Box-Gum and Grey Box Grassy Woodland Identification

NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People

The North Central CMA is seeking landholders in the central Loddon catchment area interested in caring for Box-Gum and Grey Box Grassy Woodlands on their properties under the Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands project. Financial assistance is available through a devolved grants program for onground works of fencing and revegetation works. Revegetation works may include vegetation corridors to link remnant areas or enhancement of existing vegetation. This project is supported by North Central CMA through funding from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country.

What if I have Box-Gum or Grey Box Grassy Woodlands on my property?

This guideline has been developed to assist private landholders in Central Victoria to identify the nationally endangered White Box, Yellow Box, and Blakely's Red Gum ecological community (Box-Gum Grassy Woodland) and Grey Box Grassy Woodlands.

Box-Gum and Grey Box Grassy Woodlands occur through Central Victoria typically on granitic, basalt, sedimentary or alluvial soils. As they once existed in the more fertile areas, much of which has been cleared for agriculture, only a fraction of the pre-European extent remains. Remnants are now often restricted to small isolated pockets on the best managed land.

Grassy woodlands with remnant large old trees are generally 'park like', with spreading trees over a grassy understorey with few shrubs. Remnants can also have many close small trees or be derived grasslands (where trees have been removed and only the grassy or herbaceous understorey remains).

Photo: Geoff Park

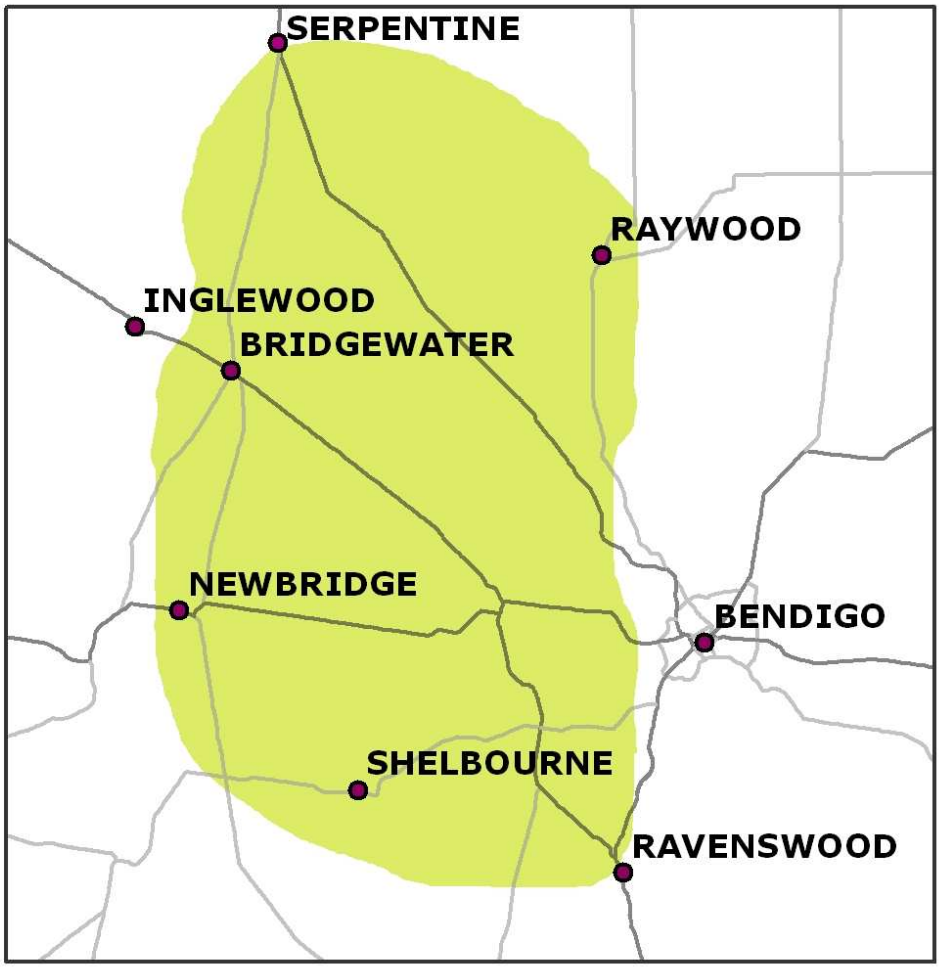
Grassy Woodland

What do these trees look like?

