

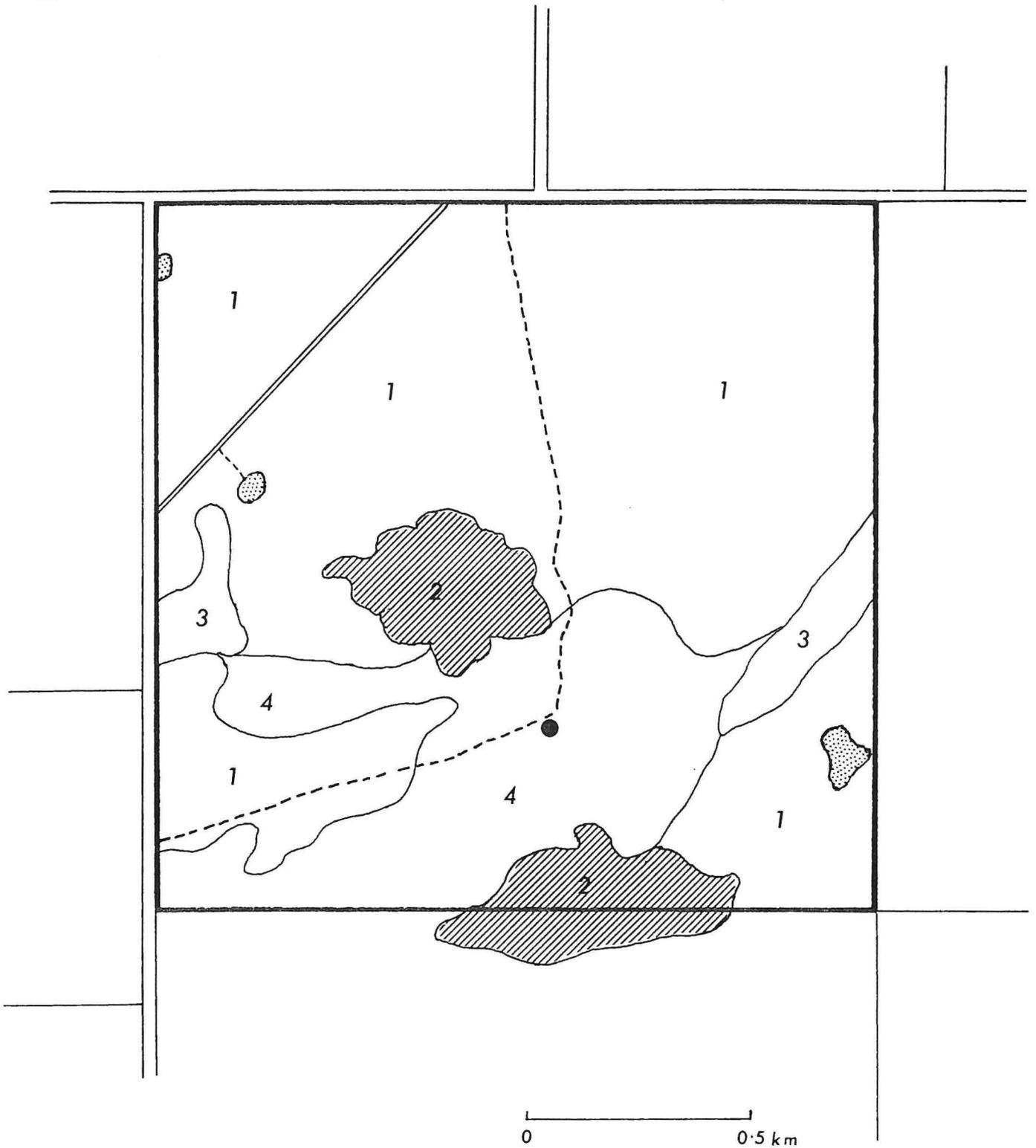
MANAGEMENT PLANNING REPORT

WYALKATCHEM SHIRE

RESERVE NO. 10992

ANDREW A.E. WILLIAMS

ELASHGIN SOAK



-  Granite Rock Complex
-  Gravel Pit
-  Track
-  Elashgin Soak

VEGETATION ASSOCIATIONS SHOWN ON MAP

AREA 1.

