

Riverine Grassy Woodland / Riverine Sedgey Forest

Goulburn Broken Catchment

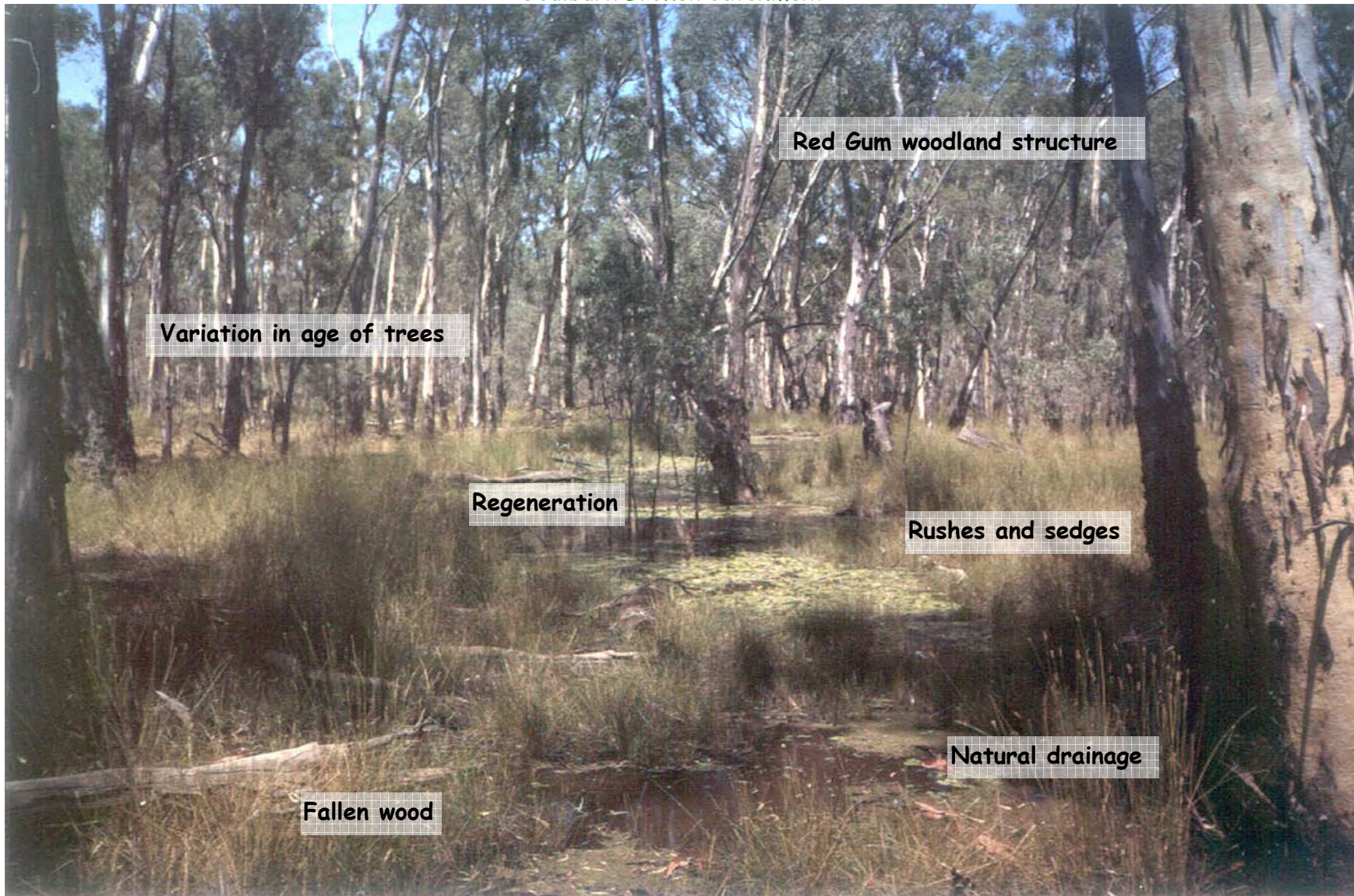


Photo: Keith Ward

Figure 1 A healthy example of a Riverine Sedgey Forest in flood at Barmah Forest, with important habitat and diagnostic features noted.

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Figure 2 Distribution of Riverine Grassy Woodlands and Riverine Sedgey Forests in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Current Threats

- Alteration to **natural water flows** and **temperature regimes** causes loss of native species (both plants and animals), and disrupts the delicate balance of the system, threatening the viability of the remnant.
- Inappropriate **grazing regimes** cause loss of native species, hinder native plant regeneration, disturb the soil, and increase nutrient levels (encouraging weeds).
- Loss of tree and ground **habitat** (through **timber harvesting**, **firewood collection**, and **"tidying-up"** of fallen sticks), threatens associated native fauna.
- **Weeds**, particularly Phalaris and Blackberries, compete with native species.
- **Pest animals** defoliate native vegetation, disturb the soil and threaten native fauna as predators and by competing for food.
- **Increases in nutrients** can eliminate plants, favours weeds, and causes excessive growth of some species which shade out others.
- **Isolation** of remnants makes it difficult to maintain a healthy gene pool and to recolonise with native species following disturbance, and restricts the movement of native fauna.
- Lack of native **understorey** and **groundlayer** plants, which: attract insect eating birds, helping keep the overstorey healthy; and improve soil health through fixing nitrogen.
- Lack of **natural regeneration** of plants, threatens the viability of remnant.

Description

Riverine Grassy Woodlands and Riverine Sedgey Forests occur on the **riverine floodplain** at elevations of 100–200m and an annual rainfall of 400–700mm. Riverine Grassy Woodland occurs on **slightly elevated** positions on the floodplain, on deposited silts and sands, and is **less frequently flooded**, or for a shorter duration than the adjacent Riverine Sedgey Forest. The **overstorey** of both is dominated by Red Gums, (occasionally with Black Box on the margins of Riverine Grassy Woodlands). Riverine Grassy Woodland has a grassy **understorey** including Common Wallaby—grass, Brown—back Wallaby—grass and Plains Spear—grass. In Riverine Sedgey Forest the groundlayer consists of more sedges and wetter grasses such as: Rush Sedge, Veined Swamp Wallaby—grass, Brown—back Wallaby Grass and Common Spike—sedge. **Herbs** include Bluebells and Slender Dock, and in wetter areas: Water—ribbons, Yellow Twin—heads, and Burr—daisies.

Significant Species

Flora: Small Psoralea and Woolly Buttons (adjacent to Box ridges).

Fauna: Powerful Owl, Barking Owl, Tree Goanna and Squirrel Glider.

Management Tips

Management which **maintains** and **enhances** the remnant vegetation / habitat, including:

- **Maintain** or restore the natural flooding, flow and temperature regimes.
- To **prevent pugging**, **exclude grazing** when soil is wet and allow **flowering** and **seed—set** of natives, **strategically managing** grassy weeds.
- **Control** weeds and pest animals.
- Encourage **natural regeneration** by **controlling rabbits**, **reducing competition** with grasses prior to seed fall and **removing stock** until seedlings are well established.
- **Plant understorey** for remnants with no native shrubs or ground layer where appropriate.
- **Revegetate** around remnants to buffer from pasture.
- **Retain** dead & hollow—bearing trees and **leave** fallen timber and branches.
- **Monitor** your site and **adapt management** practices as required (help is required to assist and set up monitoring).