



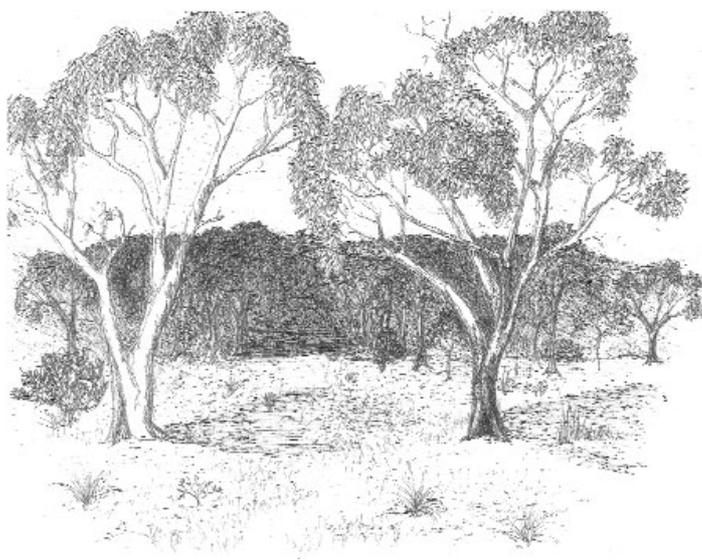
THREATENED SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES OF THE ACT

Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodland

An endangered ecological community

Issued: 4 March 2005

Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodland is an open woodland community in which either or both Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) and Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*) are usually present and commonly dominant or co-dominant. Apple Box (*E. bridgesiana*) is a frequent associate.



The trees form an open canopy above a species-rich understorey of native tussock grasses, herbs and scattered shrubs. The combination results in a variegated mosaic of vegetation patches with features that are transitional between forest and grassland, and the community is frequently interspersed with these other vegetation types.

Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodlands are utilised by a large number of animal species. The name of this ecological community (Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodland) is intended to encompass the dominant trees of the upper stratum, the characteristic plants of the understorey and the characteristic animals that interact with the vegetation complex.

It has been estimated that prior to European settlement (pre-1750), the extent of Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodland in the ACT was about 32,000 ha. About 15,000 ha (47%) of former Yellow Box–Red Gum Grassy Woodland have been destroyed during the development of Canberra or as a result of other land uses. The areas now remaining are located at Gungahlin, Majura-Kowen, Callum Brae-Jerrabomberra and on rural land south and west of Canberra. Of these remaining areas about 10,865 ha are in a partially or moderately modified condition that meets the definition of this endangered ecological community. A further 5,955 ha are in a substantially or severely modified condition.

Of the 10,865 ha of Yellow Box-Red Gum grassy woodland, about 7,035 ha (65%) are protected by virtue of their location within land use categories that do not permit clearing for urban and similar activities. This includes about 2,940 ha in nature reserves. 2,990 ha are located in land shown as Broadacre and Rural under the Territory Plan. Some of these areas of woodland are under long term rural leases and Land Management Agreements exist to ensure conservation values are retained. 840 ha of Yellow Box-Red Gum Grassy Woodland are located on land identified in the Territory Plan as urban or related land use categories.

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CONSERVATION THREATS

- Urban and infrastructure development.
- Grazing.
- Dieback.
- Firewood and other timber cutting.
- Weeds invasion.
- Fire.
- Introduced pests and changes in native species abundance.

CONSERVATION THREATS

Priority tasks to improve Conservation of Lowland Woodland in the ACT (including Yellow Box-Red Gum grassy woodland) include:

- Completing surveys of woodlands.
- Protecting key habitat areas.
- Providing for improved habitat connectivity for wildlife movement.

- Protecting lower elevation woodlands.
- Reviewing management of lowland woodland areas in horse paddocks and agisted land.
- Assessing woodland for their potential for listing on the ACT Heritage Places Register as natural heritage places.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The primary source of information for this Information Sheet is the ACT Lowland Woodland Conservation Strategy—Action Plan No. 27 where a full bibliography is available. Action Plans are available from the Environment ACT Website: www.environment.act.gov.au or the Arts, Heritage and Environment Information Centre at 12 Wattle Street, Lyneham ACT.

Acknowledgement

The illustration of the species was prepared for Environment ACT by Fiona Baker.