Casuarina and Melaleuca Thicket/Heath

AREA 2.

Granite Rock complex.

AREA 3.

York Gum Low Woodland

AREA 4.

Jam Low Woodland.

TABLE 1: VEGETATION CLASSIFICATION AS USED IN WHEATBELT SURVEY

LIFE FORM/HEIGHT CLASS	CANOPY COVER			
	DENSE 70-100% ^d	MID-DENSE 30-70% ^c	SPARSE 10-30% ⁱ	VERY SPARSE 2-10% ^r
T Trees >30m M Trees 15-30m LA Trees 5-15m LB Trees <5m	Dense Tall Forest Dense Forest Dense Low Forest A Dense Low Forest B	Tall Forest Forest Low Forest A Low Forest B	Tall Woodland Woodland Low Woodland A Low Woodland B	Open Tall Woodland Open Woodland Open Low Woodland A Open Low Woodland B
KT Mallee tree form KS Mallee shrub form	Dense Tree Mallee Dense Shrub Mallee	Tree Mallee Shrub Mallee	Open Tree Mallee Open Shrub Mallee	Very Open Tree Mallee Very Open Shrub Mallee
S Shrubs >2m SA Shrubs 1.5-2.0m SB Shrubs 1.0-1.5m SC Shrubs 0.5-1.0m SD Shrubs 0.0-0.5m	Dense Thicket Dense Heath A Dense Heath B Dense Low Heath C Dense Low Heath D	Thicket Heath A Heath B Low Heath C Low Heath D	Scrub Low Scrub A Low Scrub B Dwarf Scrub C Dwarf Scrub D	Open Scrub Open Low Scrub A Open Low Scrub B Open Dwarf Scrub C Open Dwarf Scrub D
P Mat plants H Hummock Grass GT Bunch grass >0.5m GL Bunch grass <0.5m J Herbaceous spp.	Dense Mat Plants Dense Hummock Grass Dense Tall Grass Dense Low Grass Dense Herbs	Mat Plants Mid-Dense Hummock Grass Tall Grass Low Grass Herbs	Open Mat Plants Hummock Grass Open Tall Grass Open Low Grass Open Herbs	Very Open Mat Plants Open Hummock Grass Very Open Tall Grass Very Open Low Grass Very Open Herbs
VT Sedges >0.5m VL Sedges <0.5m	Dense Tall Sedges Dense Low Sedges	Tall Sedges Low Sedges	Open Tall Sedges Open Low Sedges	Very Open Tall Sedges Very Open Low Sedges
X Ferns Mosses, liverwort	Dense Ferns Dense Mosses	Ferns Mosses	Open Ferns Open Mosses	Very Open Ferns Very Open Mosses

MANAGEMENT PLANNING REPORT

WYALKATCHEM SHIRE

1. INTRODUCTION

Reserve No. 10992, one of three Nature Reserves located in the southern part of the shire, lies some 16 km south-south-east of Wyalkatchem and 10 km east of Derdibin Rock. It is shown on lithograph No. 2335 - 11 - Bulagin.

The area was originally set aside as a "Water" Reserve on 25th October 1907, and remained as such until 11th May 1956 when its purpose was amended to "Water, Flora and Fauna".* The Wyalkatchem Road Board then approached the Under Secretary for Lands requesting a further amendment of purpose, and after a Reserve inspection by Wildlife Officers from the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife the request was approved. The purpose "Picnic Ground and Conservation of Flora and Fauna" was gazetted on 2nd December 1960, with vesting in the Wyalkatchem Shire Council.

