

Tasmanian Threatened Native Vegetation Communities

EUCALYPTUS OVATA FOREST AND WOODLAND

Conservation status

Threatened: Community 20 - Schedule 3A *Nature Conservation Act 2002*

What is *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland?

The community is dry or damp forest and woodland dominated by *Eucalyptus ovata* (black gum). *Eucalyptus viminalis* (white gum) may occur as scattered individuals or as a localised dominant over small patches within forest or woodland that is otherwise dominated by *E. ovata*.

Within lowland areas of Tasmania *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland is widespread but uncommon. It is often found in river valleys and flats on poor to moderately drained fertile soils in eastern Tasmania, but also occurs on less fertile soils, in coastal regions, and within western Tasmania and the Bass Strait islands.

The understoreys of *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland are most commonly characterised by being either shrubby or sedgy. However, on the most poorly drained sites the understorey can be scrubby with *Melaleuca* (paperbark) and *Leptospermum* (tea-tree) species present. Within coastal areas on infertile soils a heathy woodland form of the community is characterised by short (5-10 m) mallee-like *E. ovata*, often over a dense and species-diverse heathy understorey. On fertile flats in the Midlands, open woodlands of *E. ovata* may occur over a grassy understorey.

To help you decide if this Threatened Native Vegetation Community is on your site, a decision tree is provided further below. This is a guide only. Assessment by a qualified ecologist is needed to confirm the presence (or absence) of a listed threatened community.

Distribution, extent and reservation status

The Threatened Native Vegetation Communities 2020 (TNVC 2020) distribution *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland is derived from the TASVEG 4.0 mapping of DOV (*Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland), DOW (*Eucalyptus ovata* heathy woodland) and DMW (Midlands woodland complex). TASVEG mapping units provide only an indicative distribution of listed communities



An example of the *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland community at Huon River, Franklin. Nepelle Temby.



Indicative *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland distribution from TNVC 2020.

Eucalyptus ovata forest and woodland

Eucalyptus ovata forest and woodland has an approximate Tasmania-wide extent of 16400 hectares. Of this, 21% of the community is mapped within the secure National Reserve System increasing to 30% in the wider Tasmanian Reserve Estate, which also includes informal and fixed-term reserves.

A snapshot of the reservation status of *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland for Local Government Regions is available on the [Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania website](#) and via the 'By Council Area' tab at this [link](#).

Why is *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland important and what are its management issues?

Since European settlement, the community has been cleared extensively from river valleys and flats for agricultural development, particularly in the northern Midlands. The current stronghold is around the West Tamar region, but patches are found state-wide where conditions are suitable.

Most patches are small with an average patch size of less than 10 hectares identified in TNVC 2020. Old growth stands are extremely rare.

Exposed remnants are vulnerable to invasion by weeds such as *Ulex europaeus* (gorse) and *Rubus fruticosus* (blackberry) and, where fragmentation has resulted from clearing for plantation establishment, exposure to genetic pollution from *Eucalyptus nitens* may be an issue. In the driest areas of the state remnants are impacted by dry season 'dieback'.

How can the condition of the vegetation be assessed?

To help you to assess the condition of *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland, the following [TASVEG VCA benchmarks](#) are recommended:

- ❖ DOV *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland: (forest)
- ❖ DOV *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland: (woodland)
- ❖ DOW *Eucalyptus ovata* heathy woodland
- ❖ DMW Midlands woodland complex

What does it mean if you have a Threatened Native Vegetation Community?

If you are planning an activity that will potentially impact a Threatened Native Vegetation Community you should seek advice from the authority responsible for regulating this activity.

The authority responsible will depend upon the nature of the planned activity (see *Further information*).

In the first instance you can check the [Information for landowners](#) on the Forest Practices Authority (FPA) website for comprehensive advice on when a Forest Practices Plan may be required.

Some vegetation communities can represent important habitat for threatened species. This may have implications when development applications are assessed or for land use.

Matters of National Environmental Significance as listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBCA) should also be considered to determine if the proposal will need to be assessed under that Act.

Further information

For further detail about the possible variation within *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland refer to relevant sections of the descriptions of the TASVEG mapping units DOV, DOW and DMW within the 'Dry eucalypt forest and woodland' section of the online publication [From Forest to Fjeldmark \(Edition 2\)](#) and to the Forest Practices Authority's [Forest Botany Manual](#) keys to the floristic communities equivalent to RFA OV.

Further information to assist developers and their representatives in assessing the impacts of proposed developments on natural values is provided in NRE Tasmania's [Guidelines for Natural Values Surveys – Terrestrial Development Proposals](#) and the [Threatened Species Link - Activity Advice](#).