White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely's Red Gum and Grey Box are the key tree species but others, such as Yellow Gum and Buloke, may also be found. The following pages outline how you can identify species.

What is the project area?

Landholders within the project area defined in the map below are eligible to apply.



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White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*)

These trees have fine pale grey 'box' bark and blue-grey leaves. Buds and fruit (gum nuts) are often glaucous (have a white-waxy coating). Juvenile leaves are oval shaped. Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) is similar but has a darker, rougher bark and narrower olive-green leaves, including the juvenile foliage. The buds of Grey Box are never glaucous.

Photo: Ian Higgins

White Box form

Photo: Robyn McKay

White Box bark

Photo: Robyn McKay

White Box fruit and leaves

Photo: Ian Higgins

White Box fruit

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Yellow Box *(Eucalyptus melliodora)*

These trees have rough, dark brown bark below, peeling to reveal smooth pale bark underneath and on the smaller branches. Leaves are fine and grey-green. The fruit (gum nuts) is short with no protruding valves.

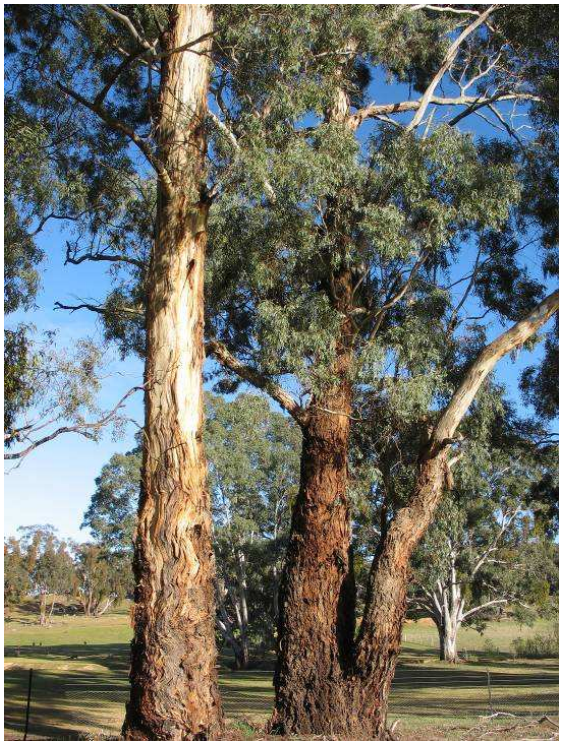

Photo: Ian Higgins

Yellow Box form

Photo: Robyn McKay

Yellow Box bark

Photo: Robyn McKay

Yellow Box fruit

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Blakely's Red Gum (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*)

These trees are similar to River Red Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) with a patchy grey, cream and white coloured smooth bark but typically short trunked and poorly developed. River Red Gums are found in the wetter parts of the landscape such as on the floodplains and along waterways, whereas Blakely's Red Gums are not. Blakely's Red Gums have a long conical cap on the buds. This species is unlikely to be found within the Mid Loddon Catchment project area.

Photo: Geoff Park

Blakely's Red Gum Buds

Photo: Robyn McKay

Blakely's Red Gum

Photo: Ian Higgins

Blakely's Red Gum fruit

DM#65707

Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*)

Grey Box is a widespread and common tree. In the project area it may be co-dominant with other woodland trees such as Yellow Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*) or Buloke (*Allocasuarina leuhmannii*). Trees are often quite branched and may be multi-trunked. The bark is fine and scaly, shedding to a smooth paler bark on the upper branches. The olive-green leaves, the buds and the fruit (gum nuts) are smaller than that of White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*) and do not have the glaucous (whitish) coating.

