Department of Sustainability and Environment

Red Gum Wetland

Endangered in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

81% of Red Gum Wetlands have been cleared. 47% of what remains is on private land.

Photo: Mary Titcumb

Figure 1. A healthy example of Red Gum Wetland. Photograph was taken in November.

Photo: Sue Berwick

Figure 2. A healthy example of Red Gum Wetland.

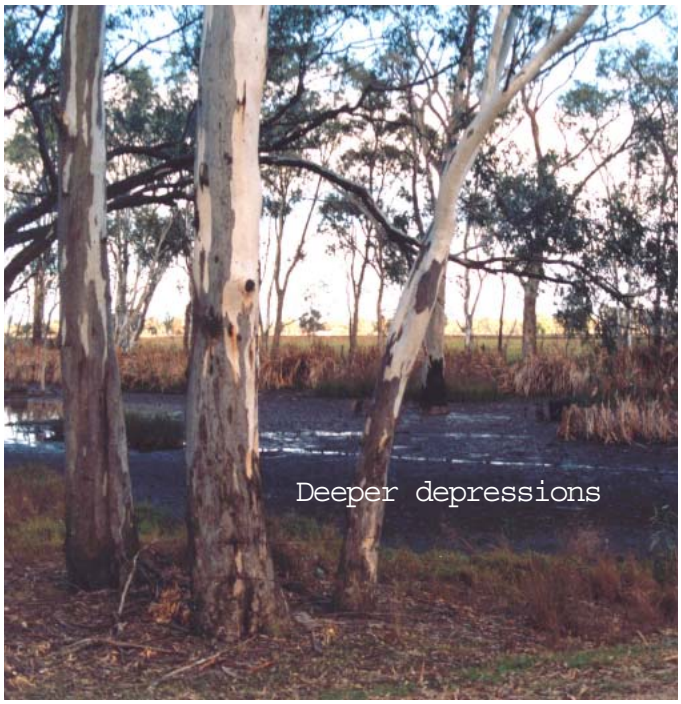

Photo: Mary Titcumb

Figure 3. A healthy example of Red Gum Wetland in June.

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Victoria The Place To Be

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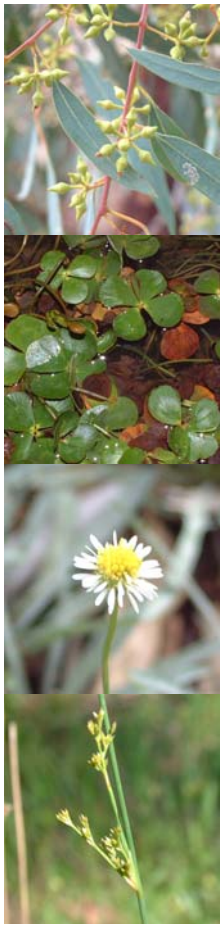
Description

These shallow wetlands occur on the alluvial plain in deeper depressions of shallow drainage lines or prior stream meanders, where annual rainfall is generally less than 700mm. Inundation occurs when there is sufficient run-off to create a flow along these depressions. Inundation may last 2 to 6 months, and the wetlands may be dry at the start of winter.

Typically, the floristic composition of the woodland varies according to water depth and time of year.

Aquatic species include Narrow-leaf Nardoo and Common Nardoo, Pacific Azolla, Common Spike Sedge, Tall Spike-sedge, Floating Pondweed and Water-ribbons. As the wetland dries, a range of grasses and herbs grow, including Common Blown Grass, Tufted Burr-daisy, Couch, Poison Lobelia and Austral Brooklime.

Rushes include: Hollow Rush, Joint-leaf Rush and Finger Rush. Associated species may include Cumbungi and Common Reed.



Figures 7-10. River Red Gum, Common Nardoo, Tufted Burr-daisy, Joint-leaf Rush.

Photos: 7, 9 and 10: Mary Titcumb, 8: Sally Timmins.

Species To Look For

Flora: Water-shield.
Fauna: Royal Spoonbill and breeding sites for water birds including the Australian White and Straw-necked Ibis, Australasian Bittern (e), Great Egret (v), Hardhead (v).

