



**FLORA & FAUNA
GUARANTEE**

NOMINATION NO. 364
ITEM NO. C1514

FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE - SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FINAL RECOMMENDATION ON A NOMINATION FOR LISTING

Warm Temperate Rainforest (Far East Gippsland) Community

Date of receipt of the nomination: 5 June 1995
Date of preliminary recommendation: 19 September 1995
Date of final recommendation: 1 February 1996

File No.:95/1015

Validity:

The nomination is for a valid item and the prescribed information was provided.

The nominated community is accepted by the SAC as a valid community because it is adequately defined and described according to accepted practice, and it is described in such a way as to be distinguished from all other communities.

The Warm Temperate Rainforest (Far East Gippsland) Community is structurally complex with emergent species including Blackwood *Acacia melanoxylon* and occasionally Mountain Grey-gum *Eucalyptus cypellocarpa* over a closed canopy of trees and lianes beneath which there is a dense layer of tree-ferns, a discontinuous stratum of shrubs, then ground-ferns and herbs. The canopy species are invariably Lilly Pilly *Acmena smithii* and Sweet Pittosporum *Pittosporum undulatum* which are dominants with Muttonwood *Rapanea howittiana* as an occasional member of the canopy. There is a plethora of lianes and scrambling species which densely clothe the tree canopy and fill the gaps. The most common and dominant of these lianes in the canopy include Jungle Grape *Cissus hypoglauca*, Milk Vine *Marsdenia rostrata*, Wonga Vine *Pandorea pandorana* and Jasmine Morinda *Morinda jasminoides*. There is also the usual suite of Warm Temperate Rainforest wirey lianes Wombat Berry *Eustrephus latifolius* and Austral Sarsaparilla *Smilax australis* that are very shade tolerate but can also be very prolific in gaps.

There are a number of character species which are secondary species, such as Hazel Pomaderris *Pomaderris aspera*, Blanket-leaf *Bedfordia arborescens*, Victorian Christmas Bush *Prostanthera lasianthos*, Trailing Guinea-flower *Hibbertia dentata*, Forest Wire-grass *Tetrarrhena juncea* and Forest Bindweed *Calystegia marginata* which are indicative of disturbance. This may indicate disturbance due to an incursion by fire, tree fall or land slip creating a gap or flooding disturbance associated with stream margins. Gaps are filled with these secondary species, as well as rampant thickets of Jungle Grape and Queensland Bramble *Rubus hillii*. It is within these gaps that the large variety of herbs recorded for this community become the most abundant, with lesser numbers persevering beneath the canopy's full shade. The understorey shrubs of this community, Large Mock-olive *Notelaea venosa*, Austral Mulberry *Hedycarya angustifolia*, Mountain Pepper *Tasmannia lanceolata*, Prickly Currant *Coprosma quadrifida* are usually shade tolerant species and bird-dispersed, generally reaching a height of 1-3m although Blue Oliveberry *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* can eventually attain a height of 8m or more and participate in the canopy. Tree-ferns like Soft Tree-fern *Dicksonia antarctica* and Rough Tree-fern *Cyathea australis* are the most common and structurally dominant tree-ferns in the community although three other rarer species may also be encountered.

The ground layer is dominated by ground-ferns, the most abundant of which are Gristle-fern *Blechnum cartilagineum*, Fishbone Water-fern *B. nudum*, Mother Shield-fern *Polystichum proliferum*, Creeping Shield-fern *Lastreopsis microsora* and Shiny Shield-fern *L. acuminata*. Vascular epiphytes are common with the most diverse group being the ferns and fern allies such as Weeping Spleenwort *Asplenium flaccidum* ssp. *flaccidum*, Jungle Bristle-fern *Macroglena caudata*, Veined Bristle-fern *Polyphlebium venosum*, Common Filmy-fern *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme*, Small Fork-fern *Tmesipteris parva* and the flowering plants Fieldia *Fieldia australis* and Butterfly Orchid *Sarcochilus australis*.

Eligibility for listing as a community under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee

The nominated item satisfies at least one criterion of the set of criteria prepared and maintained under Section 11 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, and stated in Schedule 1 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Regulations 1991*.

Evidence that criteria are satisfied:

Sub-criterion 2.2.1 *The community is very rare in terms of the total area it covers or it has a very restricted distribution or it has been recorded from only a few localities.*

Evidence:

The community is very rare in terms of total area and is geographically restricted in distribution to a small area on the coastal hills and plains east of Cann River township.

