



**FLORA & FAUNA  
GUARANTEE**

NOMINATION NO. 365  
ITEM NO. C2021

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

**Herb-rich Plains Grassy Wetland (West Gippsland) Community**

Date of receipt of the nomination: 8 June 1995  
Date of preliminary recommendation: 18 August 1995  
Date of final recommendation: 1 February 1996

File No.:95/0950

**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 community structure of Herb-rich Plains Grassy (West Gippsland) Community varies from woodland to low open-forest or grassland/sedgeland. The tree stratum may consist of River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* or Swamp Gum *E. ovata*. In some examples the trees have been cleared while others are probably naturally treeless. Shrubs are generally sparse to absent and may include Blackwood *Acacia melanoxylon*, Golden Spray *Viminaria juncea*, Swamp Paperbark *Melaleuca ericifolia* and Prickly Tea-tree *Leptospermum continentale*. These species usually only occur on the fringe of the community.

The field layer is zoned according to flooding regimes. A fringing zone, which is subject to shallow seasonal inundation (for up to 3-4 months, dependent on rainfall), is dominated by Common Tussock-grass *Poa labillardierei* and/or Soft Twig Sedge *Baumea arthropphylla*, and Common Spike-sedge *Eleocharis acuta*, in association with Brown-back *Danthonia duttoniana* and Wetland Wallaby-grass *D. semiannularis*. Other sedges, including Basket Sedge *Carex tereticaulis*, or Fen Sedge *C. gaudichaudiana* may be locally abundant. This zone supports a suite of species including Joint-leaf Rush *Juncus holoschoenus*, Running Marsh-flower *Villarsia reniformis*, Prickfoot *Eryngium vesiculosum*, Floating Club-sedge *Isolepis fluitans*, Small Loosestrife *Lythrum hyssopifolia*, Poison Lobelia *Lobelia pratoides* and Small Spike-sedge *Eleocharis pusilla*. In intact (ungrazed or infrequently grazed) examples this zone may include Swamp Everlasting *Bracteantha* sp. aff. *subundulata*, Pale Swamp Everlasting *Helichrysum* aff. *rutidolepis* (Lowland Swamps), Milky Beauty Heads *Calocephalus lacteus*, Billy Buttons *Craspedia canens*, and Swamp Daisy *Brachyscome cardiocarpa*. Many of these species also grow out into the wetland in deeper water.

The more frequently flooded central zone, which may also be permanently inundated, is dominated by Common Spike Sedge *Eleocharis acuta*, in association with Australian Sweet Grass *Glyceria australis*, and/or Veined Swamp Wallaby-grass *Amphibromus nervosus*. Other plants which may be abundant in this zone include Water Purslane *Neopaxia australasica*, Running Marsh-flower *Villarsia reniformis*, Soft Twig-sedge *Baumea arthropphylla*, Soft Bog-sedge *Schoenus tesquorum*, Floating Pondweed *Potamogeton tricarlinatus*, Water Ribbons *Triglochin procerum* spp. agg., River Buttercup *Ranunculus inundatus* and Water Milfoils *Myriophyllum* spp.

**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:**

**Criterion 2.1** *The community is in a demonstrable state of decline which is likely to result in extinction.*

*Evidence:*

Historically this community has declined because of wetland draining and grazing. Its distribution has been reduced to a fragment of its former range and size and this process continues.

**Criterion 2.2** *The community is significantly prone to future threats which are likely to result in extinction.*

*Evidence:*

Remnants are threatened by wetland draining and alteration of wetland hydrology, weed invasion, railway maintenance work, grazing by introduced stock, urban and industrial runoff and filling and draining to allow development. The largest known remnant of the community is currently threatened by urban development. No remnants occur in areas set aside primarily for conservation purposes.

**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:*

It is estimated that less than 70 hectares of the community now exists, including areas which are degraded. Remnants occur at Barnbam Swamp at Lyndhurst, along the fringe of the former Carrum Carrum Swamp, at Braeside Park, on private land, and along rail reserves between Dandenong and Cranbourne, Dandenong and Berwick, and Clyde and Tooradin.

## **Background Information**

- The following taxa considered threatened in Victoria (CNR 1994) have been recorded within the community:
  - *Agrostis billardierei* var. *filifolia* Coast Blown-grass (vulnerable). Received final recommendation for listing under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
  - *Bracteantha* sp. aff. *subundulata* Swamp Everlasting (vulnerable). Received final recommendation for listing under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
  - *Prasophyllum frenchii* Slaty Leek-orchid (vulnerable). Vulnerable in Australia (*Endangered Species Protection Act 1992*).
  - *Rostratula benghalensis* Painted Snipe (insufficiently known) (CNR 1995, in press).
- The community has close affinities with two communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*: Red Gum Swamp Community No.1 and Plains Grassland (South Gippsland) Community

## **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 Cranbourne Sun” - on 21 November 1995
- “The Dandenong Examiner” - on 21 November 1995
- The Government Gazette* - on 23 November 1995

Submissions closed on 29 December 1995.

## **Further evidence provided:**

A submission was received by the Scientific Advisory Committee. However 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 on the evidence available the nominated item is eligible for listing in accordance with Section 11(1) of the Act because primary criteria 2.1 and 2.2 are satisfied.

The Scientific Advisory Committee also 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:**

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

CNR (1995) *Threatened Fauna in Victoria - 1995*. Flora and Fauna Branch, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Victoria.

Costello, C. & Meredith, C. (1994) *Flora and Fauna Assessment of Cranbourne Swamp*. A report to the Urban Land Authority. Biosis Research Pty. Ltd., Melbourne.

Corrick, A. H. (1981) Wetlands of Victoria II. Wetlands and Waterbirds of South Gippsland. *Proc. Roy. Soc. Vic.* 94: 69-87.

DCE (1992) *An assessment of Victoria's wetlands*. Department of Conservation and Environment & Office of the Environment, Melbourne.

Frood, D. (in prep) *The vegetation of Victorian wetlands*. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Victoria.

Gullan, P. K., Cheal, D. C. & Walsh, N. G. (1990) *Rare or threatened plants in Victoria*. Department of Conservation and Environment, Melbourne.

Maver, J. L. *et al.* (1995) Planning and Environment Act 1987 Cranbourne Planning Scheme Amendment L100 LSP1 - Lyndhurst Local Structure Plan. Report of Advisory Committee.

**Endorsement by the Convenor of the Scientific Advisory Committee**

**Date**

19 April 1996



Dr. Malcolm Calder  
Convenor