

Swampy Riparian Woodland

ENDANGERED in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

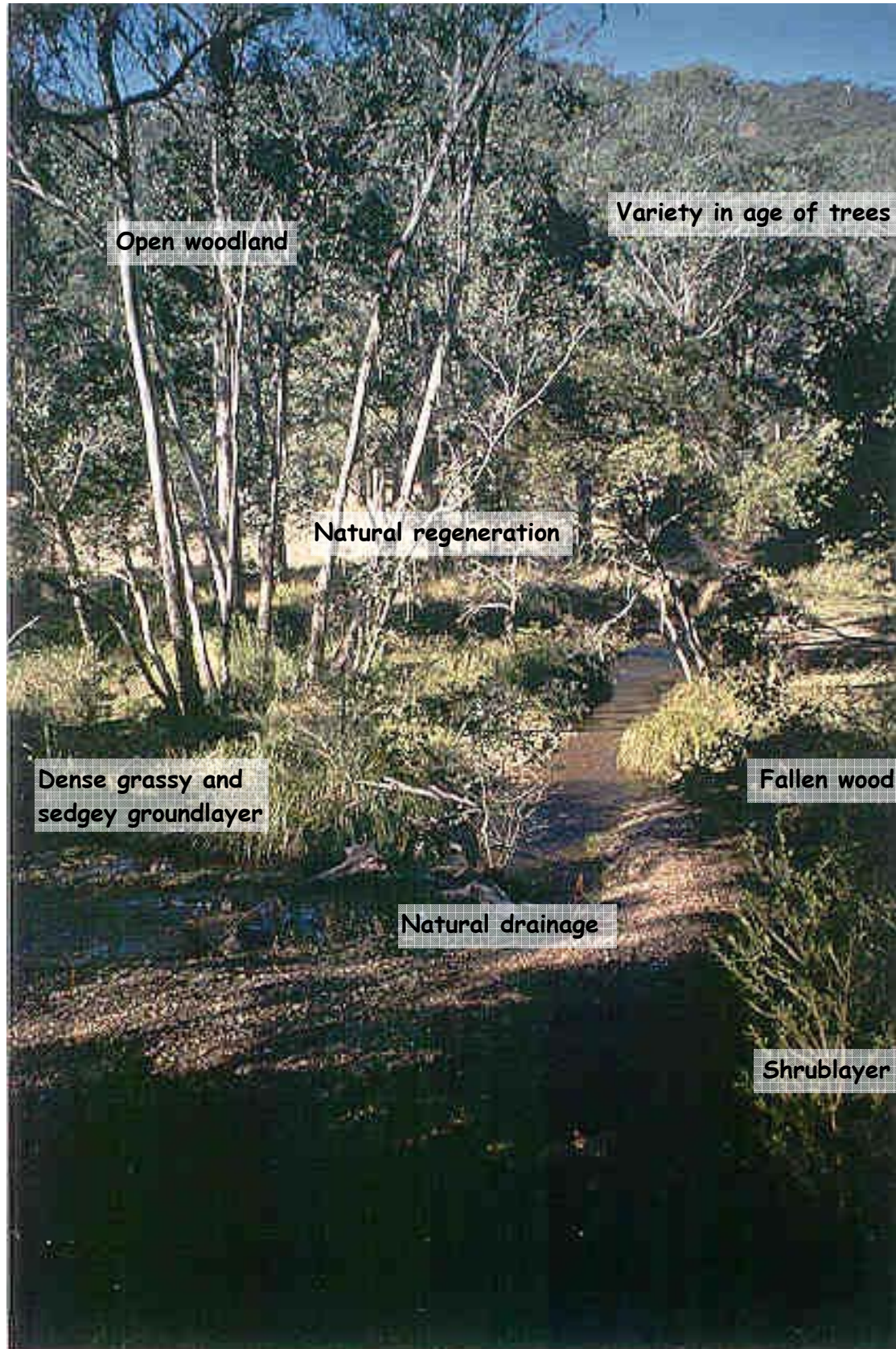


Photo: Sue Berwick

Figure 1 A healthy example of a Swampy Riparian Woodland with important habitat and diagnostic features noted.

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Description

Swampy Riparian Woodland occurs in poorly drained sections of streams and rivers. Annual rainfall is 900–1500mm at elevations of 300–800m. The **overstorey**, (typically Mountain Swamp Gum), has a **woodland structure**. **Understorey** shrubs include Ovens Wattle, Tea–tree, Prickly Tea–tree, Burgan, Blackwood and Prickly Currant–bush. The **ground layer** is normally **dense with sedges** such as Leafy Flat–sedge, Tall Sedge and **ferns** like Fishbone Water–fern, Soft Water–fern and Mother Shield–fern.

Current Threats

- **Drainage** for agriculture changes riparian functions. It can result in loss of native species and threatens the viability of the system.
- Inappropriate **grazing regimes** cause loss of native species, hinder native plant regeneration, disturb the soil, and increase nutrient levels – encouraging weeds.
- **Weeds**, particularly Blackberries, Cat's Ear, Yorkshire Fog Grass and White Clover, compete with native species.
- Loss of tree and ground **habitat** (through **timber harvesting**, "tidying–up", and **firewood collection**), which threatens the structure of the remnants, and the dependent native fauna.
- **Pest animals** 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, recolonise with native species following disturbance, and restricts 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.

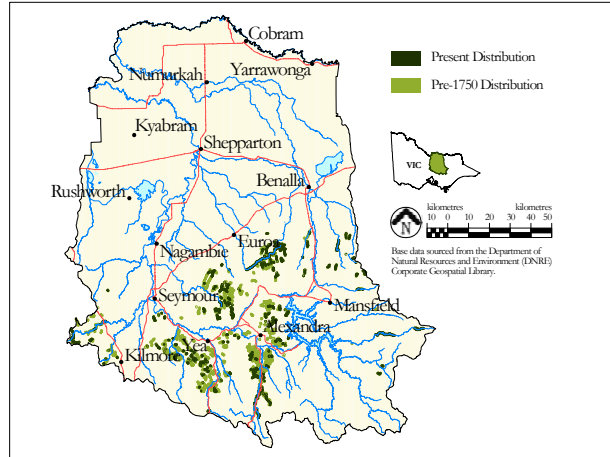


Figure 2 Distribution of Swampy Riparian Woodlands in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Significant Species

Flora: Omeo Gum.

Fauna: Powerful Owls.

Management Tips

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

- **Maintain** or **restore** the natural flows and drainage patterns.
- **Fence** sites from grazing.
- **Develop and implement** a plan to control weeds and pest animals.
- Encourage **natural regeneration** by **reducing competition** with grasses prior to seed fall, **removing stock** and **controlling rabbits**.
- **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).