

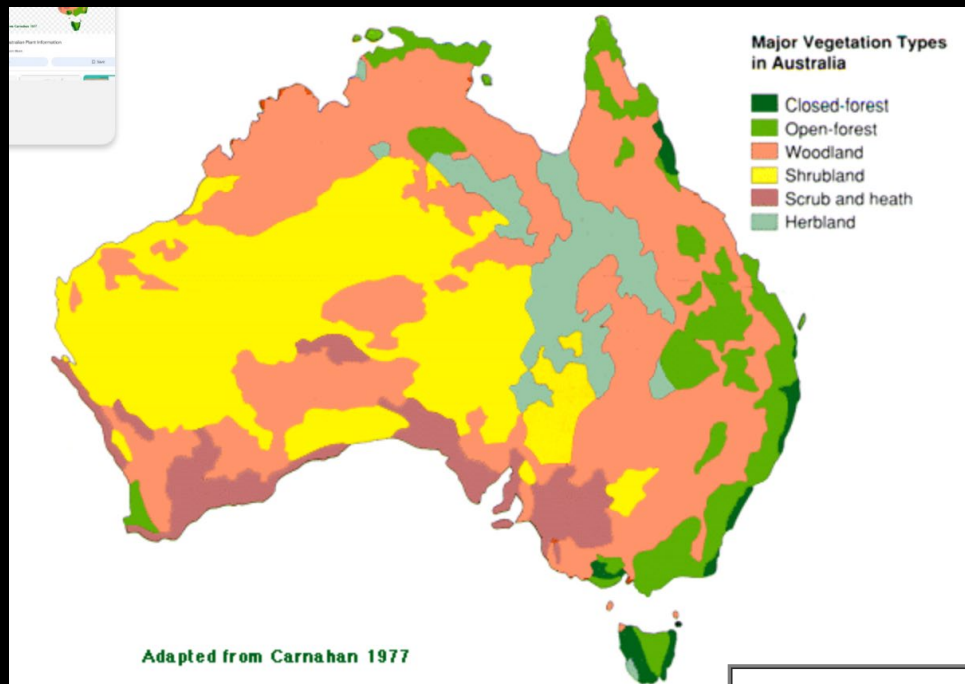
Woodland birds in central Victoria –
historical observations, current status and
future prospects

FOBIF AGM

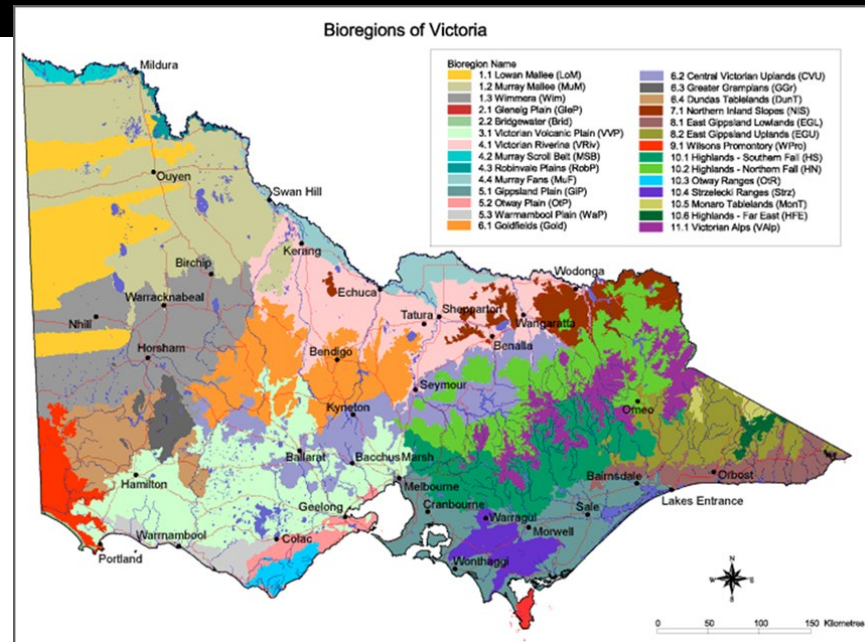
Geoff Park

12th August 2024

What is a woodland?



