

Granitic Hills Woodland

Threatened in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

56% of Granitic Hills Woodlands have been cleared. 51% of what remains is on private land.



Figure 1. An example of Granitic Hills Woodland from the Warby ranges in good condition, although there seems to very few large trees.



Figure 2. Another example of Granitic Hills Woodland from the Warby ranges in good condition. The photograph was taken in June.

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Description

This type of vegetation occurs on granite country with outcropping rocks and sandy to sandy-clay soils which typically have low water holding capacity. They occur at elevations between 150-450m, with an annual rainfall of 400-750mm. Rocky Outcrop Shrubland / Herbland is often interspersed amongst this vegetation community.

The low woodland overstorey is usually dominated by Blakely's Red Gum, with Red Stringybark, Red Box and Long-leaf Box.

The dense shrub layer is often dominated by Common Fringe-myrtle and includes species such as Drooping Sheoak, Lightwood, Box-leaf Wattle and Varnish Wattle. White Cypress-pine can also be found in this vegetation community, usually in uncleared and fire sheltered rock areas.

Ground layer species include Nodding Blue Lily, Austral Carrot, Raspwort, Cotton Fire-weed, Green Rock Fern and Austral Stonecrop.

Species To Look Out For

Flora: Hickory Wattle (Longwood area), Hairy Hop-bush (r) (Warby Ranges and Mt. Meg), Crimson Spider-orchid (Ve) Grey Rice-flower (v) (eastern area).

Fauna: Powerful Owl (v), Bandy Bandy (n), Carpet Python (e) (Warby Ranges and Mt. Meg) and Turquoise Parrot (n) (Warby Ranges and Mt. Meg).



Figures 3-6. Blakely's Red Gum, Common Fringe-myrtle, Drooping Sheoak, Nodding Blue-lily