Elashgin Soak is one of three Nature Reserves in the Shire which is due to be jointly vested in the Wyalkatchem Shire Council and the Western Australian Wildlife Authority.

*There is no mention in our files to the 11th May 1956 change of purpose, but the card index system at the Department of Lands and Surveys has it recorded.

2. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Reserve covers an area of 258.9988 hectares, is square in shape with a perimeter measuring some 12.5 km. It is surrounded by gently undulating cleared farmland. To the north and west it is bounded by gravel roads while the eastern and southern sides abut directly onto farmland. The Reserve can best be approached from the west along Maitland Road which runs alongside the Reserve's northern boundary. The altitude on the Reserve varies from a low of 270 metres along the northern side to over 310 metres in the south where a rocky outcrop is the highest point.

The Reserve contains several interesting features. The central and southern parts are dominated by a series of granite outcrops which, although generally low in profile, are quite extensive in area. Some notable gnamma holes are located in these rocks. Elashgin Soak is situated in the south-central part of the Reserve (Fig. 1). The stone-lined well at this site contained fresh water at the time of inspection, and reputedly holds water into early summer.

3. SOILS AND VEGETATION

Loams and sandy loams are the characteristic soils throughout the Reserve, with extensive areas of exposed granite rock especially in the central and southern sectors (Fig. 1).

The vegetation can, broadly speaking, be separated into four main categories though the demarkation between these is often poorly defined. They include an extremely variable shrubland association in which Casuarinas and Melaleucas are the major dominants - this habitat occupies some 75% of the Reserve area. In the south of the Reserve the vegetation is largely an open Jam Woodland, which

gives way to limited areas of Eucalyptus low woodland usually dominated by York Gum E. loxophleba. Among the rocky outcrops are limited stands of Sheoak, Casuarina huegeliana and Acacia lasiocalyx, with the spectacular red-flowered Kunzea pulchella growing from narrow crevices in the sheet rock.

AREA 1.

Tamma/Melaleuca Thicket/Heath A.

Casuarina campestris and Melaleuca uncinata dominated Thicket/Heath A, averaging 2 to 2.5 metres in height, with Melaleuca radula, Melaleuca adnata, Acacia hemiteles and Santalum acuminatum also represented. Patchily distributed Open Shrub Mallee is emergent to ca. 5 metres. Open areas denote shallow soil over the underlying granite rock.
E. redunca + E. transcontinentalis

Note: Where this association abuts the granite outcrops, Casuarina campestris often forms Dense Thickets to ca. 3 metres in height.

AREA 2.

Granite rock complex

The granite surfaces support mosses and lichens. A few specimens of Kunzea pulchella, growing from narrow cracks in the rock, are emergent to ca. 2 metres. In very shallow pockets of soil, Borya nitida is the common ground cover. Localised stands of Sheoak, Casuarina huegeliana to ca. 12 metres and Acacia lasiocalyx to 10 metres also occur.

AREA 3.

York Gum 'Low Woodland A'.

York Gum, Eucalyptus loxophleba Low Woodland, ca. 12 to 15 metres in height, sometimes with a low mallee component. Understorey variable, characteristic species being Jam, Acacia acuminata, Casuarina campestris, Exocarpus aphyllus, Olearia muellerii and Hakea sp.

AREA 4.

Jam Low Woodland A/Low Woodland B

Jam, Acacia acuminata Low Woodland, ca. 4 to 8 metres in height, over Low Grass and Borya nitida. Scattered York Gums, Eucalyptus loxophleba, are emergent in some areas to ca. 15 metres.

Note: The heathlands and woodlands are more variable than these descriptions suggest. Future more detailed examination will no doubt increase the number of association descriptions.

4. FAUNA

Birds - (Names follow those recommended by the R.A.O.U.)