Structural forms of vegetation in Australia (based on Specht 1970)



Life form and height of tallest stratum	Percentage foliage cover of tallest plant layer			
	Dense (70-100%)	Mid-dense (30-70%)	Sparse (10-30%)	Very sparse (<10%)
Trees > 30 m	Tall closed-forest	Tall open-forest	Tall woodland	Tall open-woodland
Trees 10-30 m	Closed-forest	Open -forest	Woodland	Open-woodland
Trees 5-10 m	Low closed-forest	Low open-forest	Low woodland	Low open-woodland
Shrubs 2-8 m	Closed -scrub	Open-scrub	Tall shrubland	Tall open-shrubland
Shrubs 0-2 m	Closed -heath	Open-heath	Low shrubland	Low open-shrubland



What is a woodland bird?

... Birds that are largely dependent on woodlands for feeding and/or breeding



Victorian temperate- woodland bird community – listed under the FFG Act

Common name	Scientific name	Conservation status NRE (2000):	FFG status	Robinson (1994)
Apostlebird	<i>Struthidea cinerea</i>	V	R	r
Barking Owl	<i>Ninox connivens</i>	E	L	r
Black-chinned Honeyeater	<i>Melithreptus gularis</i>	-	-	-
Brown Treecreeper sub-species <i>victoriae</i>	<i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i>	-	-	-
Brown-headed Honeyeater	<i>Melithreptus brevirostris pallidiceps</i>	-	-	-
Bush Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>	E	L	v
Diamond Firetail	<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	-	R	d
Fuscous Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus fuscus</i>	-	-	-
Grey-crowned Babbler	<i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i>	E	L	v
Ground Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina maxima</i>	E	-	r
Hooded Robin	<i>Melanodryas cucullata</i>	-	R	d
Jacky Winter	<i>Microeca fascinans</i>	-	-	d
Little Lorikeet	<i>Glossopsitta pusilla</i>	-	-	d
Painted Button-quail	<i>Turnix varia</i>	-	-	-
Painted Honeyeater	<i>Grantiella picta</i>	V	L	r
Red-capped Robin	<i>Petroica goodenovii</i>	-	-	d
Red-tailed Black-cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus banksii</i>	E	L	e
Speckled Warbler	<i>Chthonicola sagittata</i>	V	R	d
Superb Parrot	<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	E	L	v
Swift Parrot	<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	E	L	v
Turquoise Parrot	<i>Neophema splendida</i>	LR	L	r
Regent Honeyeater	<i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i>	CE	L	e
Western Gerygone	<i>Gerygone fusca</i>	-	-	-
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater sub-species. <i>meltoni</i>	<i>Lichenostomus melanops meltoni</i>	-	-	-

Victorian woodland dependent bird species

Common name	Scientific name	Conservation status NRE (2000):	FFG status	Robinson (1994)
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza uropygialis</i>	-	-	-
Crested Bellbird	<i>Oreoica gutturalis</i>	-	R	d
Crested Shrike-tit	<i>Falcunculus frontatus</i>	-	-	-
Dusky Woodswallow	<i>Artamus cyanopterus</i>	-	-	-
Eastern Yellow Robin	<i>Eopsaltria australis</i>	-	-	-
Emu	<i>Dromaius novaehollandiae</i>	-	-	d
Gilbert's Whistler	<i>Pachycephala inornata</i>	-	-	d
Glossy Black-cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	V	L	v
Grey Falcon	<i>Falco hypoleucos</i>	E	I	v
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua leadbeateri</i>	V	L	r
Malleefowl	<i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	E	I	v
Masked Owl	<i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i>	E	L	r
Powerful Owl	<i>Ninox strenua</i>	E	L	r
Regent Parrot	<i>Polytelis anthopeplus</i>	V	L	v
Restless Flycatcher	<i>Myiagra inquieta</i>	-	-	-
Rufous Whistler	<i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i>	-	-	-
Southern Whiteface	<i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i>	-	-	d
Square-tailed Kite	<i>Lophoictinia isura</i>	E	R	-
Varied Sittella	<i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i>	-	-	-
White-browed Babbler	<i>Pomatostomus superciliosus</i>	-	-	d
White-browed Woodswallow	<i>Artamus superciliosus</i>	-	-	-

