

Sand Ridge Woodland

ENDANGERED in the Goulburn Broken Catchment



Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Helping Australia
A Commonwealth Government Initiative



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5% of this vegetation type remains uncleared, 56% (130ha) of which is on private land.

Description

Sand Ridge Woodlands occur on natural high sand ridges or dunes, typically formed by large rivers depositing the deep sandy soils at elevations of 100–125m with an annual rainfall of 400–550mm. These sand ridges are typically dominated by White Cypress–pine, sometimes with Yellow Box and Drooping She–oak. **Silver Banksias** once occurred on these ridges. The **shrub layer** contains Lightwood (in north–west of Catchment), Common Fringe–myrtle, Grey Mulga, Golden Wattle, Mallee Wattle, Gold–dust Wattle and Cassinia. The **ground layer** contains a mixture of Wire–grass, Hairy Panic, Umbrella Grass, Summer Grass, Common Wheat–grass, Nigger–heads, Blue–bush, Blue Bells and Smooth Minuria.

Significant Species

Flora: Small Psoralea, Mallee Wattle, Silky Umbrella Grass, Finger Panic–grass, Australian Millet, Leafless Blue–bush and White Cypress–pine.

Fauna: Grey–crowned Babbler and Tree Goanna.

Current Threats

- Lack of native **understorey** and **groundlayer** plants, which: attract insect eating birds, helping keep the overstorey healthy; and improve soil health through fixing nitrogen.
- Loss of tree and ground **habitat** (through **timber harvesting**, “tidying–up”, and **firewood collection**), which threatens associated fauna.
- Inappropriate **grazing regimes** cause loss of native species, hinder native plant regeneration, disturb the soil and increase nutrient levels.
- **Weeds**, particularly Phalaris, Yorkshire Fog Grass, Paspalum, and Wild Oats, compete with native species.
- **Pest animals** cause defoliate native vegetation, disturb the soil and threaten native fauna as predators and by competing for food.
- Lack of **natural regeneration** of plants, which threatens the viability 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 Sand Ridge Woodland in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

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.
- **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** until seedlings are well established.
- **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).