Crested Pigeon
Galah
Port Lincoln Ringneck
Mulga Parrot
Black-eared Cuckoo
*Rainbow Bee-eater
Tree Martin

Richards Pipit
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
White-winged Triller
Red-capped Robin
Rufous Whistler
Willie Wagtail
White-browed Babbler
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill
Yellow-rumped Thornbill
*Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
Singing Honeyeater
White-fronted Honeyeater
*Crimson Chat
White-fronted Chat
*Zebra Finch
*Black-faced Woodswallow
Australian Raven

(A large raptor nest is located on the Reserve. Mr H.H. Maitland reports that it has been occupied for many years).

Birds previously recorded on Reserve No. 10992

Pallid Cuckoo
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Western Warbler
Red Wattlebird
White-eared Honeyeater
Australian Magpie Lark
Dusky Woodswallow
Australian Magpie

*Denotes breeding record for the Reserve

Grey Fantail (7/7/83)

Native Mammals

Grey Kangaroo - Macropus fuliginosus

Echidna - Tachyglossus aculeatus - local report.

Euro (7/7/84)

Exotic Species

Rabbit - limited signs only

Fox - previously recorded on Reserve

5. PAST MANAGEMENT, USES AND FIRE HISTORY

Reserve No. 10992 has been subjected to varying degrees of human usage from the time it was gazetted in 1907. The area immediately surrounding the Reserve was initially developed by Mr James H. Maitland whose first establishment was at Elashgin Soak. Transportation at this time was by horse-drawn sulky, and it is of interest to note that along the original route their characteristic triple groove tracks can still be seen. These tracks run close to the edge of the granite outcrop on the southern side of the Reserve.

There are also several vehicle tracks on the Reserve (Fig. 1). Two of these lead to the soak, one from the northern boundary, the other from the southern end of the western boundary. They provide access to picnickers, but from their overgrown condition are apparently little used. Another road cuts across the north-west corner of the Reserve and this is also becoming overgrown.

Rubbish is a problem common to many wheatbelt reserves, and this one is no exception. Farm related materials, bottles and cans, have been dumped on the Reserve mainly alongside the gravel roads. Mr H.H. Maitland kindly offered to clean up the unsightly debris. There are also three small disused gravel pits on the Reserve.

Active management of the Reserve has been conducted at a low level in the past. The surrounding farmland is fenced, - well maintained ploughed breaks have been constructed around those paddocks which border the Reserve. The two gravel roads which run along the northern and western sides of the Reserve also serve as excellent breaks.

Past records point to a low incidence of fire - the only fire in living memory being one which burnt a small area around the soak over 30 years ago. This fire, possibly started by lightning strike, burnt itself out against the base of the central rocky complex.*

6. NATURE CONSERVATION VALUES

Elashgin Soak, ca. 258.9988 hectares, is the largest Nature Reserve in the shire. (Reserve No. 689 is also the same area). It supports a wide range of vegetation types which include Casuarina and Melaleuca heath and thicket, Jam low woodland and York Gum low woodland. In the central and southern areas largely undamaged granite complexes are the dominant feature.

No formal mammal and reptile trapping programme has yet been undertaken on the Reserve, but its size, compact shape and lack of recent fire suggest that many native species may still occur. From two brief surveys of the area 24 bird species have so far been listed. Five of these have been recorded breeding on the reserve. It is likely that further observations will add considerably to the list of both resident and transient species.

From the botanical standpoint the area is interesting and according to local residents Spring flowering is good. Orchids are numerous on the Reserve at this time of the year.

*Pers. comm. Mr H.H. Maitland, Reserve neighbour.

The soak and stone-lined well provide an important source of semi-permanent water. There are also two gnamma holes in the granite rock, both of which hold water. These may well have been used by Aboriginal people before European settlement.

7. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Management of this Reserve will be directed toward maintaining its nature conservation values, while continuing to recognise its subsidiary use as a picnic ground.* Provisions for management will include the following:

7.1. PROTECTION FROM FIRE

This is to be consistent with the need to protect the assets of adjacent landholders while at the same time maintaining the biological values of the Reserve.

