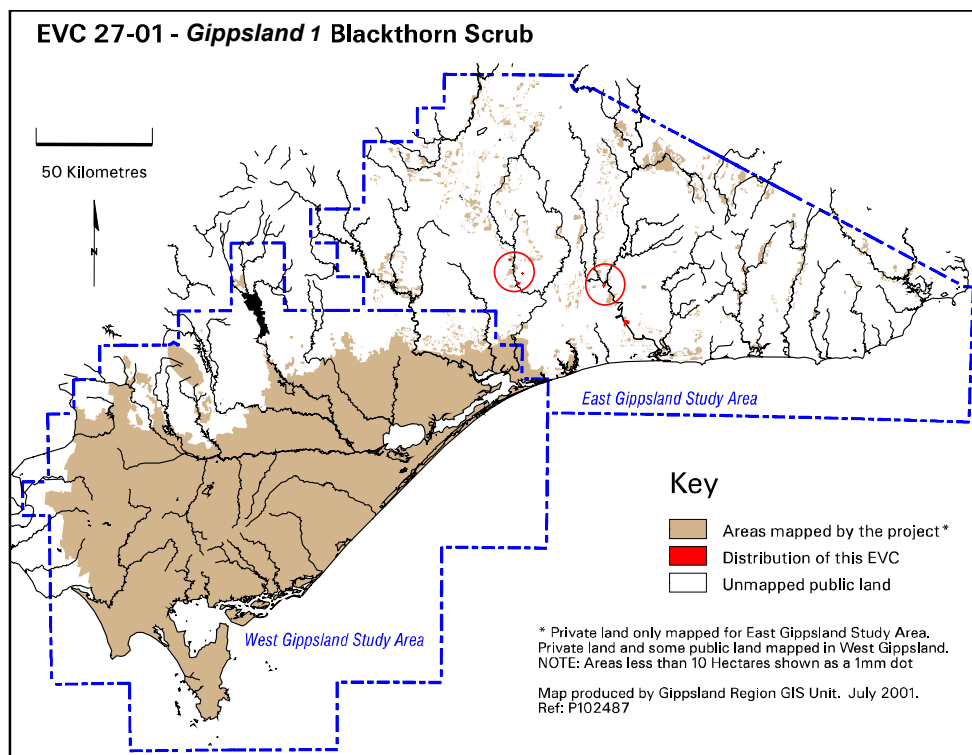


EVC 27 Blackthorn Scrub

Only found in East Gippsland on northerly and westerly slopes of mountains and valleys. Trees are not a prominent feature, often present only as emergence or forming a very open woodland. The small tree or tall shrub layer is a dominant feature, often forming even-aged stands of uniform height. The ground layer is generally sparse and species-poor due to low site quality and the cover of the overstorey canopy. Vines can be conspicuous in the understorey.

Floristic Community 27-01 *Gippsland 1 Blackthorn Scrub*

Elevation (metres above sea-level)	300-640
Average rainfall p.a. (mm)	700-850
Topography	Valleys of major rivers on steep northern and western aspects
Geology	Ordovician sediments
Soils	Skeletal soils
Related/Adjacent groups	Rocky Outcrop Shrubland
Present land use	Mainly public land
Present distribution	Mitchell River south of Dargo, Wentworth River south of Jenkins, Tambo River, south of Tambo Crossing and along Wilkinson Creek
Total Area (ha)/ Number of polygons	101/9
Examples of sites/quadrats/lists	“Bark Sheds” Tambo River, (036499)



Vegetation: structure/floristics:

Trees are not a prominent feature and are often present only as emergence or forming a very open woodland. Trees may take on a mallee-form growth habit. Species present may include Red Ironbark *Eucalyptus tricarpa*, Red Box *E. polyanthemos*, White Stringybark *E. globoidea*, Gully Gum *E. smithii*, Gippsland Blue Gum *E. globulus* ssp. *pseudoglobulus* and River Peppermint *E. elata*.

The small tree or tall shrub layer is a dominant feature of Blackthorn Scrub, often forming even-aged stands of uniform height. In the east of the study area this stratum is dominated by Red Wattle *Acacia silvestris* which may form dense thickets, almost to the exclusion of many other species. Further west the small tree or tall shrub layer is dominated by Black Wattle *A. mearnsii*. Other common species

include Cherry Ballart *Exocarpos cupressiformis* that may form large stands, and Rock Wax-flower *Eriostemon trachyphyllus* which occurs as an understorey shrub, but may also form the canopy in long-unburnt sites. Shiny Cassinia *Cassinia longifolia*, Bootlace Bush *Pimelea axiflora*, Ferny Panax *Polyscias sambucifolia* ssp. 2, White Elderberry *Sambucus gaudichaudiana* and Saltbush *Einadia* spp. are also present.

The ground layer is generally sparse and species-poor due to low site quality and the density of the shrub layer. When disturbance opens the canopy, the shrub layer may become very dense. Species present may include Variable Sword-sedge *Lepidosperma laterale*, Long-leaf Wallaby-grass *Notodanthonia longifolia* and Weeping Grass *Microlaena stipoides*.

Vines are conspicuous and include Wonga Vine *Pandorea pandorana*, Common Apple Berry *Billardiera scandens* and Coarse Dodder-laurel *Cassytha melantha*.

Comments:

Ecologically, *Gippsland 1* Blackthorn Scrub has similarities to Rainforest as it has the ability to exclude fire. Eucalypts are rarely present and shrubs form the emergent overstorey after long absence of fire.