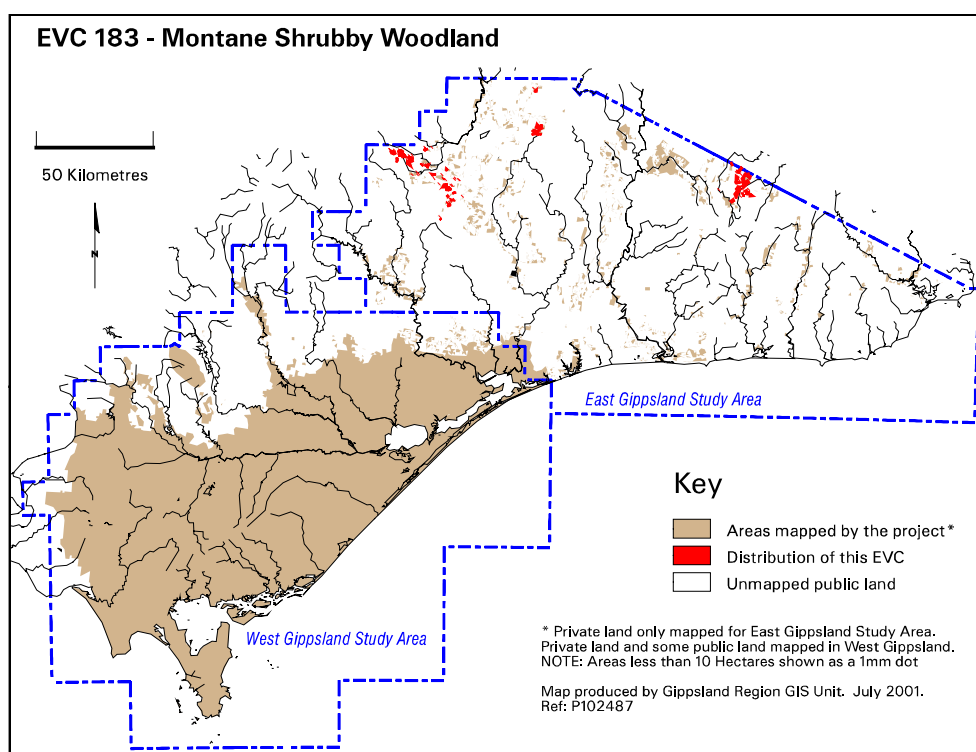


EVC 183 Montane Shrubby Woodland

| | |
|--|---|
| Elevation (metres above sea level) | 900 - 1580 |
| Average rainfall p.a. (mm) | 800-885 |
| Topography | Confined mostly to hilltops and north and west facing slopes, but may be found on all aspects. |
| Geology | Various |
| Soils | Generally shallow, sometimes may be stony |
| Related/adjacent EVCs/FCs | |
| Present land use | Agriculture, recreation, nature conservation |
| Present distribution | High elevation areas of East Gippsland |
| Examples of sites/quadrats/lists | West of Omeo at Dinner Plain and Horsehair Plain, Tea Pot Creek Track south of Mt. Leinster, around Bendoc including Haydens Bog Creek and Mt. Delegate |
| Total Area (ha)/ Number of polygons | 2,750/120 |
| Group analysis no. | Not available for East Gippsland Study Area |



Vegetation: structure / floristics:

Dominant trees in the overstorey of this EVC are Candlebark *Eucalyptus rubida* and Broad-leaved Peppermint *E. dives*. In more exposed or higher elevation environments Snow Gum *E. pauciflora* may be the sole dominant, or found in mixture with either Candlebark or Broad-leaved Peppermint. In the more protected locations Narrow-leaved Peppermint *E. radiata* s.l. may be found in mixture with Candlebark and Snow Gum. Around the Bendoc area, Mountain Gum *E. dalrympleana*, and Gippsland Peppermint *E. croajingolensis* are occasional components.

The distinguishing features of this vegetation class are the abundance of understorey shrubs and the paucity of grasses and forbs. Shrubs present include Common Cassinia *Cassinia aculeata*, Handsome Flat-pea *Platylobium formosum*, Grey Guinea-flower *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, Mountain Beard-heath *Leucopogon hookeri* and Honey-pots *Acrotriche serrulata*, all of which are adapted to the harsh montane environment and low effective rainfall. Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata*, normally a tree in other vegetation, is commonly found in this vegetation class as a low shrub that rarely attains 2m in height.

There are a small number of herbs, grasses and ferns that are characteristic in the ground layer of this vegetation class. Herbs present include Small Poranthera *Poranthera microphylla*, Button Everlasting *Helichrysum scorpioides*, Prickly Woodruff *Asperula scoparia* and Bidgee-widgee *Acaena novae-zelandiae*. Ferns present include Austral Bracken *Pteridium esculentum* and Mother Shield-fern *Polystichum proliferum*, and climbers present include Twining Glycine *Glycine clandestina* and Mountain Clematis *Clematis aristata*. Also common in the ground layer are graminoids including Common Woodrush *Luzula meridionalis* var. *flaccida*, Spiny-headed Mat-rush *Lomandra longifolia*, Grass Trigger-plant *Stylidium graminifolium* s.l. and Tasman Flax-lily *Dianella tasmanica*. The dominant cover of this lifeform is composed mostly of the 'fine-leaved' Tussock-grass *Poa* sp.

Most species are drought tolerant but as is typical of this EVC elsewhere in Victoria, there are some species representative of montane environments in that they are moisture-requiring species found in an otherwise dry environment. The increase in effective rainfall is derived from frequent cloud cover and cooler temperatures that are typical of montane environments. Species indicative of this montane habitat include Candlebark *Eucalyptus rubida*, Snow Gum *E. pauciflora*, Mountain Gum *E. dalrympleana*, Gippsland Peppermint *E. croajingolensis*, Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata*, Mountain Beard-heath *Leucopogon hookeri*, Mother Shield-fern *Polystichum proliferum*, Prickly Woodruff *Luzula meridionalis* var. *flaccida*, Bidgee-widgee *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, Mountain Clematis *Clematis aristata* and Tasman Flax-lily *Dianella tasmanica*. These species are very cool hardy and are therefore less commonly found in warmer coastal localities in Gippsland.

Shrubs and ferns are structurally significant and in some situations can provide almost a complete dominance of the middle and ground layers of the vegetation.