

Riparian Shrubland

ENDANGERED in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

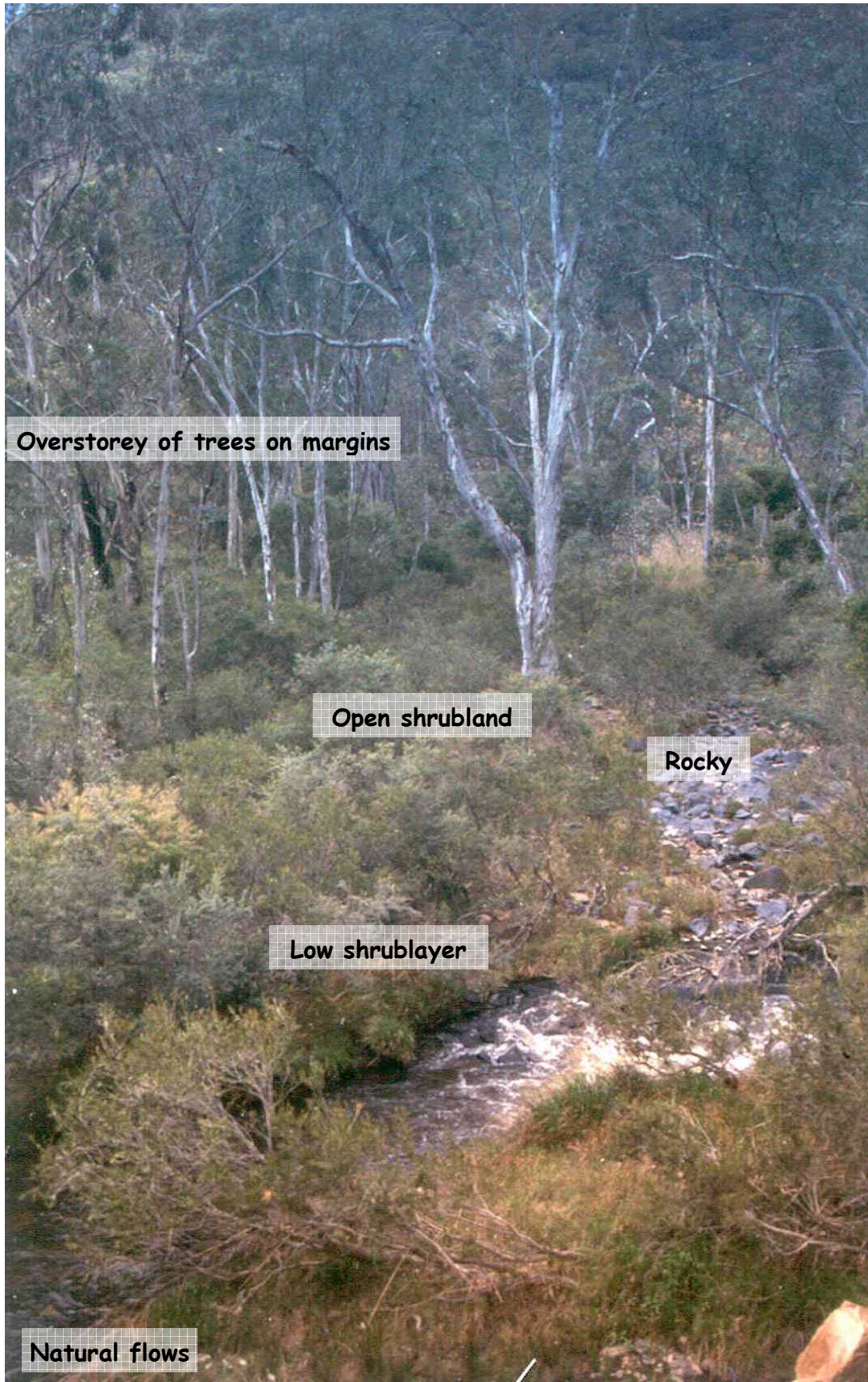


Photo: Sue Berwick

Figure 1 An example of Riparian Shrubland in good condition, with important diagnostic and habitat features noted.



Natural Heritage Trust
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37% of this vegetation type remains uncleared, 13% (22ha) of which is on private land.



Figure 2 Distribution of Riparian Shrubland in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Significant Species

Flora : Omeo Gum.

Fauna: Powerful Owl.

Current Threats

- Alteration of **natural water flows** and **temperature regimes** causes loss of native species, which disrupts the delicate balance of the system.
- Inappropriate **grazing regimes** compact the soil, erode the bank, hinder native plant regeneration, increase nutrient levels, and cause loss of native species.
- Loss of tree and ground **habitat** (through **timber harvesting** **firewood collection**, and "tidying-up" of fallen sticks), threatens associated native fauna.
- **Weed invasion**, particularly by Blackberries and Willows, compete with native species.
- **Pest animals** cause defoliate vegetation, disturb the soil and threaten native fauna as predators and by competing for food.
- **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 the remnant.

Description

Riparian Shrublands are **low open shrublands** that occur along rocky creeks, with granitic boulders (occasionally metamorphosed boulders) at elevations of 120–300m and an annual rainfall of 600–800mm. The vegetation along these creeklines receives **seasonally high flows of short duration**. Adult eucalypts only occur on the margins of this vegetation. The **overstorey** is dominated by an array of shrubs which are able to **withstand frequent flooding** or else **regenerate rapidly** after floods. These include Silver Wattle, Blackwood, Hop-bush, Woolly Tea-tree, Burgan and Sweet Bursaria. On the banks of creeks, Varnish Wattle, Lightwood, Rough Fireweed occur. The **understorey** of forbs and grasses either **survive between severe floods** on bare sand or in cracks of rocks, or **regenerate rapidly** from seed. These include Glandular Willow—herb, Clustered Cudweed, Weeping Grass and Common Blown Grass.

Management Tips

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

- **Maintain** or restore the natural flows and temperature regimes.
- **Fence** sites to **exclude grazing** and provide off-stream water.
- **Develop and implement a plan to control** weeds and pest animals.
- Encourage **natural regeneration** by **controlling rabbits**, **reducing competition** with grasses prior to seed fall and **removing stock**.
- **Plant understorey** for remnants with no native shrubs or ground layer.
- **Revegetate** around remnants to buffer from pasture, and link to other remnants.
- **Retain** dead & hollow-bearing trees (where absent, erect nest boxes) and **leave** fallen timber and branches.
- **Monitor** your site and **adapt management practices** as required (help is available to assist and set up monitoring).