Grey Box leaf (L) and White Box leaf (R)

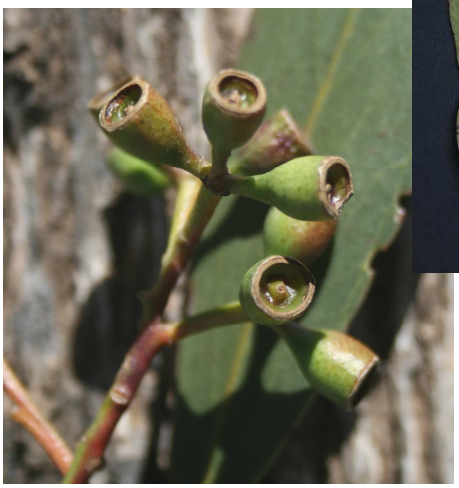

Photo: Robyn McKay

Grey Box fruit

Photo: Robyn McKay

Grey Box form

Photo: Ian Higgins

Grey Box bark

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Understorey

Box-Gum and Grey Box Grassy Woodlands should typically have a grassy understorey with few shrubs. Derived grasslands (where trees have been historically cleared) are also part of the ecological community. Wildflowers may be observed when flowering in spring, such as lilies, orchids, daisies and bush peas. Native grasses such as Wallaby Grass, Kangaroo Grass, Spear Grass, Weeping and Red-leg Grasses may dominate and are often green during the summer months when introduced species have died off.

