Shallow Sand Woodland

ENDANGERED in the Goulburn Broken Catchment

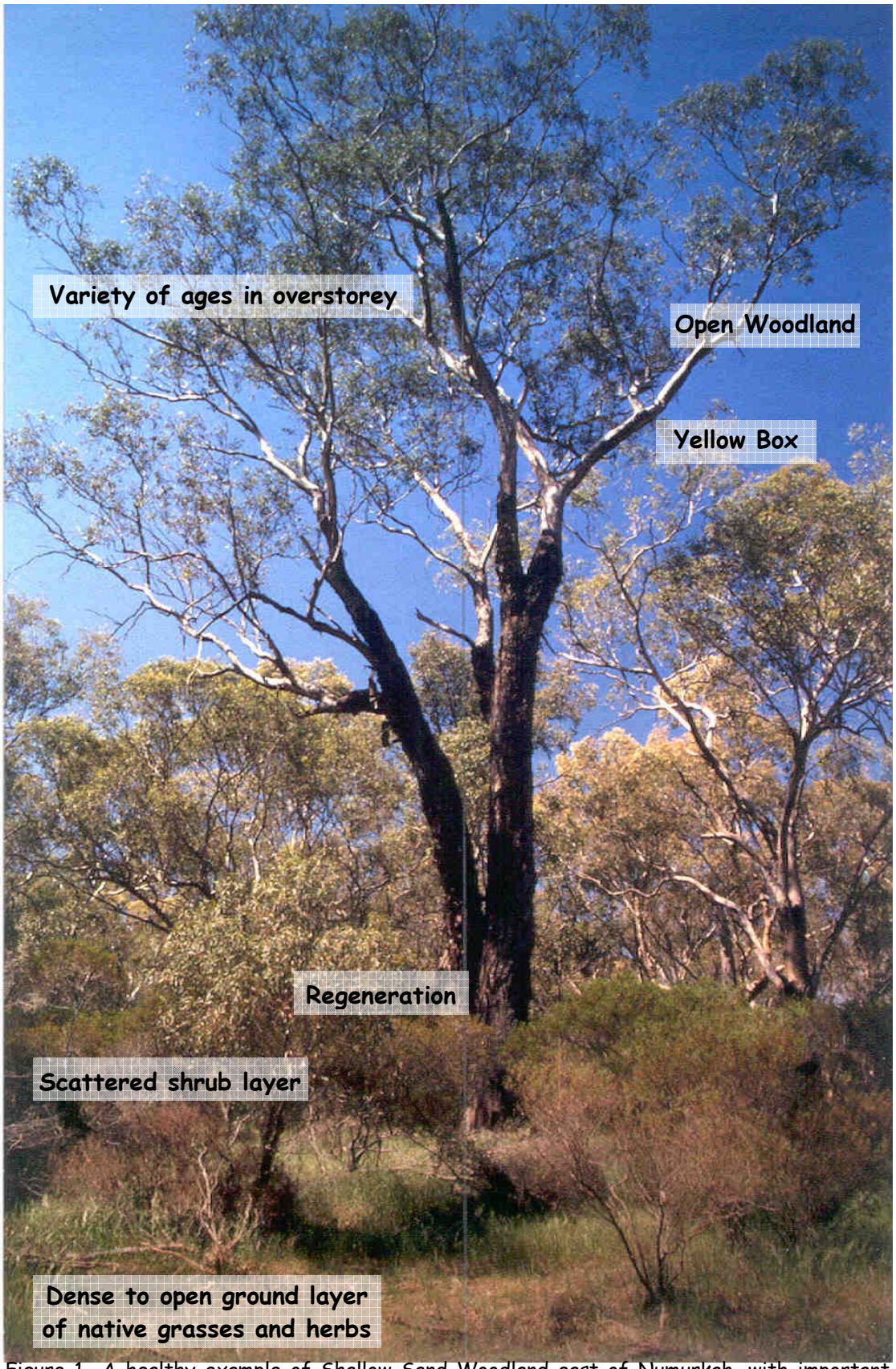

Photo: Sue Berwick

Figure 1 A healthy example of Shallow Sand Woodland east of Numurkah, with important habitat and diagnostic features noted.

Natural Heritage Trust
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GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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1% of this vegetation type remains uncleared, 94% (128ha) of which is on private land.

Description

Shallow Sand Woodlands occur on the plains with sandy loam soils. They are often associated with Plains Grassy Woodlands and surrounds or are adjacent to Sand Ridge Woodlands at elevations of 100—125m and an annual rainfall of 400—550mm. This is a grassy ecosystem with an overstorey of Yellow Box, White Cypress—pine and Buloke, sometimes with Grey Box and River Red Gum. The shrub layer consists of Golden Wattle, Mallee Wattle, Varnish Wattle, Curved Rice—flower, Weeping Pittosporum and Ruby Saltbush. The ground layer contains Rough Spear—grass, Bristly Wallaby—grass, Yellowish Bluebell and Many—flowered Mat—rush. Although no longer found in this vegetation type, historical records suggest that Silver Banksia, Yarran Wattle, Broom Ballart and Pale—fruit Ballart occurred in this community.

Current Threats

- Loss of tree and ground habitat (through timber harvesting, firewood collection, and "tidying—up" of fallen sticks), threatens associated native fauna.
- Inappropriate grazing regimes cause loss of native species, hinder native plant regeneration, disturb the soil and increase nutrient levels.
- Weeds, particularly Phalaris, Paspalum, Yorkshire Fog Grass and Wild Oats, compete with native species.
- Pest animals defoliate native vegetation, disturb the soil and threaten native fauna as predators and by competing for food.
- 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 future of the remnant.
- 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.

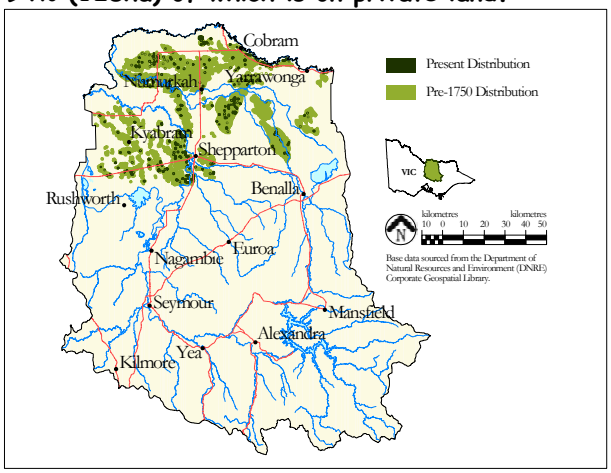

Figure 2 Distribution of Shallow Sand Woodland in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

Significant Species

Flora: Buloke, Buloke Mistletoe, White Cypress—pine, Sweet Quandong, Desert Cassia, Silver Banksia and Spurred Spear—grass.

Fauna: Grey—crowned Babbler, Apostle Bird and Tree Goanna.

Management Tips

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

- Fence sites to exclude grazing, particularly over spring and early summer, to allow flowering and seed—set of native plants. Retain access for controlled grazing for to manage weeds where necessary.
- 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.
- Revegetate areas to buffer remnants from pasture, and link to other remnants.
- Retain dead & hollow—bearing trees (where absent, erect nest boxes) and leave fallen timber & branches.
- Plant understorey for remnants with no native shrubs or groundlayer.
- Monitor your site and adapt management practices as required (help is available to assist and set up monitoring).

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