Photos: Mary Titcumb



Figure 7. Bandy Bandy
Photo: Jerry Alexander



Figure 8. Turquoise Parrot
Photo: Len Robinson c/o Viridans



Figure 9. Carpet Python
Photo: DSE/McCann

Why Granitic Hills Woodlands are Threatened

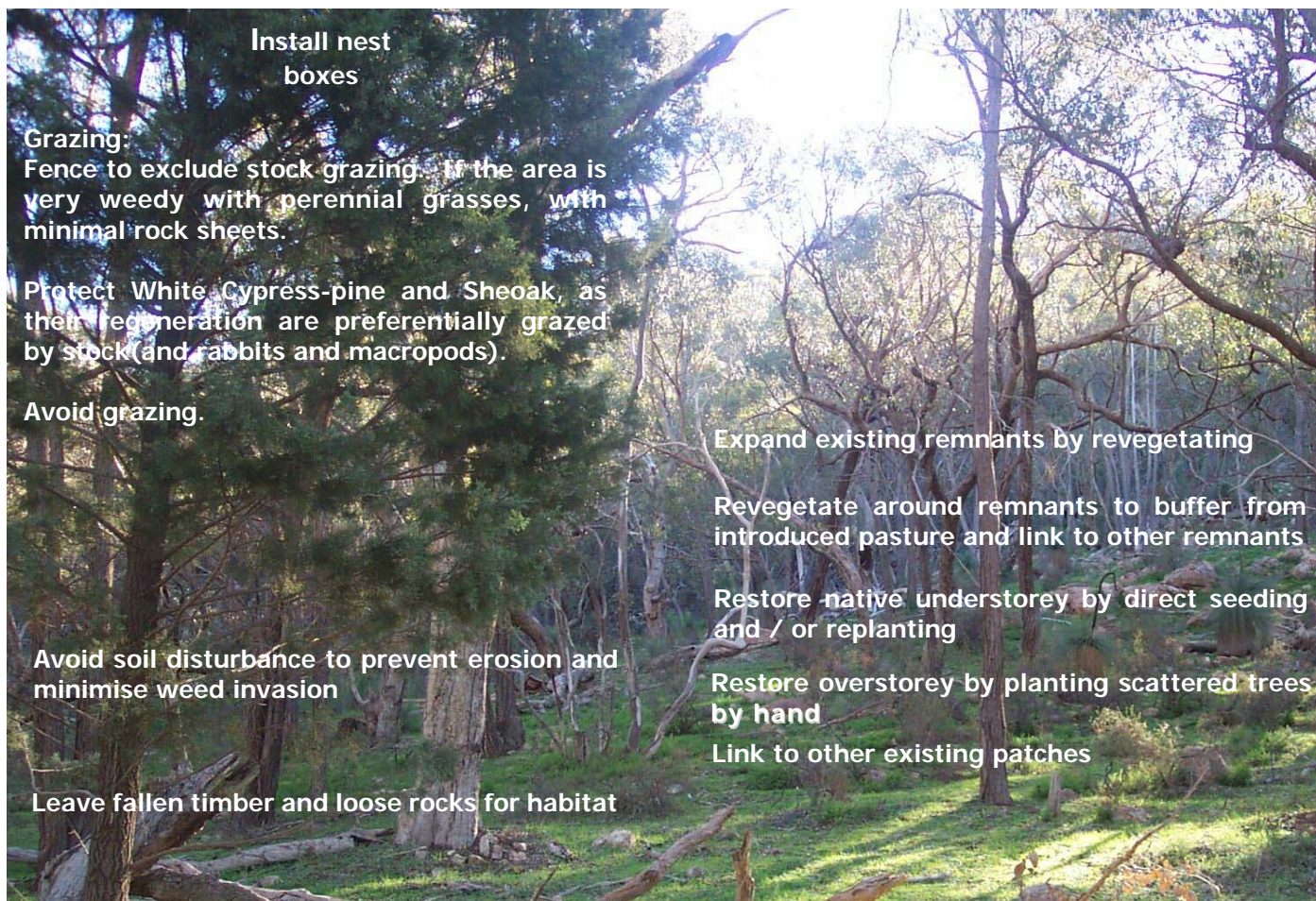
More than 56% of Granitic Hills Woodlands in the Goulburn Broken Catchment have disappeared since European settlement. Many of the plants and animals that rely on this habitat are now also threatened, and some are extinct. 18% of the remaining area is on private land. The support of private landholders is essential for the ongoing conservation of Granitic Hills Woodlands.

Current threats include, **inappropriate fire regimes** (too frequent/ infrequent fire which can hinder shrub regeneration leading to eventual loss of species, and changes the structure of the remnant), **stock grazing** (cause pugging, hinders native plant regeneration, increases nutrient levels, and causes loss of native species through selective grazing and trampling), **soil disturbance** (eg. ploughing and pugging, favouring weed species), **weed invasion** (particularly by St. Johns Wort and Large Quaking Grass), lack of native **understorey** and **groundlayer** (which attract insect eating birds helping keep the overstorey healthy, and improve soil health through fixing nitrogen), lack of natural **regeneration**, and loss of **tree** and **ground**

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Management Tips



Install nest boxes

Grazing:

Fence to exclude stock grazing. If the area is very weedy with perennial grasses, with minimal rock sheets.

Protect White Cypress-pine and Sheoak, as their regeneration are preferentially grazed by stock (and rabbits and macropods).

Avoid grazing.

Avoid soil disturbance to prevent erosion and minimise weed invasion

Leave fallen timber and loose rocks for habitat

Expand existing remnants by revegetating

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

Restore native understorey by direct seeding and / or replanting

Restore overstorey by planting scattered trees by hand

Link to other existing patches

Photo: Debbie Colbourne

Figure 10. An example of a degraded Granitic Hills Woodland near Thoono. Has a range of annual and perennial weeds and a lack of regeneration of the native overstorey and shrub layer (mostly absent).

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



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.

Encourage natural regeneration by:

- * controlling rabbits (White Cypress-pine and Sheoaks are preferentially grazed);

- * reducing competition from grasses prior to seed fall (spraying, slashing or grazing);

- * removing stock until seedlings are well established

Photo: Mary Titcumb

Figure 11. An example of a degraded Granitic Hills Woodland with a ground layer of annual weedy grasses, mixed with patches of native grasses. There is some regeneration of the overstorey and some shrub layer.