Victorian woodland-associated bird species

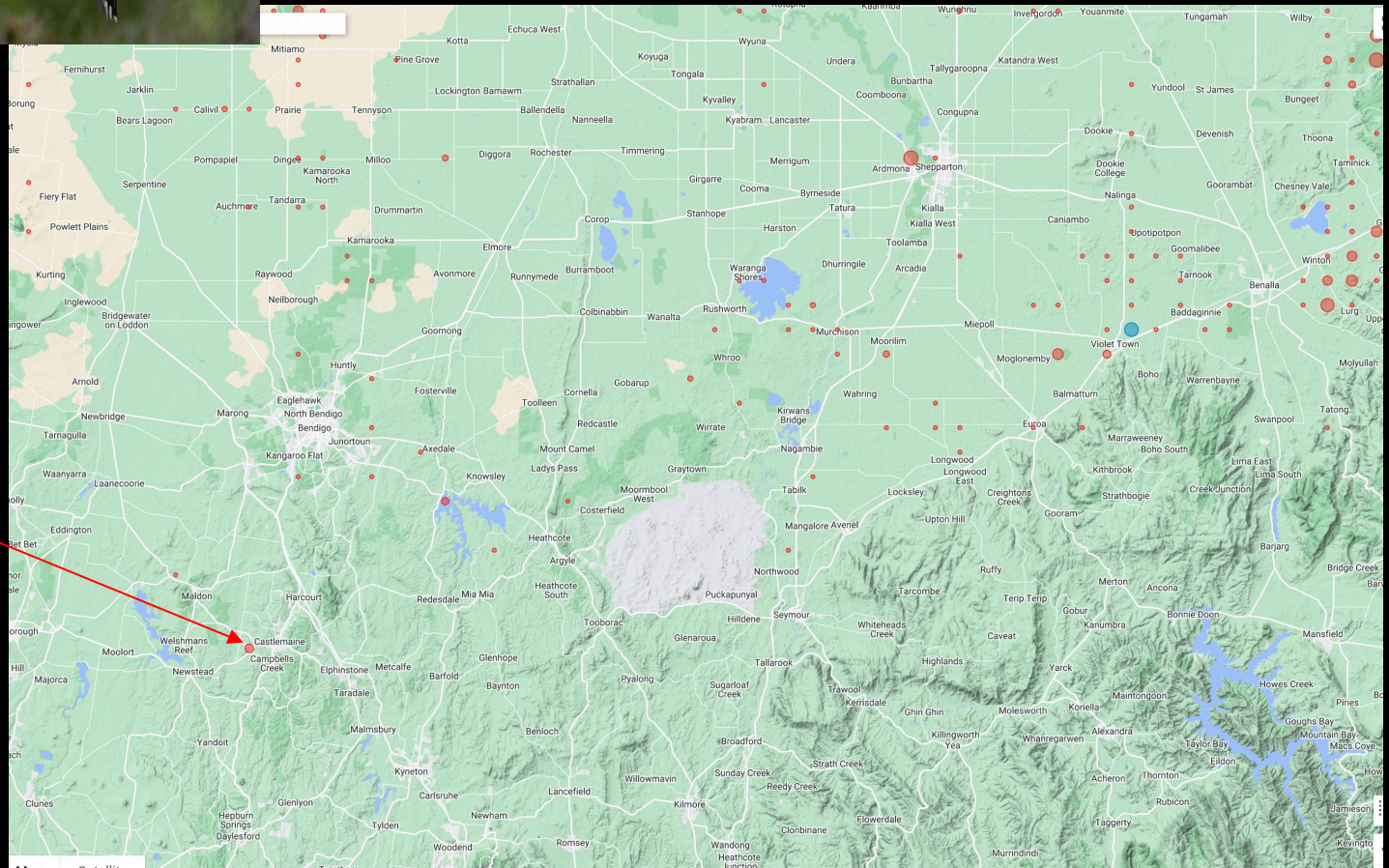


Historical perspectives

Grey-crowned Babbler

In many areas, populations have declined because of clearance or other modifications of habitat, especially in the last 30-40 years ... as groups become isolated, their numbers decline to where they are too small to breed successfully, and remaining birds eventually die

HANZAB Vol 6 (2002)



