



FLORA & FAUNA
GUARANTEE

NOMINATION NO. 92
ITEM NO. C1751

FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE - SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FINAL RECOMMENDATION ON A NOMINATION FOR LISTING

Butterfly Community No. 1

Date of receipt of the nomination: 23 October 1989
Date of preliminary recommendation: 22 January 1991
Date of final recommendation: 22 May 1991

File No.: 89/2909

Validity:

The nomination is for a valid item and the prescribed information was provided. The nominated community is clearly described in such a way as to be distinguished from all other communities.

The community is described as an assemblage of flora and fauna characterised by the presence of a large number of significant, rare and extremely rare invertebrate species (e.g. the butterflies *Acrodipsas myrmecophila* (Small Ant-blue), *A. brisbanensis* (Large Ant-blue), *Ogyris genoveva araxes* (Genoveva Azure), *Candalides hyacinthinus simplex* (Northern Dusky Blue), *Theclines thes miskini miskini* and the ant *Iridomyrmex nitidus* on which the ant-blues depend). The vegetation consists of a mosaic of dry sclerophyll open forest and woodland, of various eucalypts (e.g. *Eucalyptus dives* Broad-leaved Peppermint, *E. goniocalyx* Long-leaved box, *E. obliqua* Messmate, *E. macrorhyncha* Red Stringybark) with an understorey of a mixture of grasses and shrubs (e.g. *Poa* spp., *Grevillea alpina*, *Epacris impressa*, *Senecio* spp., *Cheilanthes* spp.) The food plants of the invertebrates also include tree and rock lichens and fungi.

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 1990*.

Evidence that criteria are satisfied:

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

Evidence:

The SAC was satisfied that the community is threatened by habitat damage, notably fire, land clearance and damage by feral and other grazing animals. Significant species in the community are also threatened by overcollection. The community is immediately threatened by a proposal to mine for gold at its only known occurrence on the Mt Piper volcanic plug. The resulting dust, vibration and vegetation clearance would seriously damage the community and its butterfly fauna (additional expert opinion).

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 SAC accepted the nomination's argument that the community is unique, because:

- it is a community including at least 20 species of butterflies including the unique co-occurrence of the two ant-blue species and three other rare species; and
- at no other site in the State do the two ant-blue butterflies co-exist.

Clear evidence was provided to show that the community is known from only one site in the State.

The data presented on distribution and abundance are the result of comprehensive surveys and provide clear and strong evidence that the community is rare in terms of abundance and distribution.

Background Information

- Data on threats and rarity were provided by the nominator, who is accepted by the SAC as an expert on lepidoptera.
- The SAC accepted the argument that the volcanic plug known as Mt. Piper is the only area in the State where such an assemblage of rare and significant species of butterfly may be found.
- A major part of the community (nearly 56 ha.) is included within an Education Reserve for the Study of the Natural Environment, established in 1980 and managed by DCE.

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 public comment for a period of at least 30 days.

The preliminary recommendation was advertised in:

"The Age" - on 6 February 1991

"Kilmore Free Press" - on 13 February 1991

Government Gazette - on 6 February 1991

Submissions closed on 8 April 1991.

Further evidence provided:

No public comments were received by the Scientific Advisory Committee.

No new 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 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:

Anderson, E. & Spry, F.P. (1987) A new butterfly, *Lycaena cyrilus* n. sp. *Vict. Nat.* 14(1): 5-7.

Ashton, H. (1976) The vegetation of Mt. Piper, central Victoria: a study of a continuum. *J. Ecol.* 64: 463-483.

Atkins, A. (1978) Another distribution record for *Pseudodipsas brisbanensis cyrilus*. *Vict. Entomologist* 8(1): 7.

Common, I.F.B. & Waterhouse, D.F. (1981) *Butterflies of Australia*. Revised edition. Sydney: Angus & Robertson.

Dunn, K.L. (1982) Notes on an important extension to the distribution of *Theclinesstes miskini miskini* (T.P. Lucas) (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae). *Vic. Entomologist* 12(5): 53-55.

Field, R.P. (1978) Rediscovery of *Pseudodipsas brisbanensis* in Victoria. *Vict. Entomologist* 8(1): 5-7.

Hunting, M.M. (1980) More records from Croajingalong National Park, East Gippsland. *Vic. Entomologist* 10(3): 29-30

Jelinek, A. (1991) Butterfly Community No. 1. *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Action Statement No. 6*. Department of Conservation and Environment, Victoria.

Quick, W.N.B. (1989) The Victorian "Ant-blues" *Acrodipsas* spp. (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae). Unpublished report to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, Victoria.

Valentine, P.S. (1982) *Ogyris genoveva gela* Waterhouse (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) feeding at sapflow, and the first record of this subspecies in Victoria. *Aust. Ent. Mag.* 8(6): 92.

Waterhouse, G.A. & Lyell, G. (1913) Description of a new lycaenid butterfly, with notes on its life history. *Vic. Nat.* 29(10): 156-160.

Endorsement by the Convener of the Scientific Advisory Committee

Date


Dr. Neil Murray

19 June, 1991