Figure 4. Hardhead
Photo: DSE/McCann

Figure 5. Australian White Ibis
Photo: DSE/McCann

Figure 6. Australasian Bittern
Photo: DSE/Peter Menkhorst

Why Red Gum Wetlands are Threatened

More than 81% of Red Gum Wetlands in the Goulburn Broken Catchment have disappeared since European settlement. Over 47% of what remains is on private land. Many of the plants and animals that rely on this habitat are now also threatened, and some are extinct. Therefore, the support of private landholders is essential for the ongoing conservation of Red Gum Wetlands.

Current threats include, **changes to natural flooding, temperature and flow regimes** (changes floodplain functions and can result in loss of native species and disrupts the delicate balance of the system, threatening the viability of the remnant), **poor timing of stock grazing and overgrazing** (causing loss of native species through selective grazing and trampling, hinders native plant regeneration, disturbs the soil and increases nutrient levels), **loss of ground habitat** (through dredging, land-filling, draining and overgrazing), **weed invasion**, **increases in nutrients** (favours weeds and causes excessive plant growth which restricts water movement and reduces dissolved oxygen).

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Management Tips

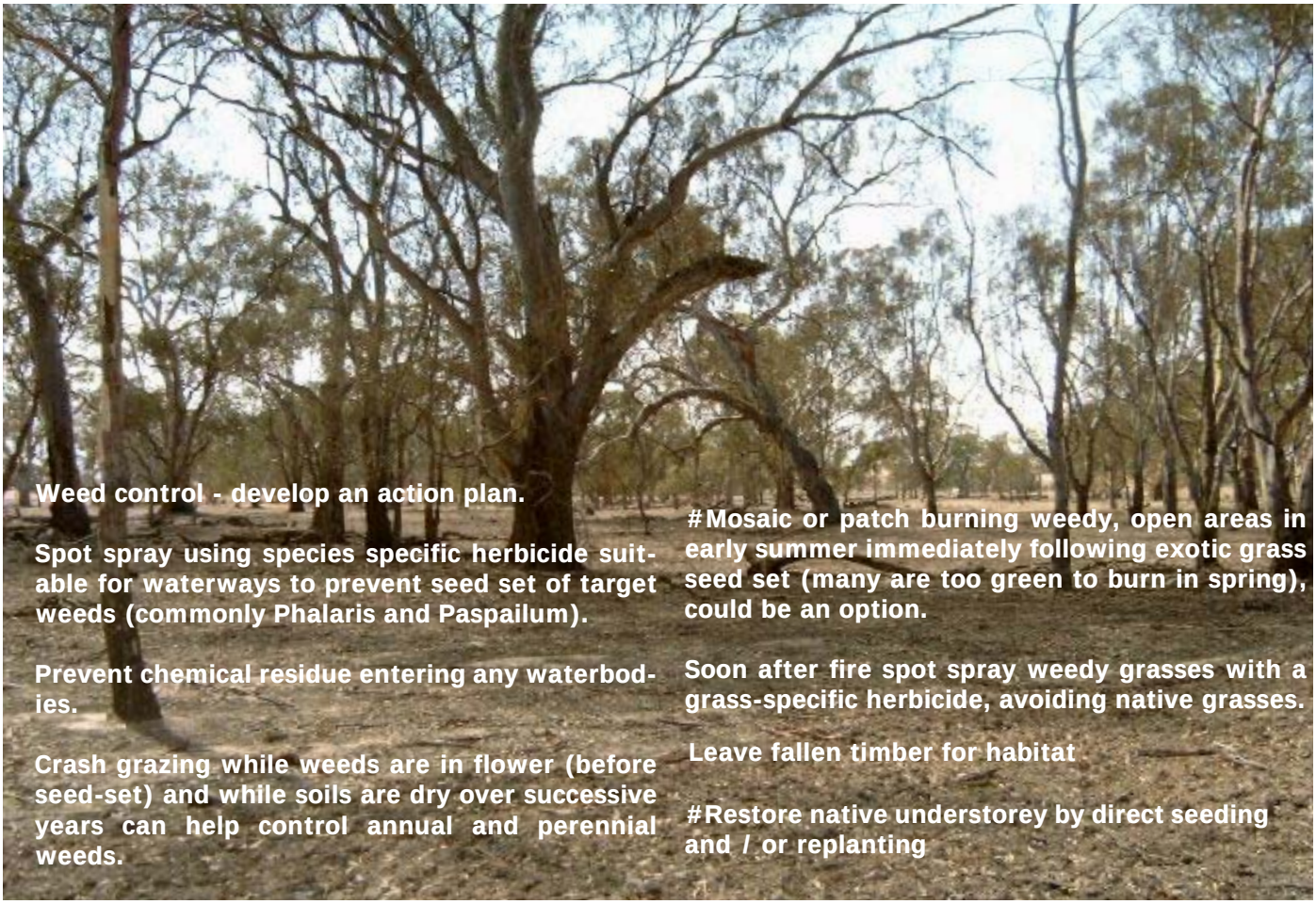


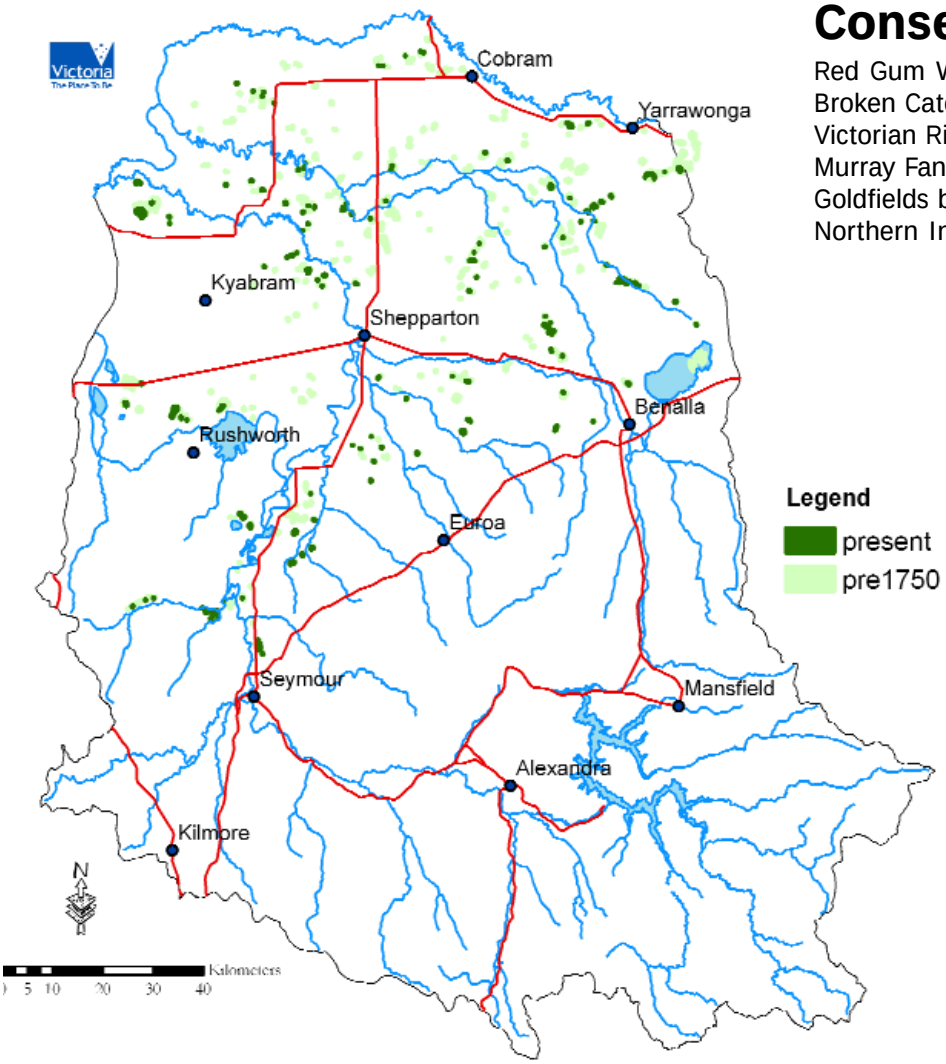
Photo: Debbie Colbourne

Figure 11. An example of degraded Red Gum Wetland.

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

Photo: Debbie Colbourne

Figure 12. An example of degraded Red Gum Wetland, with pugging in the foreground.



Conservation Status

Red Gum Wetland is threatened in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Victorian Riverina bioregion : Endangered
Murray Fan bioregion: Endangered
Goldfields bioregion : Endangered
Northern Inland Slopes bioregion : Endangered

Figure 12. A representation of the pre-1750 and present day distribution of Red Gum Wetland 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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