Local extinction
~ 2000



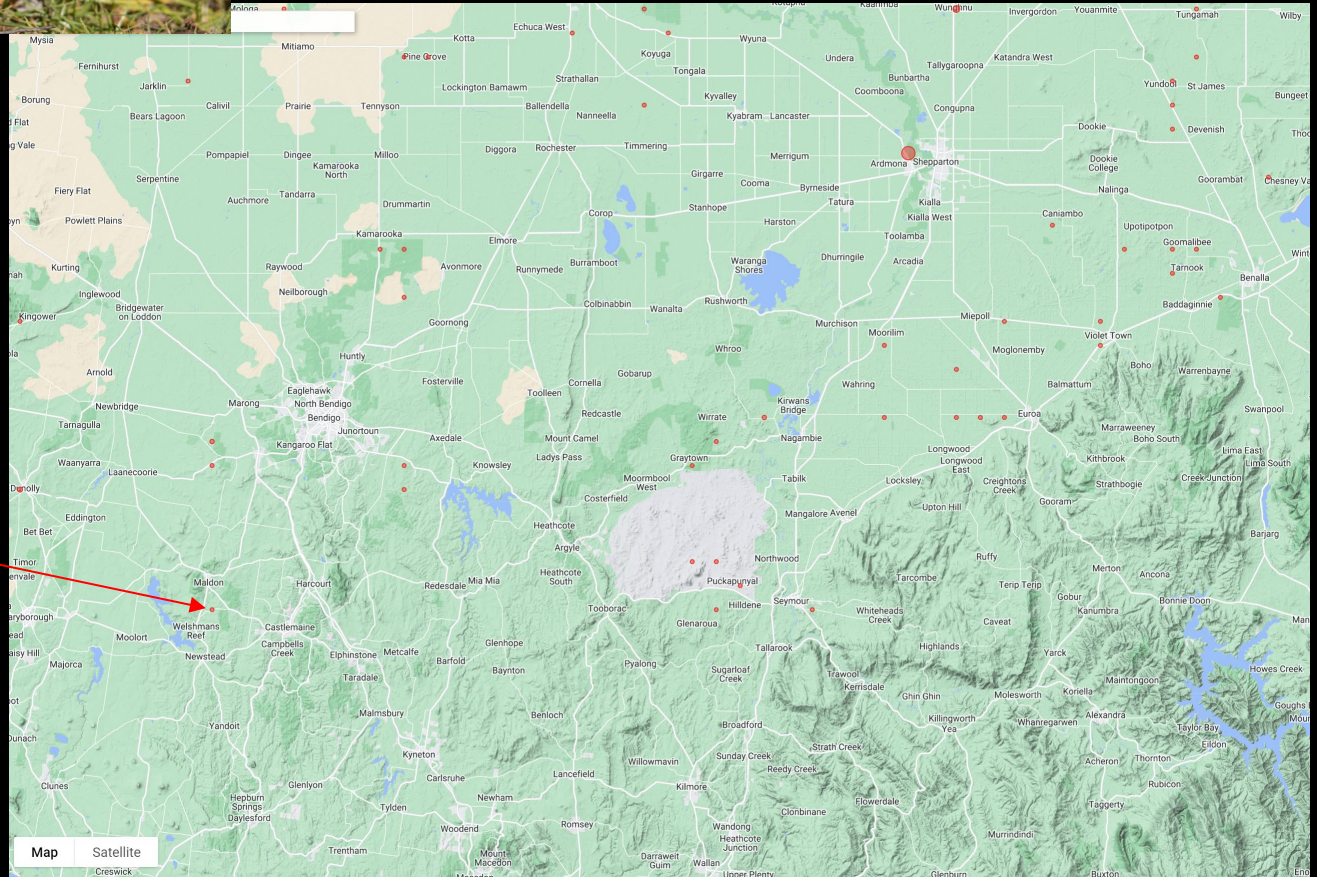
Bush Stone-curlew

Widespread but very rare. Formerly more common, but population began to decline in early 1900s; the decline escalating in the 1970s and continuing today. Only known sites are small remnant woodlands, the majority on privately owned land.

Wildlife of the box-ironbark country (2021)

- Breeding in Newstead in late 1960s
- Hanging on around Shelbourne/Marong

Recent local record
(May 2023)



Regent Honeyeater

I am afraid that the exigencies of settlement make it unlikely that the species will ever be seen there again.