7.2. PROTECTION FROM PESTS, ANIMAL AND WEED CONTROL

To protect the Reserve and surrounding farmland from damage as a result of infestation with animals and plants which are declared from time to time under the provisions of the Agricultural and Related Resources Protection Act.

7.3. RUBBISH DISPOSAL AND GRAVEL PIT RESTORATION

Provision is made for rubbish disposal, should this be required, and minor gravel pit restoration.

7.4. TRACK CLOSURE

To close the track which runs uphill from the northern boundary to Elashgin Soak. This is to facilitate vegetation recovery and prevent further soil erosion.

7.5. USE OF RESERVE FOR PICNICKING

The continued use of the Reserve for picnicking is acceptable. At the present low level of use, this activity has a negligible impact on the natural environment. However, provision is hereby made for periodic review of the situation.

8. MANAGEMENT

8.1. FIRE PROTECTION - RATIONALE

No prescribed burning is envisaged for the Reserve during the currency of this Plan. The fire history record shows that the Reserve has not sustained a fire for over 30 years, and as such does not represent a severe fire hazard. It is evident that fire protection measures employed to date have been very effective. The northern and western boundaries abut onto gravel roads which serve as excellent firebreaks. The eastern and southern sides have no protection other than farmers' border breaks. Under normal circumstances peripheral breaks would also be installed on the Reserve along these two boundaries. However, in this case special attention has been paid to the feelings of the Reserve neighbours, (Mr H.H. Maitland and Mr M.E. Maitland), who feel that the present control measures are sufficient. This course of action (i.e. not constructing internal breaks) will have the added benefit of preventing unwanted vehicular access to otherwise little disturbed parts of the Reserve.

8.2. FIREBREAKS TO BE MAINTAINED

The existing perimeter firebreaks on private land adjoining the Reserve's southern and eastern borders will be maintained by the respective landowners.

8.3. GRAVEL PIT RESTORATION

The small gravel excavation sites near the north-western corner will be surface ripped to encourage regeneration.

8.4. TRACK CLOSURE

'Track Closed' signs will be erected at each end of the track leading to Elashgin Soak from the northern boundary road. (See Fig. 1).

8.5. NAMING

It is proposed that the name "Elashgin Soak Nature Reserve" be submitted to the Nomenclature Advisory Committee of the Department of Lands and Surveys for adoption and gazettal as the official name for Reserve No. 10992.

