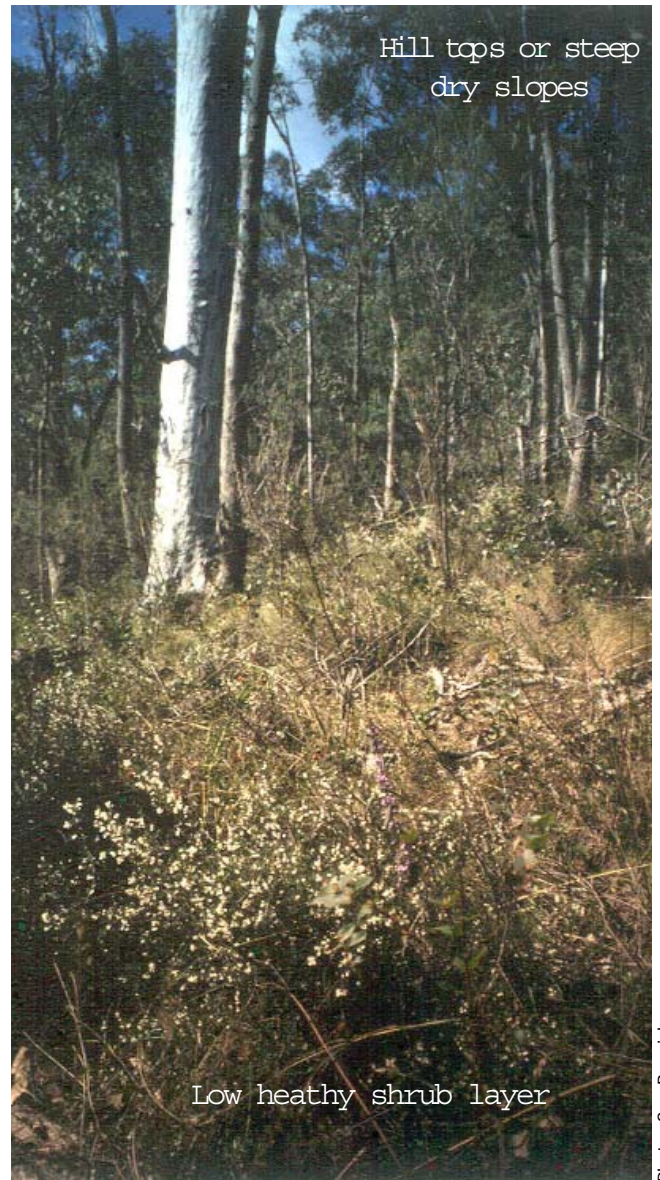


Photo: Sue Berwick

Figure 3. An example of Heathy Dry Forest in good condition.

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Description

Heathy Dry Forests occur on hill tops or steep dry slopes (north/west facing) between 230-900m altitude and 500-800mm annual rainfall. It occurs on typically skeletal soil of sedimentary or granitic geologies.

The open forest consists of Red Stringybark, Red Box, Long-leaf Box and, occasionally, Blakleys Red Gum at lower altitudes. Broad-leaf Peppermint, Brittle Gum may be found at higher altitudes.

The shrub layer consists of low heathy shrubs: Daphne Heath, Cats-claw Grevillea, Beard-heath, Urn Heath, Ploughshare Wattle, Small-leaf Parrot-pea and occasionally Hairy Geebung. The low heaths are a distinguishing feature from Grassy Dry Forest or Box Ironbark Forests. Austral Grass-tree is often present.

The groundlayer typically consists of few grasses - Silvertop Wallaby Grass dominant, with a sparse but diverse range of herbs, lilies and orchids. May seem very "grassy" due to fire regime, but diversity of grasses is low. Well known for orchids in spring.

Species To Look Out For

Flora: Beard-heath, Hairy Geebung.

Fauna: Bandy Bandy (n), Barking Owl (e), Brush-tailed Phascogale (e), Powerful Owl (v), Yellow-footed Antechinus, Tree Goanna (v) and Woodland Blind Snake(n).