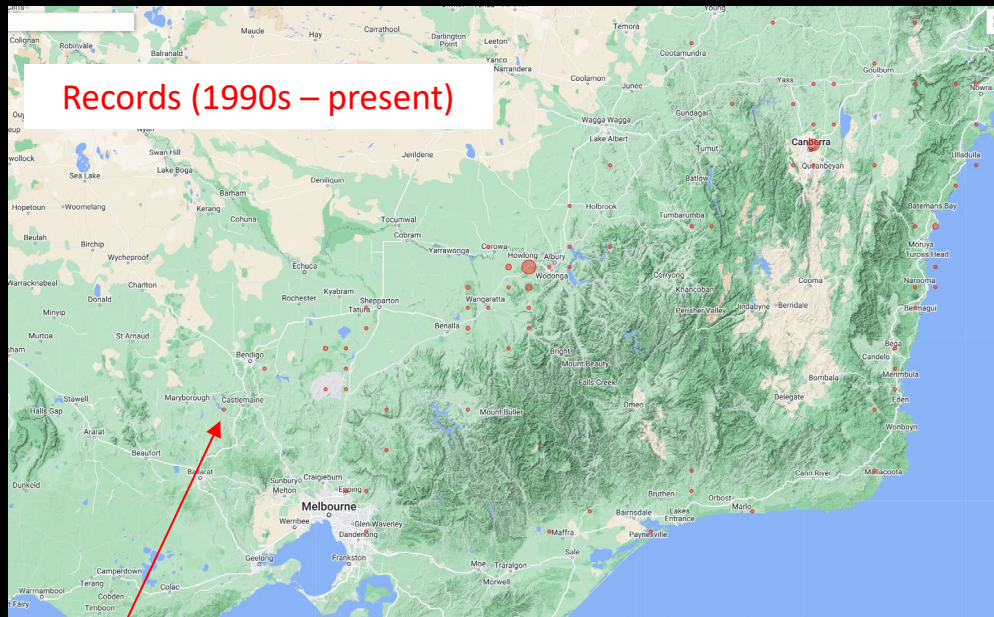
Belcher (1914) Birds of the district of Geelong

... the beautiful Regent Honeyeater which appears in certain southern Victorian districts about November, but apparently is a resident species at Bendigo, where I have recorded it for every month of the year ... last year I found many nesting in August throughout the Bendigo district.

J.V. Ryan in Emu (1951)



Image: Museums Victoria



Single bird (2003)

