

1. Fulham Streamside Reserve

Location: Fulham is an 860 ha woodland reserve with a 6-km frontage to the Glenelg River, 10 km north of Balmoral, off the Natimuk Rd. The two entrances are from Edgewood Rd. Visitors should avoid driving off the tracks, to prevent trampling of the flora and to reduce the spread of weeds and disease. Campers should use the cleared places near the river and not intrude into the bush.

The history of this area is one of timber cutting, grazing (it was part of the 1840s Fulham Run), fishing, shooting and unregulated recreational vehicle usage. The status of the area was changed from State Forest to Streamside Reserve and grazing removed from the woodland in 1987.

HFNC has worked with Parks Victoria from 2006 to attempt to control Harlequin Flower (*Sparaxis*) and Cape Tulip that has seriously invaded the floristic heathland of the western half. Campouts are held each spring to conduct spot-spraying and herbicide wiping of the pest species.

Landform and geology: The geology is a complex of aeolian sands (a high vegetated dune of Lowan Sand in the east and lower sediments in the west), Ordovician schist/gneiss (with rocky outcrops by the river at the eastern end) and Tertiary shallow marine sandstone and siltstone elsewhere. The gravelly parts in the southern edge support Brown Stringybark; the extensive flats adjacent to the river have Yellow Gum, River Red Gum and Yellow Box; the sand dune supports a stand of Slender Cypress and Desert Stringybark (the latter also occurs with Desert Banksia and Silver Banksia on deep

sand near the bend of river at the western end); and the extensive wet/saline seeps have Mallee Honey-myrtle as the only shrub.

The grassy-woodland/heathy-woodland is of particular botanic significance and beauty. It is one of the best repositories of botanic diversity in the region, although badly compromised by weed invasion along the river and past broad-scale spraying to control an agricultural weed, Cape Tulip.

Flora: In 1984, botanist Cliff Beauglehole recommended that the area become a Flora Reserve. From 1984 to 1990 he recorded 353 species (279 native & 74 alien). HFNC has added further species to the list in 2006–8, the total rising to 414, with 325 native species and 87 exotic. A fire in January 2005 caused the appearance of several “new” species in the western part of the reserve and a spectacular flowering in spring 2005 and 2006 of Red-beaks, lilies and other heathland/grassland species. Nodding Greenhoods (pictured below, RB) are emerging in spaces once occupied by the Harlequin Flower infestations, following weed eradication by HFNC.



Following the cessation of grazing by sheep in 1987 there was a remarkable regeneration of eucalypts on the eastern part of the reserve and of Slender Cypress on Pine Ridge (pictured right, RB). Other species of note include Porcupine grass, Leafy Templetonia, Showy Podolepis, Desert Banksia, Desert Stringybark and ten species of sun orchid (a full species list and report of this reserve is available from HFNC).

Fauna: The bird list contains 111 species, including Powerful Owl, Flame Robin, Rufous Songlark, White-throated Gerygone, Speckled Warbler, Southern Whiteface, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Eastern Yellow Robin, Black-chinned Honeyeater, Azure Kingfisher, Peregrine Falcon and a number of waterbirds.

Eastern Grey Kangaroo are present in quite large numbers. Red-necked Wallaby and Black Wallaby also occur, the latter species being now the more common wallaby. In 2006, a Sugar Glider tail was found beneath a Yellow Box tree in the SW section of the reserve. In May 2007 a Yellow-footed Antechinus was seen sunning in a River Red Gum spout near the river. A Common Dunnart was reported in 1983 and Echidnas are often seen. Water Rats were seen in the Fulham Pool in 2007 and several Platypus in September 2008.