Photo: Robyn McKay

Wallaby Grass

Photo: Robyn McKay

Kangaroo Grass

Photo: Garry Cheers

Chocolate lily

Photo: Terri Williams

Clustered Everlasting

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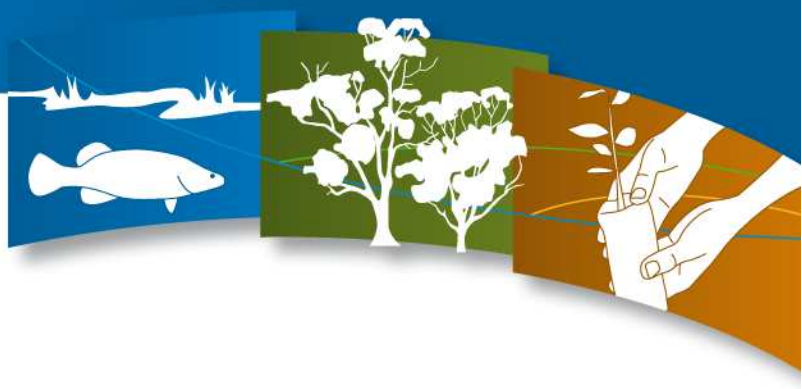
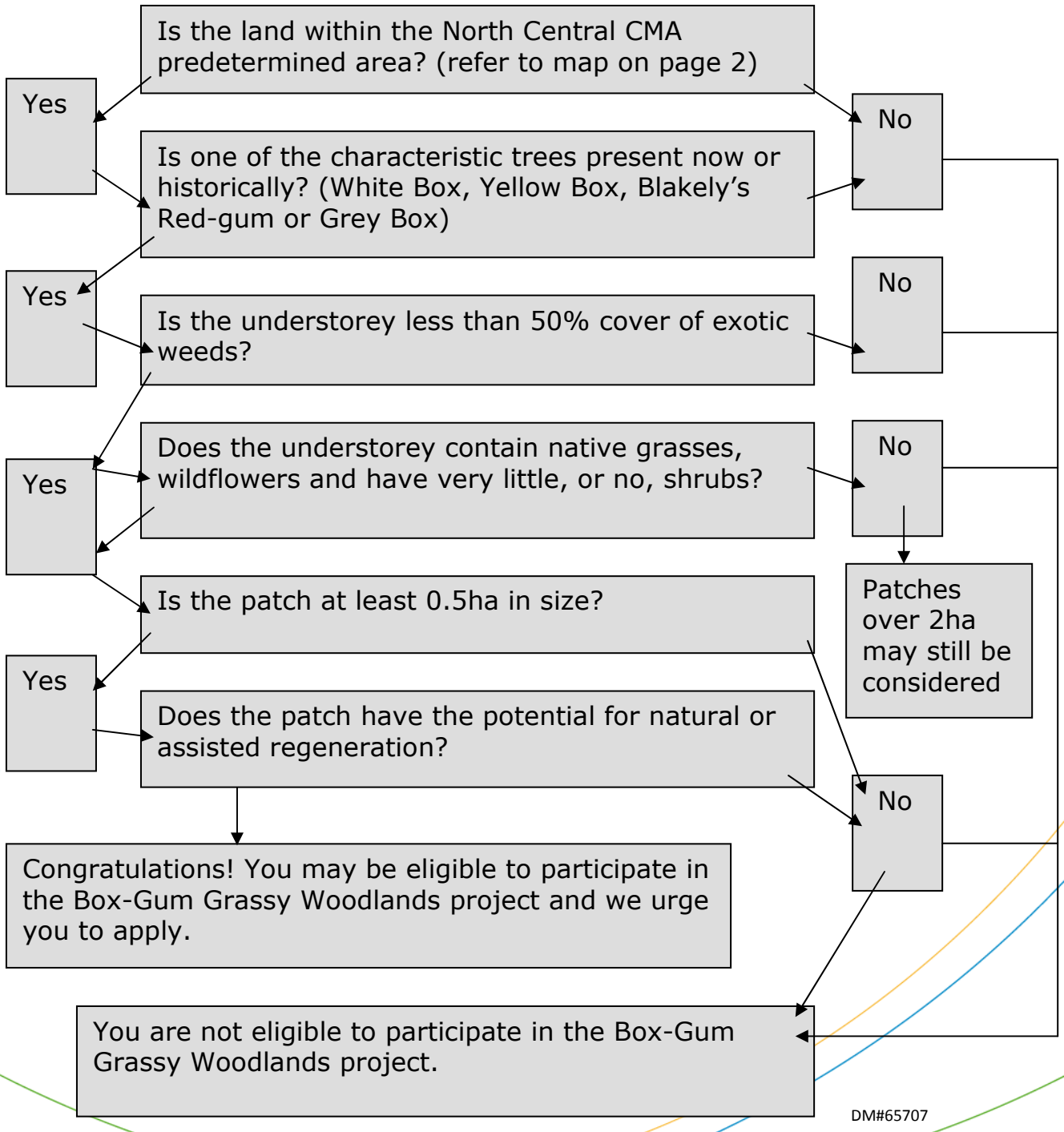


The chart below will assist in determining whether your land has an area of White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely's Red Gum and/or Grey Box Grassy Woodland



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What are the benefits?

Landholder actions can prevent further loss of this critically endangered ecological community. Grassy Woodlands can be important to farm productivity by providing shelter for stock, crops and pasture, conserving soils and lowering salinity. Retaining grassy woodlands on your property gives landholders increased opportunities to access funding and alternative incomes through seed collection or honey production. Many native fauna species that utilise Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands as habitat contribute to farm health by consuming insect pests.

Photo: Robyn McKay

Derived Grassland (trees have been removed and only the grassy or herbaceous understorey remains)

For further information on the Box-Gum Grassy Woodland project in the North Central CMA or an application form, contact Robyn McKay, Project Officer:
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e: robyn.mckay@nccma.vic.gov.au

For general information on Landcare support in the North Central CMA, contact the Regional Landcare Co-ordinator on:
t: 03 5440 1883
e: landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au

Applications close Tuesday 11 September 2012
and are also available at www.nccma.vic.gov.au

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