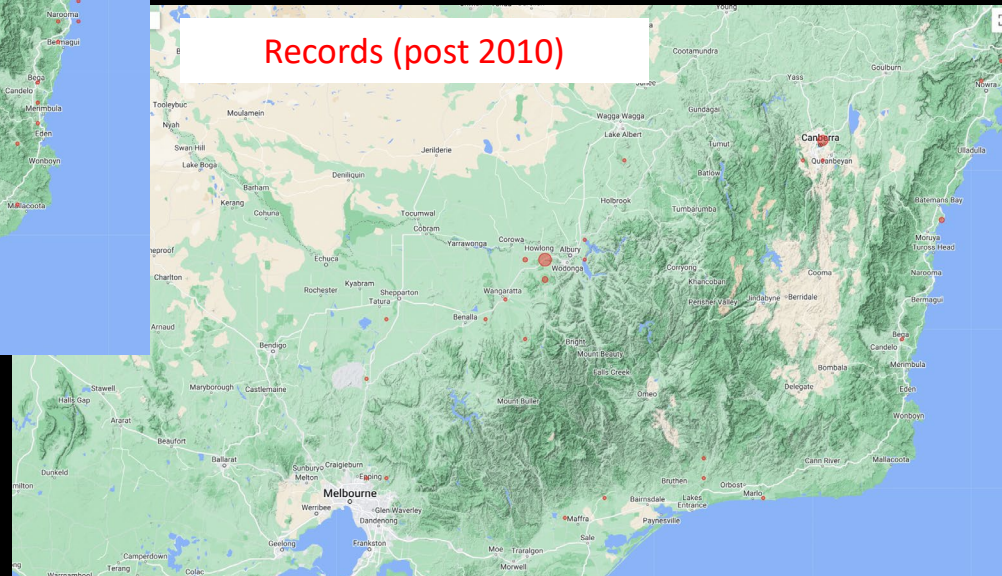
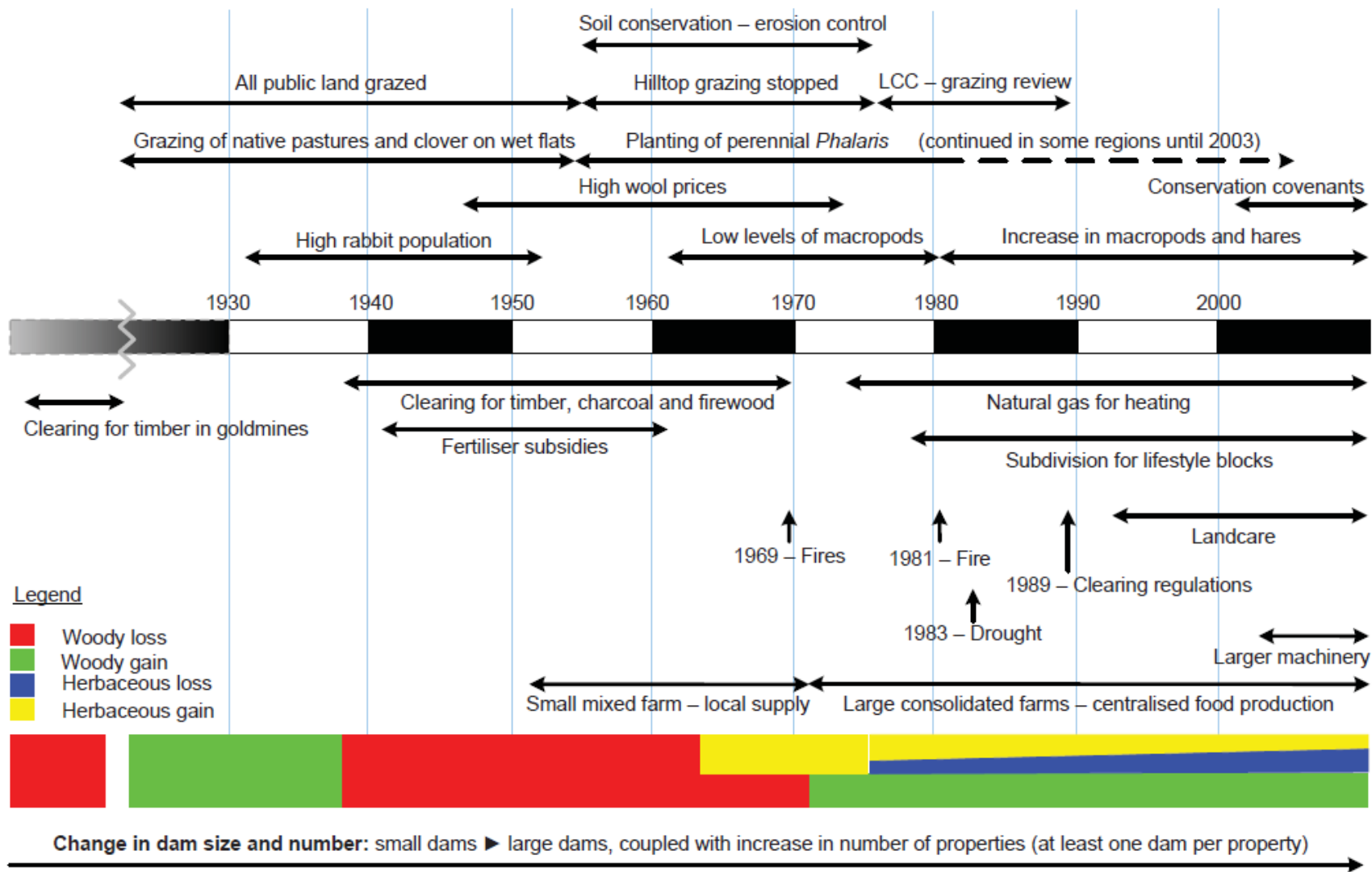


Figure 5: Timeline of key activities, events and changes in the Muckleford study area: 1930–2006.



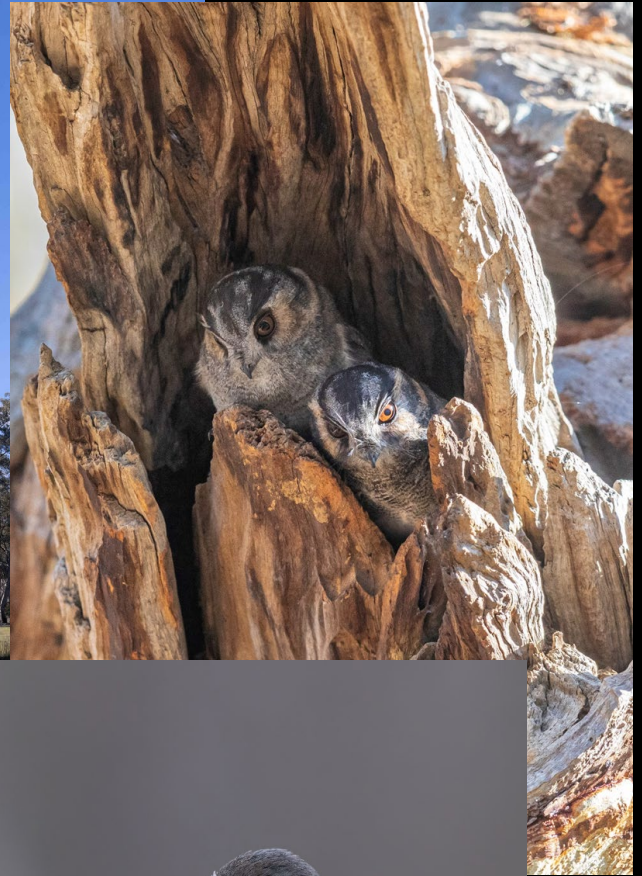
LANDSCAPE LOGIC
LIVING LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT TO RESOURCE CONDITION TARGETS

