



**FLORA & FAUNA
GUARANTEE**

FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE - SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FINAL RECOMMENDATION ON A NOMINATION FOR LISTING

Semi-arid Northwest Plains Buloke Grassy Woodland Community

Date of receipt of the nomination: 6 November 1996
 Date of preliminary recommendation: 9 July 1997
 Date of final recommendation: 1 September 1997

File No.: FF/06/0019

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.

Semi-arid Northwest Plains Buloke Grassy Woodland occurs at widespread sites across north west Victoria. More than 90% of the area is privately owned with the majority cleared for dryland agriculture. Less than 5% of the former area of the community remains.

The community can be described as open woodland containing Buloke *Allocasuarina luehmannii* as the dominant tree, sometimes in association with Black Box *Eucalyptus largiflorens* and/or Yellow Gum *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*. Gold-dust Wattle *Acacia acinacea* is the dominant shrub, but at most localities a number of sub-shrubs such as Variable Sida *Sida corrugata*, Frosted Goosefoot *Chenopodium desertorum*, Fuzzy New Holland Daisy *Vittadinia cuneata*, Woolly New Holland Daisy *V. gracilis* and Nodding Saltbush *Einadia nutans* are present. The groundlayer is normally characterised by a range of grasses including Bristly Wallaby Grass *Danthonia setacea*, Feather Spear-grass *Austrostipa elegantissima*, Crested Spear-grass *Austrostipa blackii*, Mat-rush *Lomandra effusa*, Grassland Wood-sorrel *Oxalis perennans* and Hare's foot Clover *Trifolium arvense*.

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:

Prior to European settlement, it is possible that this community occupied up to 5 000km². At present less than 5% of this area remains. The community is significantly depleted and exists as small fragments.

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

Evidence:

Remnants of the community are threatened by incremental clearing along roadsides and rail reserves through road grading, firebreak construction and weedicide application, fertiliser and weedicide drift from adjacent private land, land clearance and cultivation of private land, and overgrazing by stock and rabbits.

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:

Semi-arid Northwest Plains Buloke Grassy Woodland Community occurs at widespread sites over low-lying areas in north west Victoria. It occurs in an area bounded by the Murray River at Barham (New South Wales) in the north east, Echuca in the south east, Horsham in the south west and Yanac in the north west. The vast majority of the area is private land.

Additional Information

- The following taxa considered threatened in Victoria (CNR 1994) have been recorded within the community:
 - Hairy-tails *Ptilotus erubescens* (endangered in Victoria).
 - Winged New Holland Daisy *Vittadinia pterochaeta* (endangered in Victoria)
 - Myall *Acacia melvillei* (Vulnerable in Victoria).
 - Buloke Mistletoe *Amyema linophyllum* ssp. *orientale* (Vulnerable in Victoria).
 - Long Eryngium *Eryngium plantagineum* (Vulnerable in Victoria).
 - Erect Pepper-cress *Lepidium pseudopapillosum* (Vulnerable in Victoria and Australia).
 - Bottle Bluebush *Maireana excavata* (Vulnerable in Victoria).
 - Spurred Spear-grass *Austrostipa gibbosa* (Rare in Victoria).
 - Fine-hairy Spear-grass *Austrostipa puberula* (Rare in Victoria).
 - Umbrella Wattle *Acacia oswaldii* (regeneration problematic in Victoria).
 - Buloke *Allocasuarina luehmannii* (regeneration problematic in Victoria).
 - White Cypress-pine *Callitris glaucophylla* (regeneration problematic in Victoria).
 - Turkey-bush *Eremophila deserti* (regeneration problematic in Victoria).
 - Hooked Needlewood *Hakea tephrosperma* (regeneration problematic in Victoria).

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 23 July 1997
- “The Weekly Times” - on 23 July 1997
- “The Hopetoun Courier” - on 24 July 1997
- “The Sunraysia Daily” - 23 July 1997
- “The Rainbow Argus” - 24 July 1997
- The *Government Gazette* - on 24 July 1997

Submissions closed on 29 August 1997.

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 has 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 criterion 2.2 is satisfied.

The SAC 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 Species List (including vascular and non-vascular taxa)*. Flora Section, Flora and Fauna Branch, 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.

Sluiter, I. R. K. (in prep.) *The Pine and Buloke woodlands of semi-arid and dry sub-humid Victoria and adjacent areas: floristic definition, ecology and conservation status*. Report to Environment Australia, Canberra.

Endorsement by the Convenor of the Scientific Advisory Committee

Date



Dr. David Macmillan
Convenor

- 2 JUL 1998