

HOW CAN YOU HELP TO PROTECT THE DUNLOP GRASSLANDS RESERVE?

If you are lucky enough to live near this Reserve you can assist in its protection by;

- Being watchful and reporting fires, especially in the summer months.
- Reporting any illegal activity such as the entry of cars, motorbikes and dogs as well as the lighting of fires.
- Reporting any illegal removal of timber or rocks, which provide important habitat for flora and fauna.
- Keeping an eye out for people dumping garden rubbish and prunings that often spread weeds.
- Ensuring your own gardens are free of invasive weeds, especially those easily dispersed by wind and birds.
- Keeping pets such as cats and dogs locked in at night to ensure they do not hunt or disturb native wildlife.
- Getting involved with monitoring and local Landcare activities.

To report fires or any illegal activities please call Canberra Connect on 132281 or in case of emergency 000.

For other information contact the Ginninderra Catchment Group 6278 3309.



WHAT MAKES DUNLOP GRASSLANDS NATURE RESERVE SO SPECIAL?

Dunlop Grasslands Reserve is only partially modified with a low density of introduced weed species and a wide range of native grasses and smaller plants. It is therefore a core grassland conservation site for the ACT.

The area is home to populations of eight regionally uncommon plant species which have a high conservation value. They are;

- *Amphibromus nervosus*,
- Milkmaids *Burchardia umbellata*,
- Blue Grass Lily *Caesia calliantha*,
- Flat Spike Sedge *Eleocharis plana*,
- Ophioglossum *Ophioglossum lisitanicum*,
- Five-awn Spear Grass *Pentapogon quadrifidus*,
- Matted Pratia *Pratia pedunculata*, and
- Zornia *Zornia dictiocarpa*.

This, combined with the natural scenic beauty of the area, make it a special place to protect for future generations.

DUNLOP Grasslands Nature Reserve



Australian Government



FROGWATCH
ACT and Region



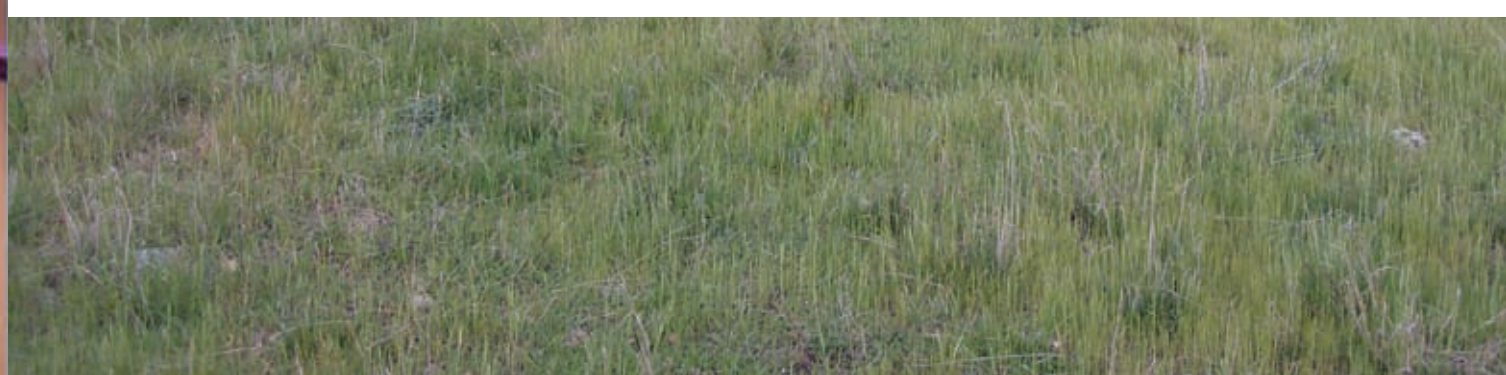
WHAT IS A NATIVE GRASSLAND / GRASSY WOODLAND?

Native grasslands are places where grasses are the dominant plant and the cover of trees and shrubs is less than 10%. When the cover of trees exceeds 10% but the ground cover is still dominated by grasses, the community is called a grassy woodland. You can see examples of both these vegetation communities in the Dunlop Grasslands Reserve.



