

Flora

Western Victoria's flora includes native vegetation and plant species that characterise the local landscape and provide habitats for fauna. We have been conducting field surveys since 2021 to help us identify and protect important flora during the planning and design of the proposed Western Renewables Link.

Why are we conducting flora field surveys?

Field surveys and investigations help ecologists to identify and confirm the types and numbers of flora in the project area and protect important flora through the planning and design of the proposed Western Renewables Link.

The Biodiversity Impact Assessment, one of 20 technical reports being prepared for the Western Renewables Link Environment Effects Statement, will provide detailed information about flora in the project area including those listed as threatened or vulnerable to extinction and measures to avoid, mitigate or manage potential impacts on flora.



Brittle Greenhood

The Brittle Greenhood is a critically endangered flora species that is present in western Victoria. This orchid flowers between February and July. Our field surveys and investigations have recorded the Brittle Greenhood within the study area, largely in the northern area of Long Forest.

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Fragrant saltbush

What area is being assessed?



The study area for flora includes 10km around the land identified for use during construction and operation of the proposed project, covering an area of about 500,000 hectares.



Field surveys and investigations are being conducted on land with relevant habitats identified through desktop analysis. All existing records for species previously located or known within the 10km study area around the proposed project land were reviewed to inform field surveys and investigations and the specific survey technique employed. A vegetation quality assessment is also undertaken as part of Victoria's native vegetation offset requirements.

Victoria's Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act 1988 defines flora as: "any plant-life which is indigenous to Victoria whether vascular or non-vascular and in any stage of biological development and includes any other living thing generally classified as flora."

Western Victoria's native vegetation areas are home to a variety of threatened plant species such as the Bacchus Marsh Wattle, Brittle Greenhood, Melbourne Yellow Gum and Yarra Gum and to threatened ecological communities such as Grey Box Grassy Woodlands and Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands.

How are the field surveys and investigations being conducted?

Ecologists have used a range of methods to investigate flora in the area, including desktop assessments and field surveys, flora community mapping and seasonal surveys for flora species such as the Spiny Rice-Flower.

Additional assessment has been completed for threatened flora species and flora communities considered reasonably or highly likely to be present in the study area, as well as all species listed in the scoping requirements for the project. Where possible, this included a detailed assessment of the suitability and quality of potential species habitat within the project area.

Some of the threatened species are only evident during specific seasons, or they may be detectable only following specific environmental events such as floods or fire. Part of the survey approach is establishing where and when such species may occur.

Community members also provided about 250 pieces of feedback (social pinpoint data) about flora and fauna features of importance to them in and around the project area. This information has been investigated by ecologists and has helped them identify important flora and fauna.

- ✓ INITIAL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT
- ✓ FIELD SURVEYS
- ✓ FLORA COMMUNITY MAPPING
- ✓ SEASONAL SURVEYS
- ✓ ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT FOR THREATENED SPECIES AND SPECIES LISTED IN THE EES SCOPING REQUIREMENTS
- ✓ 250+ PIECES OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON FLORA AND FAUNA

What field surveys have been conducted so far?

To date, we have conducted targeted surveys for many threatened flora species including:

- Adamson's Blown-grass
- Austral Tobacco
- Basalt Peppercress
- Branching Groundsel
- Brittle Greenhood
- Brookers Gum
- Buloke
- Button Wrinklewort
- Cane Spear-grass
- Clover Glycine
- Forked Rice-flower
- Fragrant Saltbush
- Glaucous Flax-lily
- Grey Scentbark
- Large-headed Fireweed
- Matted Flax-lily
- Melbourne Yellow-gum
- Pale Swamp Everlasting
- Spiny Rice-flower
- Spotted Hyacinth-orchid
- Swamp Fireweed
- Violet Westringia
- Yarra Gum

What have we found?



31

Number of federally listed threatened plant species identified in initial desktop analysis



3

Threatened ecological communities identified in the project area and relevant to the project

Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands of Southeast Australia threatened ecological community

The Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands of Southeast Australia is an endangered ecological community, recorded between the Lerderberg River in the west to Djerriwarrh Creek in the east. Our field surveys and investigations have found areas of various sizes and quality of the community, totalling 107ha of mapped vegetation throughout this section of the study area. Several species that occur within the Grey Box Grassy Woodlands community are also listed as threatened species, including Melbourne Yellow Gum, Bacchus Marsh Wattle and the Brittle Greenhood orchid.



Grey Box Grassy Woodland recorded near Merrimu Reservoir.

How is the information being used?

Field surveys and investigations are required to confirm the existing conditions and environmental sensitivities of the land and assess the potential impacts of the project. The findings of field surveys are helping us to identify the proposed route with the least overall impact and to identify indicative tower sites and access track locations in consultation with landholders.

What is flora?

Flora is the plant life that is present in a region, including trees, plants and the various groupings of plants that make up the flora communities that define native vegetation. Flora is fundamental to ecological processes that define the natural world, from oxygen production to managing erosion and providing food and shelter for fauna.



More information

You can find the latest information about the project and biodiversity impacts on the project website's **Resources** page, and the latest project information on the project website's **News & Events** page.

Western Renewables Link

🖥️ westernrenewableslink.com.au
📞 1800 WRL WRL (975 975)
✉️ info@westernrenewableslink.com.au
📍 PO Box 638, Ballarat VIC 3353

Information straight to your inbox

Sign up for information straight to your inbox at the Project website westernrenewableslink.com.au.

Need an interpreter?

🗣️ If English is not your first language or you need an interpreter, please call 13 14 50.

Complaints

If you have a query, a compliment or a complaint, you can let us know by using the online enquiry form on westernrenewableslink.com.au. Or you can let us know by:

📞 1800 WRL WRL (975 975)
✉️ info@westernrenewableslink.com.au
📍 PO Box 638, Ballarat VIC 3353

Feedback

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