Background Information

- Although the threat of wildfire is unlikely to be significant, it could represent a potential threat to the community.
- There are eleven biogeographically significant species that occur within the community. The presence of the following nine species, which are classified as threatened in Victoria (CNR 1994), represents the southern biogeographic edge of their range in Australia: Green Wattle *Acacia irrorata* ssp. *irrorata* (vulnerable), Prickly Tree-fern *Cyathea leichardtii* (vulnerable, listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), Trim Shield-fern *Lastreopsis decomposita* (vulnerable), Shiny Fan-fern *Sticherus flabellatus* (rare), Violet Nightshade *Solanum brownii* (vulnerable), Soft Skullcap *Scutellaria mollis* (rare), Rough-fruit Pittosporum *Pittosporum revolutum* (rare), Eastern Leatherwood *Eucryphia moorei* (vulnerable) and Sandpaper Fig *Ficus coronata* (vulnerable). The presence of Slender Tree-fern *Cyathea cunninghamii* (rare in Victoria and Australia, listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) within the community represents its northern limit in Australia (with the exception of a small population several kilometres north of Maxwell Creek).
- Other significant species recorded within the community include:
 - Jointed Mistletoe *Korthalsella rubra* ssp. *rubra* (vulnerable)
 - Yellow Elderberry *Sambucus australasica* (vulnerable). Listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
 - Wallaby Bush *Beyeria lasiocarpa* (rare)
 - Skirted Tree-fern *Cyathea x marcescens* (rare)
 - Branching Grass-flag *Libertia paniculata* (rare)
 - Spicy Everlasting *Ozothamnus argophyllus* (rare)
 - Tangle Orchid *Plectorrhiza tridentata* (rare)
 - Cobra Greenhood *Pterostylis grandiflora* (rare)
 - White Supplejack *Ripogonum album* (rare)
 - Oval Fork-fern *Tmesipteris ovata* (rare).

Advertisement for public comment

In accordance with the requirements of Section 14 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, the preliminary recommendation was advertised for a period of at least 30 days.

The preliminary recommendation was advertised in:

“The Age” - on 22 November 1995

“The Weekly Times” - on 22 November 1995

“The Mallacoota Mouth” - on 24 November 1995

The Government Gazette - on 23 November 1995

Submissions closed on 29 November 1995.

Further evidence provided:

No public comments were received by the Scientific Advisory Committee.

No evidence was provided to warrant a review of the Scientific Advisory Committee's preliminary recommendation that the community is eligible for listing.

Documentation

The published information and research data provided to the SAC have been assessed. To the best of their knowledge, the SAC believes that the data presented are not the subject of scientific dispute and the inferences drawn are reasonable and well supported.

Final Recommendation of the Scientific Advisory Committee

The Scientific Advisory Committee concludes that sub-criterion 2.2.1 has been satisfied and that no evidence exists to suggest that primary criterion 2.2 cannot be satisfied as a consequence of sub-criterion 2.2.1 being satisfied.

The Scientific Advisory Committee recommends that the nominated item be supported for listing on Schedule 2 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

Selected references:

Busby, J. R. (1992) *Climatic influences on rainforest distribution*. In: Gell, P. & Mercer, C. [Ed.] *Victoria's rainforests: Perspectives on definition, classification and management*. Department of Geography and Environmental Science. Monash Publication in Geography No. 41.

Cameron, D. (1992) *A portrait of Victoria's rainforests: Distribution, diversity and definition*. In: Gell, P & Mercer, C. [Ed.] *Victoria's rainforests: Perspectives on definition, classification and management*. Department of Geography and Environmental Science. Monash Publication in Geography No. 41.

CNR (1994) *Victorian Flora Species List (including vascular and non-vascular taxa)*. Flora Section, Flora and Fauna Branch. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Victoria

Foreman, D. B. & Walsh, N. G. (1993) [Ed.] *Flora of Victoria Volume 1*. Inkata Press, Melbourne.

LCC (1985) *East Gippsland area review*. Land Conservation Council, Victoria.

McMahon, A. R. G. (1987) *The effects of the 1982-3 bushfires on sites of significance*. Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands Environmental Studies Publication Series No. 41.

Peel, B. & Coram, J. (1993) *Rainforest of the Lower Snowy River*. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Orbost.

Smith, C. (1992) *Rainforests and fire*. *Park Watch*. Victorian National Parks Association. March 1992.

Endorsement by the Convenor of the Scientific Advisory Committee

Date



12 March 1996

Dr. Malcolm Calder
Convenor