www.landscapellogic.org.au
June 2009

Landscape history and vegetation change
in the Muckleford region of Victoria

Current situation









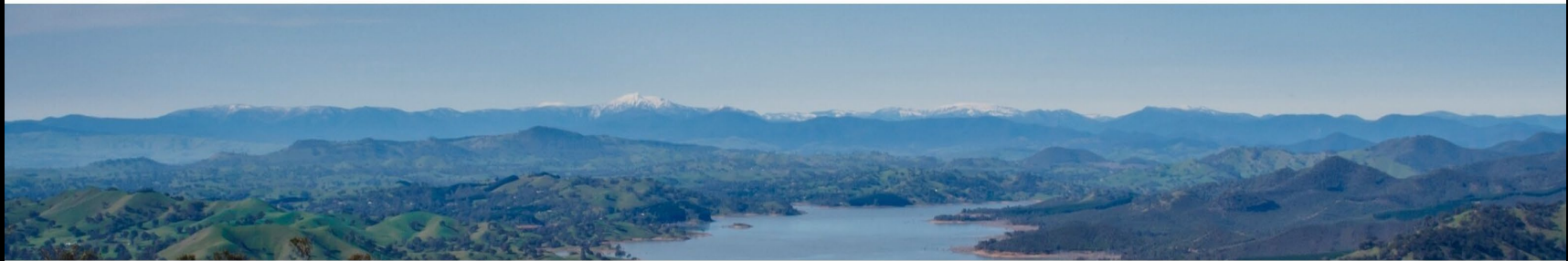




From anecdotes to data



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Environmental accounting can change the world.

Building the world's most scientifically credible and trusted environmental accounting standard. *Opening new markets for natural capital.*