8.6. SIGNS TO BE ERECTED

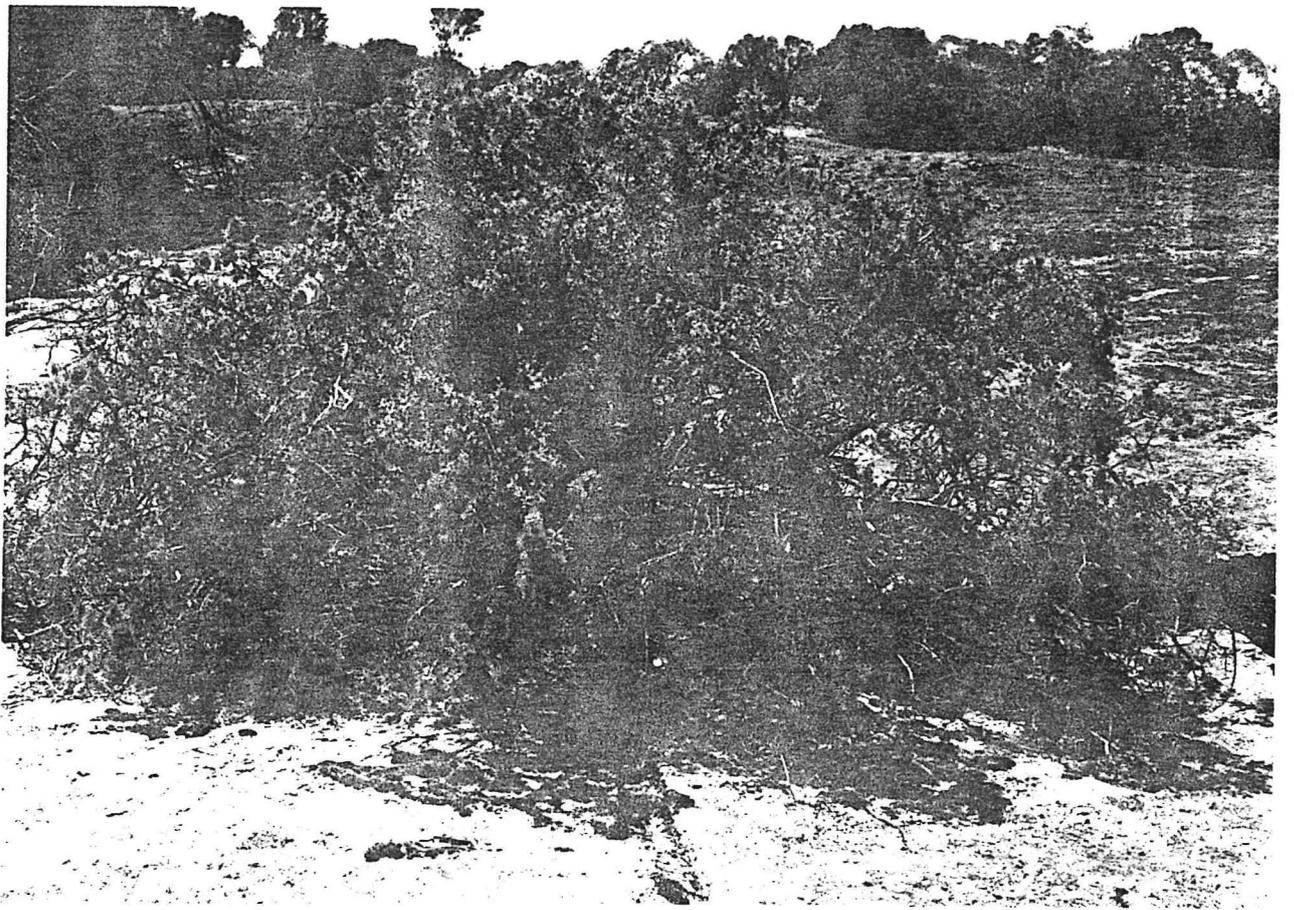
Signs identifying the Reserve shall be erected at the north-east, north-west and south-west corners of the Reserve. The signs will conform to the standard specifications for Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Nature Reserve signs.

9. MANAGEMENT - GENERAL

During the currency of this Plan the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife may, with the approval of the Chairman of the Western Australian Wildlife Authority, undertake or authorise such other work, or action, as may be seen to be necessary or desirable to properly promote the stated objectives of management of the Reserve.

Photographs

- A. Red flowered Kunzea pulchella growing from narrow crevice in sheet granite.
- B. Stand of Sheoak, Casuarina huegeliana.
- C. Casuarina campestris in south-eastern corner of Reserve.
- D. Jam woodland.
- E. Nest of Black-faced Woodswallow found near eastern border of Reserve.