Contact details

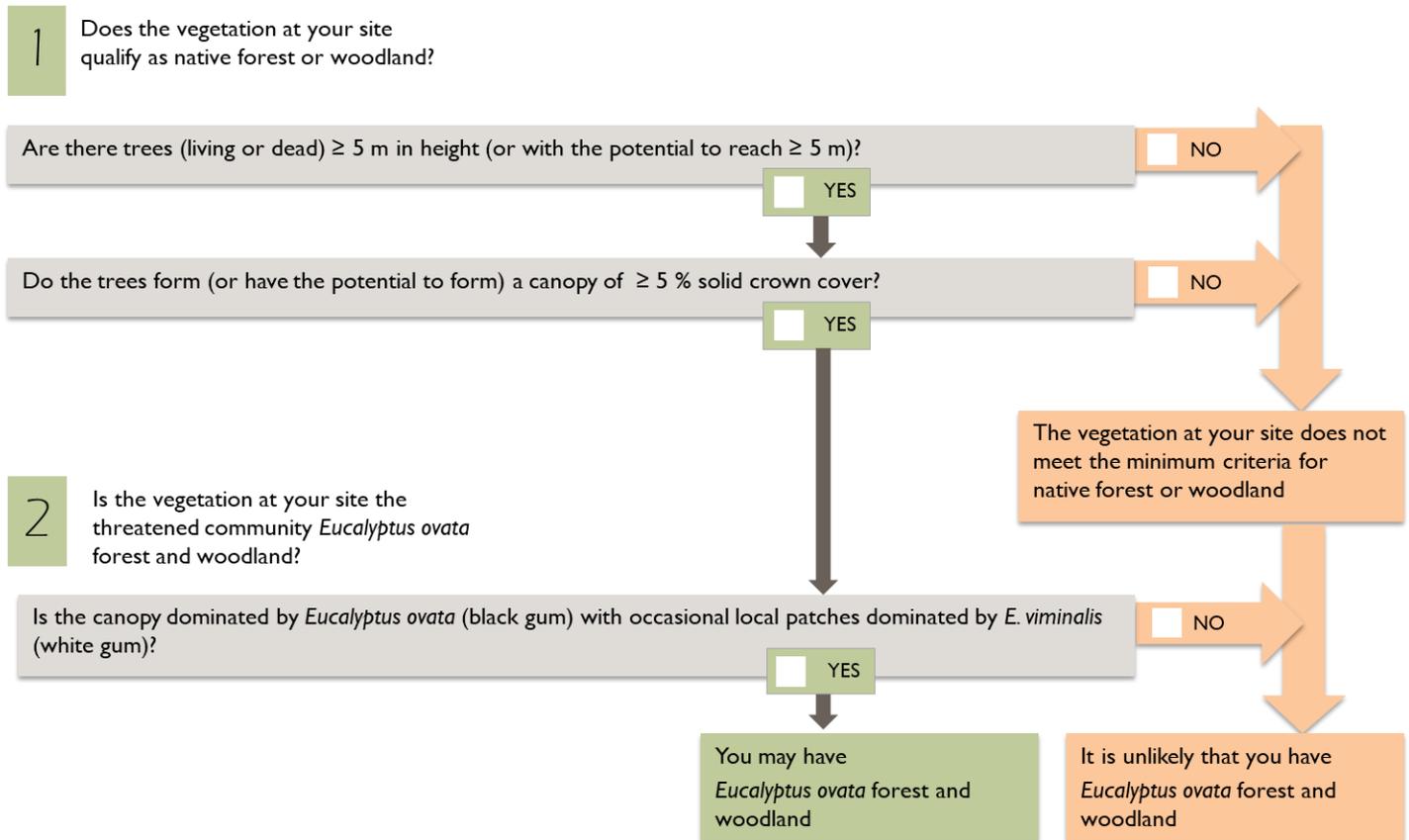
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Is *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland present at your site?



Note:

- ❖ *Eucalyptus viminalis*-dominated vegetation may be attributed to *E. ovata* forest and woodland where this occurs as a localised patch of otherwise *E. ovata*-dominated forest and woodland. However, it is recommended that additional advice from a qualified ecologist is sought. For additional information check **23** *Eucalyptus viminalis* - *Eucalyptus globulus* coastal forest and woodland, **25** *Eucalyptus viminalis* wet forest and, for *E. viminalis*-dominated vegetation on the Furneaux Group of islands, **24** *Eucalyptus viminalis* Furneaux forest and woodland.
- ❖ There is debate surrounding the taxonomy of *E. ovata* and *E. brookeriana* on King Island and more generally in the north-west of Tasmania. This and related documents in the series recognise the occurrence of both *E. ovata* and *E. brookeriana*-dominated vegetation communities on King Island, separating the mapping of these based on canopy density and understory characteristics. However, further analysis may see some or all the vegetation on King Island currently classified within **20** *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland reclassified to the Threatened Native Vegetation Community **16** *Eucalyptus brookeriana* wet forest.