Conservation Status

Granitic Hills Woodland is **threatened** in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

- Victorian Riverina bioregion : **Endangered**
- Central Victorian Uplands bioregion : **Vulnerable**
- Northern Inland Slopes bioregion : **Least Concern**
- Highlands - Northern Fall bioregion : **Least Concern**

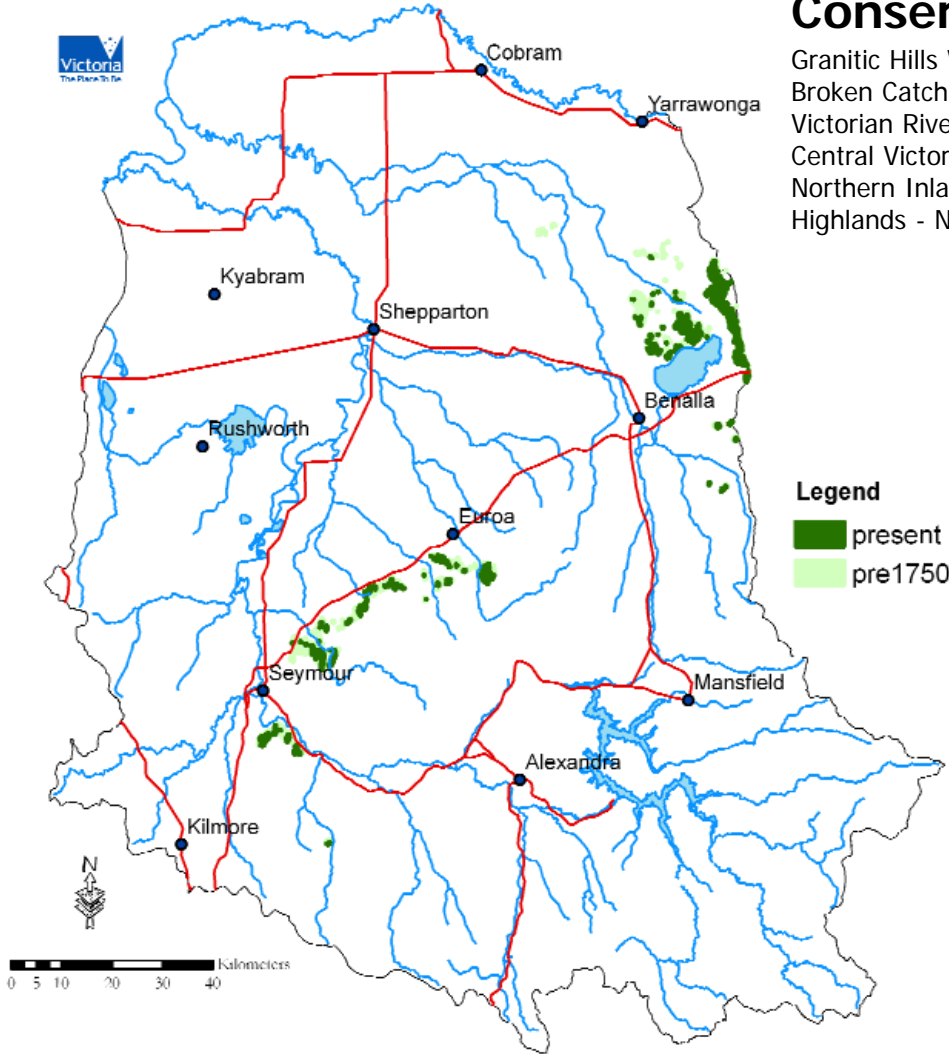


Figure 13. A representation of the pre-1750 and present day distribution of Granitic Hills Woodland and its mosaics and complexes in the Goulburn Broken Catchment. The boundaries of the vegetation have been exaggerated to allow for the small scale of the map. The map was produced from Base Data from 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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