NATIVE VEGETATION



SOIL



NATIVE FAUNA



FRESH WATER



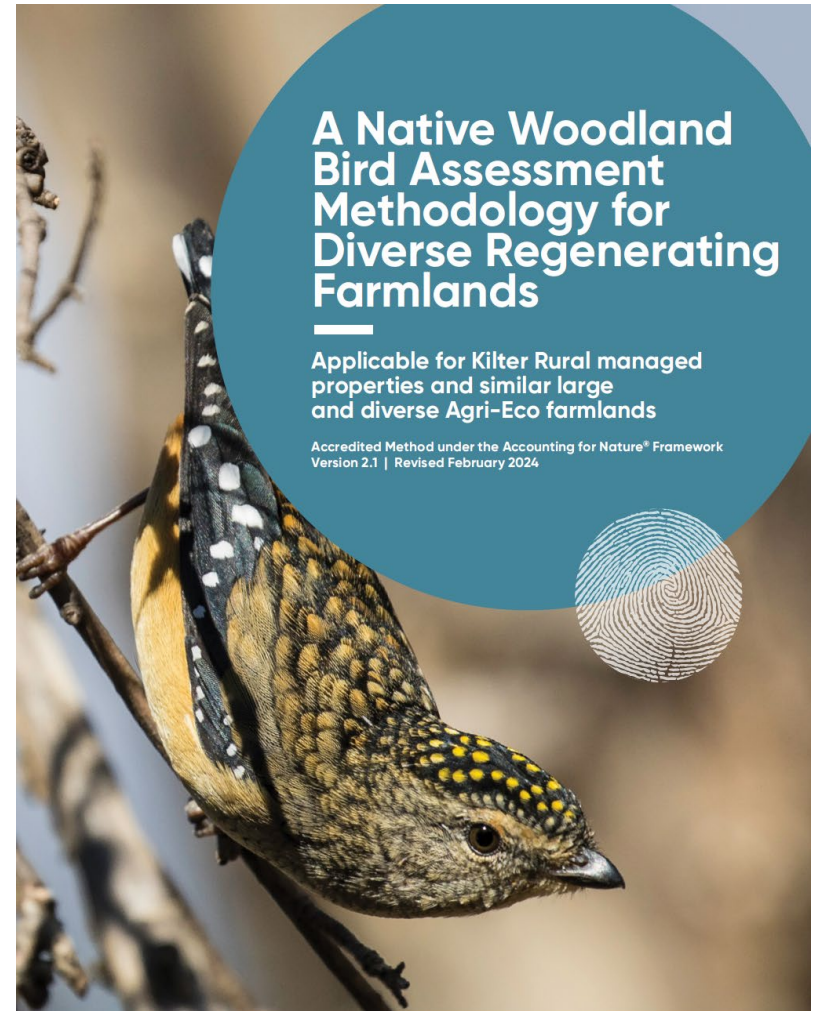
MARINE



Our Impact

Overview of the method

- Use the standard 2ha/20-minute survey technique
- Record species presence*
 - Is it a 'woodland'? ... Sites with <30% woodland character species are excluded**
- Then with 2 bits of information you can calculate the condition of the woodland bird community
 1. Species richness (number of native sp. recorded)
 2. % of those species that are small-bodied (<50g)
- Condition is expressed as a score between 0 and 1 (Econd)



CASE STUDY – WOOD 4 GOOD CROSBIE PLANTATION



Native sp. <50g

Site 1

- Sept 2020 0.57 (14/8)
- Nov 2020 0.72 (21/11)
- April 2021 0.71 (19/12)
- April 2022 0.69 (19/11)
- Oct 2022 0.69 (19/11)

Site Econd Average = 0.68

Site 3

- Sept 2020 0.48 (3/3)
- Nov 2020 0.44 (5/4)
- April 2021 0.23 (3/1)
- April 2022 0.41 (6/4)
- Oct 2022 0.36 (9/3)

Site Econd Average = 0.39

Site 9

- April 2022 0.57 (16/7)
- Oct 2022 0.49 (14/5)

Site Econd Average = 0.53

Future prospects

Woodland bird communities
are changing





Rainbow Bee-eater – return dates

2010 – 27th October
2011 – 22nd October
2012 – 19th October
2013 – 13th October
2014 – 21st October
2015 – 5th October
2016 – 16th October
2017 – 29th October
2018 – 27th October
2019 – 23rd October
2020 – 14th October
2021 – 10th October
2022 – 3rd October
2023 – 8th October

Some unlikely winners?



Forces for Good and Evil

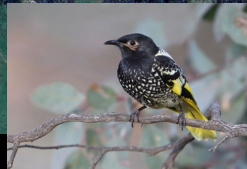
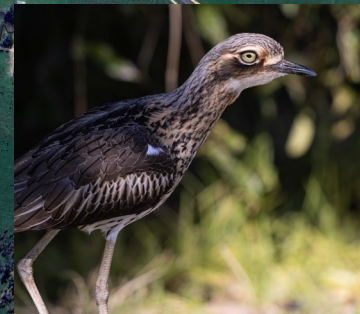
Natural regeneration

Nature conservation programs

Landscape restoration

Rewilding

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) ... LEK and 'Western Science'



Legacy effects

The usual suspects (threats) – pest animals, declining habitat quality, habitat loss, impacts of fire (planned and unplanned) etc.

Off-site effects

Climate change



- Different vegetation types = different birds
- Three key factors ... habitat quality ... habitat area ... connectivity (+ mix of vegetation types)

1750	Now	2040?
100	50	60
50	30	40
35	15	25





Great Southern Bioblitz 2024

SEPT 20TH 2024 – SEPT 23RD 2024



Call Out to All Citizen Scientists! Let's all play our part

Help showcase the amazing forms of wildlife living in our own Castlemaine region.
Help provide the scientific data to advocate for greater protection of our bushlands.

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club is again hosting this 4-day mega biodiversity survey for our region. These annual surveys collect vast amounts of data on species and distribution that would otherwise be unachievable.

September 20th to 23rd Take your photos or sound recordings of flora, fauna and fungi
October 7th Deadline for upload to iNaturalist from your phone app or computer
Ongoing Identification on iNaturalist of species by you, other citizen scientists and experts

Special Bioblitz Events:

- Sept 8th Bioblitz Photography Walk
- Using iNaturalist Training Session
- Sept 20th Moth Night
- Guided Walks
- LandCare Events

More later on CFNC website