Figures 4-7. Red Stringybark, Daphne Heath, Urn Heath, Silver-top Wallaby Grass

Photos: Mary Titcumb



Figure 8. Yellow-footed Antechinus
Photo: DSE/McCann



Figure 9. Tree Goanna
Photo: Mary Titcumb



Figure 10. Powerful Owl
Photo: DSE/McCann

Why Heathy Dry Forests are Important

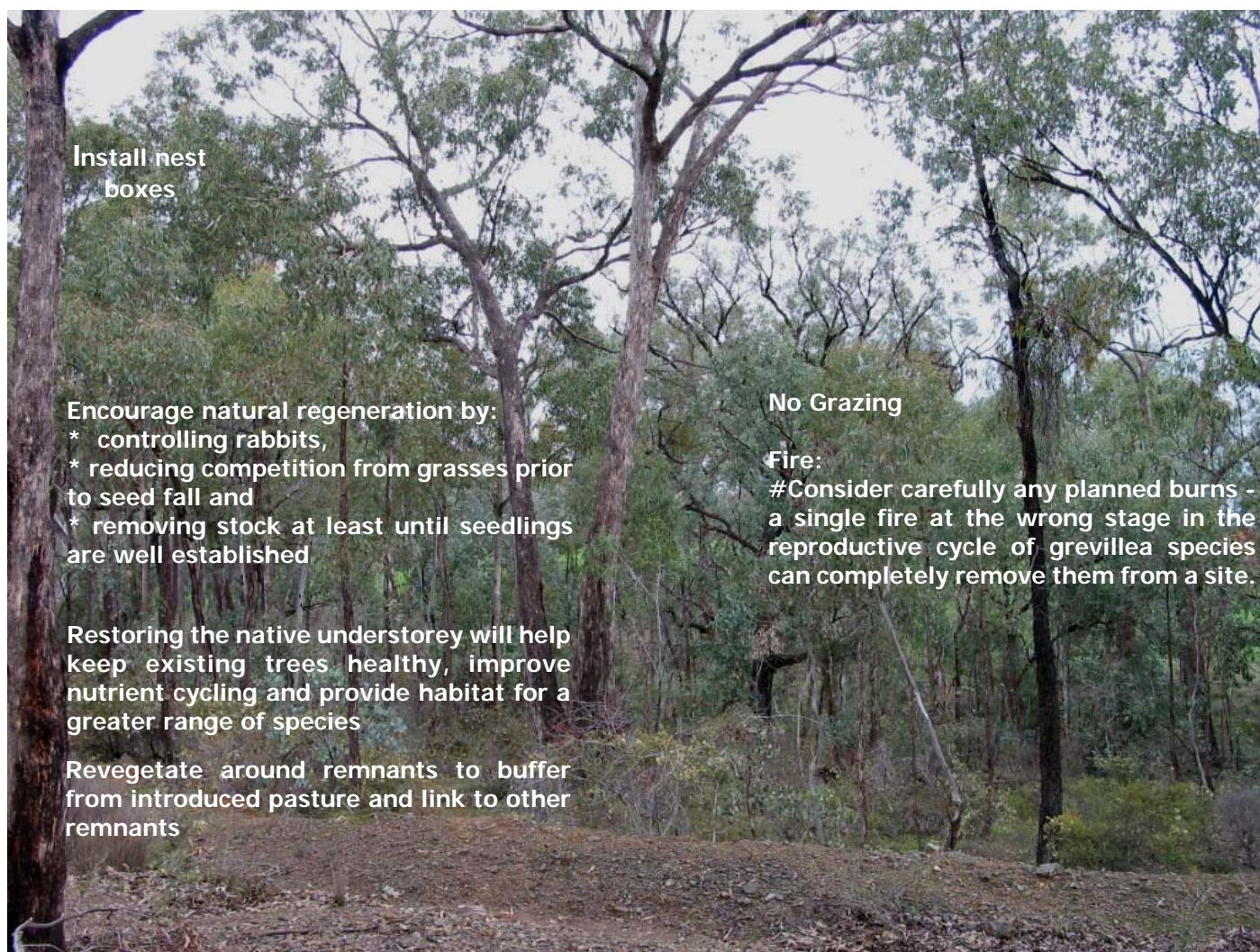
More than 32% of Heathy Dry Forests in the Goulburn Broken Catchment have disappeared since European settlement. It is important to protect the remaining area for the continued survival of the species that rely on it and for the ecological services these forests provide. Over 15% of this remains on private land. The support of private landholders is essential for the ongoing conservation of Heathy Dry Forests.

Current threats include, inappropriate fire regime (too frequent burning results in loss of grevillea species), lack of natural **regeneration**, **soil disturbance** (eg. ploughing, favouring weed species), **weed invasion**, **pest animals** and loss of **tree** and **ground habitat** (through timber harvesting, tidying-up of fallen timber and firewood collection).

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Management Tips



Install nest boxes

Encourage natural regeneration by:

- * controlling rabbits,
- * reducing competition from grasses prior to seed fall and
- * removing stock at least until seedlings are well established

Restoring the native understorey will help keep existing trees healthy, improve nutrient cycling and provide habitat for a greater range of species

Revegetate around remnants to buffer from introduced pasture and link to other remnants

No Grazing

Fire:

#Consider carefully any planned burns - a single fire at the wrong stage in the reproductive cycle of grevillea species can completely remove them from a site.

Figure 11. An example of Heathy Dry Forest with soil disturbance evident in the foreground.

May require expert input in decision making and planning. See your local DSE or CMA representative for further advice.



Avoid driving vehicles through remnant to minimise disturbance

Avoid disturbance to prevent erosion (skeletal soils often unstable) and minimise weed invasion

Leave fallen timber for habitat

#Restore native understorey by direct seeding and / or replanting

Weed control - develop an action plan.