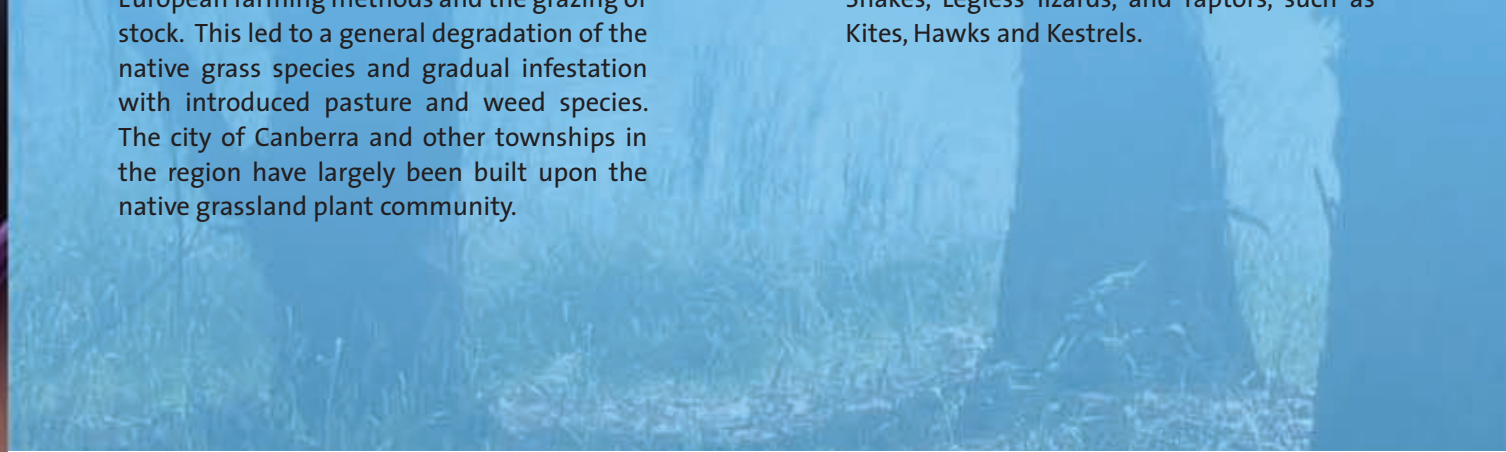
WHY ARE NATIVE GRASSLANDS IMPORTANT?

Relatively unmodified grasslands and grassy woodlands like those found in the Dunlop Grasslands Nature Reserve, now cover only a fraction of their original area. They are considered to be amongst the most threatened ecosystems in Australia and have been listed as an endangered ecological community under the ACT *Nature Conservation Act*, 1980. Prior to European settlement these vegetation communities occupied large expanses of South Eastern Australia and as they were relatively clear of trees, they were very attractive for pastoral settlement and development. This meant they were heavily impacted upon by European farming methods and the grazing of stock. This led to a general degradation of the native grass species and gradual infestation with introduced pasture and weed species. The city of Canberra and other townships in the region have largely been built upon the native grassland plant community.



WHAT LIVES IN THE DUNLOP GRASSLAND RESERVE?

Native grasslands are home to a large number of other organisms. Above ground you might see a wide variety of insects, spiders, frogs, reptiles and mammals. Many birds, whilst not inhabiting grasslands, feed in them. Lichens and fungi live among the plants, both on the surface and in the soil. Below ground there is an array of soil organisms including worms, beetles, ants and micro – organisms which all help to maintain the health of the grassland. In 2003 seven species of frogs were identified in the dam in the Northern Section of the Reserve. Other animals regularly sighted include Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Brown Snakes, Legless lizards, and raptors, such as Kites, Hawks and Kestrels.



WHAT IS BEING DONE TO PROTECT THESE AREAS?

The Dunlop Grasslands Reserve has been recognised by the ACT Lowland Native Grassland Conservation Strategy as an area of significance and deserving of conservation measures. The goals set out by the strategy include the conservation of viable examples of natural temperate grassland and its associated flora and fauna. It also aims to manage the conservation value of these areas by assisting regeneration and restoration of native species.

The Dunlop Grasslands Reserve is currently managed by The ACT Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS). To ensure that biodiversity is retained in the reserve TAMS agist introduced stock such as cattle and sheep as well as undertaking weed spraying.

■ STOCK GRAZING / DEFOLIATION

Prior to European settlement grassland areas would have been grazed and defoliated by a wide variety of native mammals and insects as well as being regularly burnt by both naturally occurring fires and those lit by Aboriginals. In the Dunlop Reserve many of these natural defoliation processes are no longer present. Therefore it is considered necessary to graze exotic stock (sheep and cattle) at certain times of the year to ensure that some native grasses do not become too dominant. If grazing is not undertaken the native grass canopy closes over, shading and out-competing smaller plants. Therefore this management technique is essential if we are to maintain the current biodiversity in the reserve.

■ WEED MANAGEMENT

TAMS also undertakes seasonal weed control programs in the Reserve, primarily to target Serrated Tussock, Thistles and woody weeds such as Blackberry and Sweet Briar. TAMS also monitors regularly for other exotic species such as African Love Grass and Chilean Needle Grass, which are highly invasive grass weeds, able to quickly displace native species and become dominant.

THE SOUTHERN RESERVE (ACCESSED VIA KERRIGAN STREET DUNLOP)

This section of the Reserve contains an important remnant of Wet-Themeda or Wet Kangaroo Grass in the low-lying areas, as well as many of the “uncommon” plant species mentioned earlier. This remnant is considered very important and for this reason has been completely fenced. The aim of this fence is to limit windblown dispersal of weed seeds, contain stock and limit pedestrian and domestic animal access.

