

SWAMPS OF THE FLEURIEU PENINSULA

The Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula are localised wetlands occurring in high rainfall areas in the local catchment areas of Tookayerta, Hindmarsh, Parawa, Myponga, Yankalilla, Onkparinga, Currency Creek and Finnis. They are densely vegetated and occur adjacent to waterlogged soils around low-lying creeks and flats. The Swamps are typified by their reedy or heathy vegetation growing on peat, silt, peat silt, or black clay soils.

The Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula are home to a number of plants and animals that are listed as endangered under the EPBC Act, and that are found nowhere else in Australia. Foremost amongst these is the Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren. Without protecting the Swamps, these endangered plants and animals will also become extinct in the wild.

Whilst the Commonwealth assisted in purchasing the largest remaining intact Swamp of the Fleurieu Peninsula, Glenshera Swamp, for inclusion in the National Reserve System, it is still important to conserve as many of the remaining smaller swamps as possible. Many of these Swamps occur on freehold land, and individual landholders are crucial to the Swamps survival.

The Mount Lofty Southern Emu-wren Recovery Program has been working extensively with landholders over the past decade to highlight the importance of the Swamps for conserving biodiversity on the Fleurieu Peninsula. To assist landholders wanting to actively conserve Swamps on their land, the Program has developed guidelines for different management practices currently used by landholders. This is an excellent source of information for individuals looking for ways to protect and maintain the Swamps. If you would like to get involved with any further conservation activities, or simply find out more information, the contact details for the Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren Recovery Program are provided at the end of this information sheet.

Why were the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula included on the list of threatened ecological communities?

The Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula were listed as a critically endangered ecological community due to the small patch sizes of remaining swamps and their vulnerability to ongoing threats.

The purpose of listing the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula under the EPBC Act is to recognise that the long-term survival of this ecological community is under threat, prevent its further decline, and assist community efforts toward the recovery of the ecological community.

The Commonwealth Minister for Environment decided to list the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula as a threatened ecological community in the Critically Endangered category after considering advice from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC), an independent committee of scientists with relevant expertise, whose role is to advise the Minister on the conservation status of native species and ecological communities. In formulating its advice on the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula, the TSSC also considered input from other recognised experts.



Nationally threatened species and ecological communities



What the listing of the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula means for you as a landholder

The EPBC Act has provisions for continuing use. These provisions are comparable with those operating under the South Australian *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. The 'continuing use' provisions of the EPBC Act provide for lawful continuation of land use that was occurring immediately before the commencement of the EPBC Act on 16 July 2000. For example, farmers who were cropping or grazing land prior to 16 July 2000 can continue to crop or graze even if new species or ecological communities are listed that occur on their land.

Actions do not require approval under the EPBC Act if either:

- the action was specifically authorised (e.g. by a permit or approval) under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law before 16 July 2000; and
- immediately before 16 July 2000, no further environmental authorisations were necessary; or
- the action was not specifically authorised before 16 July 2000; and
- the action is a lawful continuation of a use of land, sea or seabed; and
- the use was occurring immediately before 16 July 2000; and
- the use has not been enlarged, expanded or intensified.

You may need to make a referral for new or intensified activities if they are likely to have a significant impact on the ecological community. These activities include, but are not restricted to, grazing, clearing and draining. All of these activities also require approval at State level.

The process for making a referral under the EPBC Act is easy and without charge. All you have to do is complete and submit the relevant form, which can be obtained from Environment Australia.

Based on your referral, the Federal Environment Minister will determine if an assessment is required before a decision is made. If it is not required, then you are free to take action in accordance with your referral. If an assessment is required, strict timeframes in the EPBC Act ensure the assessment and approval process is conducted in a timely manner.

Where can I get further information?

Further information on the EPBC Act is available from the Environment Australia website at <http://www.ea.gov.au/epbc> or by contacting Environment Australia's Community Information Unit on **1800 803 772**.

The Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren Recovery Program has information available on the Swamps of the Fleurieu Peninsula, including Guidelines on how to manage the Swamps for a conservation outcome, and can be contacted on **(08) 8223 7437** or by email at emuwren2@ccsa.asn.au.

Photography credits

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