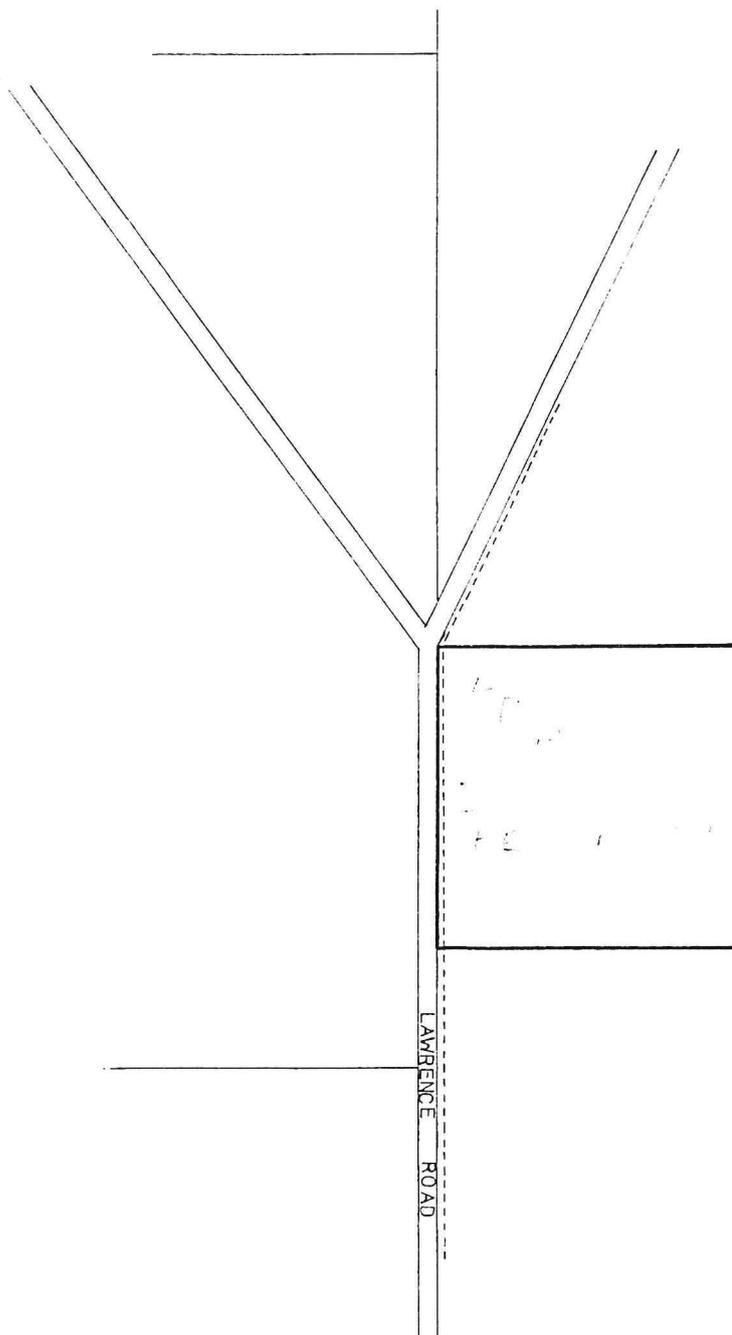
MANAGEMENT PLANNING REPORT

RESERVE NO 16129

Andrew A.E. Williams

ARCHIVAL

574.9
(9412)
BEN



-  Reserve Boundary
-  Fencing

TABLE 1: VEGETATION CLASSIFICATION AS USED IN WHEATBELT SURVEY

LIFE FORM/HEIGHT CLASS		CANOPY COVER			
		DENSE ^d 70-100%	MID-DENSE ^c 30-70%	SPARSE ⁱ 10-30%	VERY SPARSE ^r 2-10%
T	Trees >30m	Dense Tall Forest	Tall Forest	Tall Woodland	Open Tall Woodland
M	Trees 15-30m	Dense Forest	Forest	Woodland	Open Woodland
LA	Trees 5-15m	Dense Low Forest A	Low Forest A	Low Woodland A	Open Low Woodland A
LB	Trees <5m	Dense Low Forest B	Low Forest B	Low Woodland B	Open Low Woodland B
KT	Mallee tree form	Dense Tree Mallee	Tree Mallee	Open Tree Mallee	Very Open Tree Mallee
KS	Mallee shrub form	Dense Shrub Mallee	Shrub Mallee	Open Shrub Mallee	Very Open Shrub Mallee
S	Shrubs >2m	Dense Thicket	Thicket	Scrub	Open Scrub
SA	Shrubs 1.5-2.0m	Dense Heath A	Heath A	Low Scrub A	Open Low Scrub A
SB	Shrubs 1 0-1.5m	Dense Heath B	Heath B	Low Scrub B	Open Low Scrub B
SC	Shrubs 0.5-1.0m	Dense Low Heath C	Low Heath C	Dwarf Scrub C	Open Dwarf Scrub C
SD	Shrubs 0.0-0.5m	Dense Low Heath D	Low Heath D	Dwarf Scrub D	Open Dwarf Scrub D
P	Mat plants	Dense Mat Plants	Mat Plants	Open Mat Plants	Very Open Mat Plants
H	Hummock Grass	Dense Hummock Grass	Mid-Dense Hummock Grass	Hummock Grass	Open Hummock Grass
GT	Bunch grass >0.5m	Dense Tall Grass	Tall Grass	Open Tall Grass	Very Open Tall Grass
GL	Bunch grass <0.5m	Dense Low Grass	Low Grass	Open Low Grass	Very Open Low Grass
J	Herbaceous spp.	Dense Herbs	Herbs	Open Herbs	Very Open Herbs
VT	Sedges >0.5m	Dense Tall Sedges	Tall Sedges	Open Tall Sedges	Very Open Tall Sedges
VL	Sedges <0.5m	Dense Low Sedges	Low Sedges	Open Low Sedges	Very Open Low Sedges
X	Ferns	Dense Ferns	Ferns	Open Ferns	Very Open Ferns
	Mosses, liverwort	Dense Mosses	Mosses	Open Mosses	Very Open Mosses

MANAGEMENT PLANNING REPORT

WYALKATCHEM SHIRE

1. INTRODUCTION

Reserve No. 16129, Avon Location 16479, located ca. 1.5 km north of Benjaberring Townsite is the smallest Nature Reserve in the Shire. It was originally gazetted for a cemetery on 17 September 1915. On 26 January 1945 its purpose was changed to Conservation of Flora and Fauna. The Reserve, which is not vested, is shown on lithograph 2335-1, Wyalkatchem.

2. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Reserve No. 16129 is very small with an area of 4.0469 ha and a perimeter of ca. 0.8 km. It is square in shape and surrounded by gently undulating cleared farmland. Lawrence Road (gravel) runs along its western boundary.

The Reserve has been fenced into the adjoining property (Location 19385), the only fenced boundary being alongside Lawrence Road (see Fig. 1). A small uncleared Quarry Reserve is also located just to the north.

3. SOILS AND VEGETATION

Light greyish sandy loams are predominant throughout the Reserve. An open mallee association is the only native vegetation. The understorey is made up entirely of grasses. The following description applies:

AREA 1

'Open Shrub Mallee'

Eucalyptus ^{pleunissima (SDH)} ~~flocktoniana~~ and Eucalyptus ^(SDH) ~~sp.~~ redunca Open Shrub Mallee, ca. 6 to 8 metres in height, over Open Low Grass.

4. FAUNA

Birds

Port Lincoln Parrot
Crested Pigeon
Willie Wagtail

Grey Butcherbird (SAM 5/7/83)

Mammals

No records

5. PAST MANAGEMENT. USES AND FIRE HISTORY

Past management of the Reserve has been non-existent, and from the nature conservation standpoint it has been severely mis-used. The area has been fenced into the adjoining property and utilized for grazing purposes. This has resulted in the destruction of all the native understorey species. There is no evidence of recent fire.

6. NATURE CONSERVATION VALUES

The Reserve has very little nature conservation value. The vegetation is composed of two mallee eucalypt species with no native understorey. Three bird species were recorded. An old Willie Wagtail nest was also found.

7. PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT

None. The small size and degraded condition of the Reserve dictates no future management. The Reserve should be cancelled and legal action taken against the adjoining landowner for destroying its natural values. Control of the area should be given to the Local Authority.

RESERVE NO 16129