Spot spray or use species specific herbicide to prevent seed set of target weeds.

#Mosaic or patch burning weedy, open areas in autumn (may be too risky at other times), could be an option.

Soon after fire spot spray weedy grasses with a grass-specific herbicide, avoiding native grasses.

Figure 12. An example of Heathy Dry Forest in moderate condition, but with annual weed invasion.

May require expert input in decision making and planning. See your local DSE or CMA representative for further advice.

Photo: Debbie Colbourne

Photo: Mary Titcomb

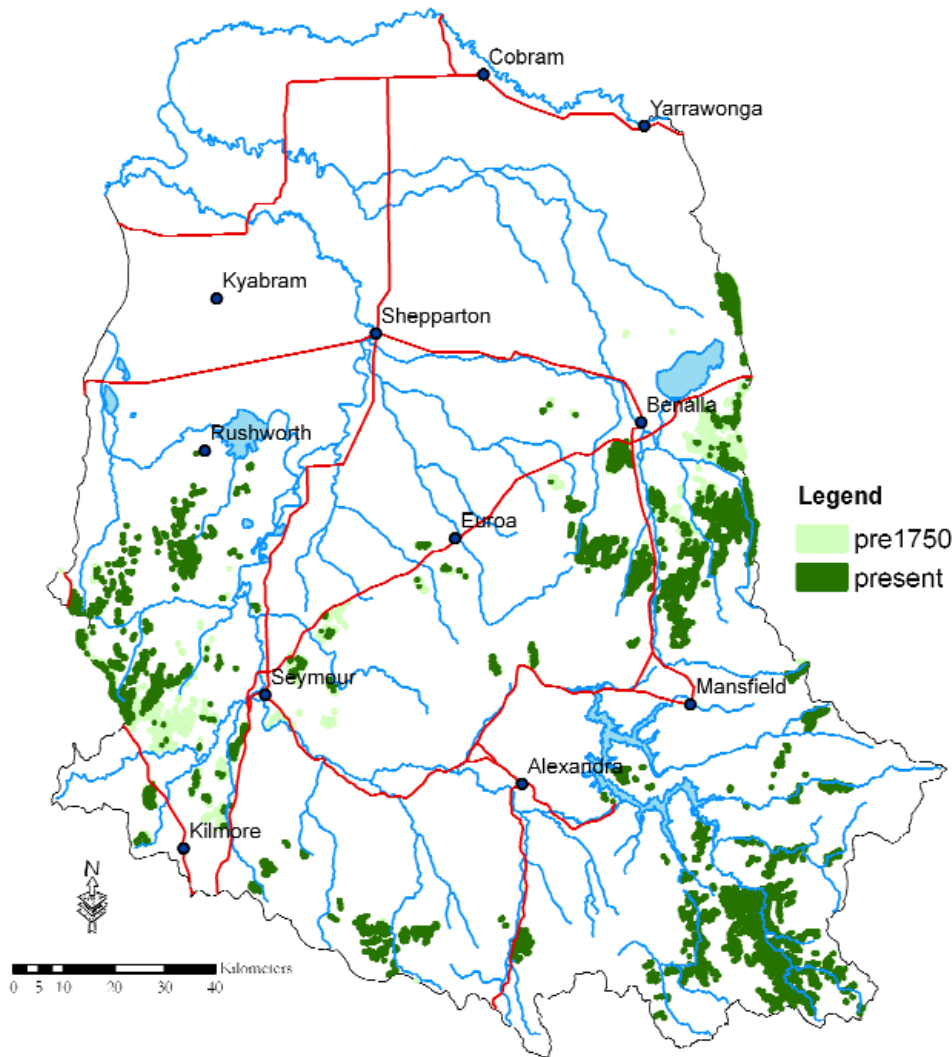



Figure 13. A representation of the pre-1750 and present day distribution of Heathy Dry Forest and its mosaics and complexes in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. The boundaries of the vegetation have been exaggerated to allow for the small scale of the map. The map was produced from Base Data from DSE Corporate Library. The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information on this map. Any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

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Acknowledgments:

 This project was a partnership between the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and Department of Sustainability and Environment, and funded by NAP: *Australian Governments and local communities working together to prevent, repair and manage rising salinity and declining water quality across Australia*. Thanks to comments from Alison Oates, Biodiversity & Natural Resource Division, DSE and Glen Johnson, Water and Biodiversity Team, North East DSE; Jenni Nunan, GIS team, DSE, Benalla for producing the maps; for Salinity & Water feedback and comments from the Biodiversity Team in the Goulburn Broken and NorthEast, DSE; the DPI LINKS officers and CMOs, the A USTRALIA GBCMA waterways and vegetation officers and to all who contributed photographs and support.

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ISBN 1-920742-11-5

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