■ WET KANGAROO-GRASS GRASSLAND

The area of Wet Kangaroo Grass is one of the best examples of this grass community in the ACT, as it has a low content of introduced weed species. Prior to European settlement this sub-community of plants would have been common in damp and poorly drained sites across the ACT and NSW. These sites are now often in poor condition as their low position in the landscape means they receive water laden with fertilisers which favours the growth of exotic weed species.

■ UNCOMMON PLANT SPECIES



This part of the Reserve is also home to many regionally ‘uncommon’ grassland species. Some of these plants are hard to identify but over spring and summer it is likely you will be able to see the beautiful and delicate white and blue flowers of Milkmaids and Blue Grass Lilies, as well as the fragrant pink flowers of the Chocolate Lily and the vivid blue of the native Blue Devil.



THE NORTHERN RESERVE (ACCESSED VIA BINNS STREET FRASER)

This section of the Dunlop Reserve contains an important remnant of Yellow Box/Red Gum Grassy Woodland and some remnants of Wallaby Grassland.

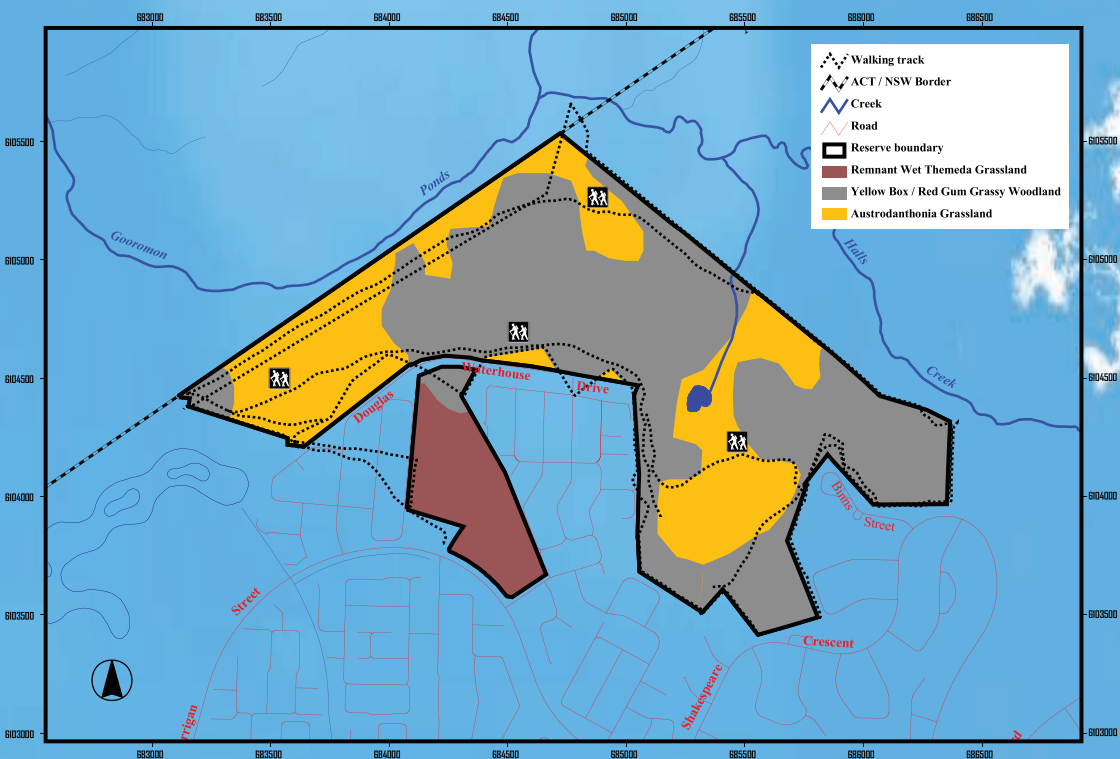
■ YELLOW BOX - RED GUM GRASSY WOODLAND

This woodland is easily recognised by its characteristic eucalyptus species including Yellow Box, Blakely’s Red Gum, Apple Box, Brittle Gum and Stringybark. The grassy understorey below these trees is mostly dominated by Spear grasses. These form a tall, open tussock grassland often interspersed with shorter grass species.

■ WALLABY GRASSLANDS

The Reserve is also home to some remnant Wallaby Grassland which forms shorter open-tussock areas free of trees and shrubs, usually in well drained areas with shallow soils.

MAP OF THE DUNLOP GRASSLANDS NATURE RESERVE



HISTORY OF THE AREA

The Dunlop Grasslands Reserve was originally part of two properties; ‘Croajingalong’ owned and managed by Florence and Frank Southwell and ‘Glenmore’ owned and managed by J.C. Moore. In the 1960’s the area was resumed by the Australian Government for the development of the suburbs we see there today. The remains of the Croajingalong Homestead are still visible in the Northern Section of the reserve and are marked by two large Elm trees.