

Vegetation Community Profile

South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) Grassy Woodland (AP0003PE)

South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) is the dominant overstorey tree, typically with a combined canopy cover of 10%–30%. The shrub layer is variable in species composition and density of shrubs, but there is always a well-developed ground layer of grasses, tussocks and herbs, including a high number of annual plants.

mapping (Data SA 2025). This indicates widespread clearance has occurred.

Because of this community's extensive pre-European distribution, the density of shrubs, and floristic composition varies across its range. Hence, the community's distribution has been divided into two regions:

Region 1: East of a line passing through approximately Mount Torrens and Strathalbyn, corresponding to < 550 mm rainfall. Along the eastern flanks of the Mt Lofty Ranges, South Australian Blue Gums have an open canopy with a sparse shrub layer, presenting a typical park-like appearance.

Region 2: West of a line between approximately Mount Torrens and Strathalbyn corresponding to > 550 mm rainfall. The tree and shrub layer may be denser than Region 1, but still with a prominent groundcover.

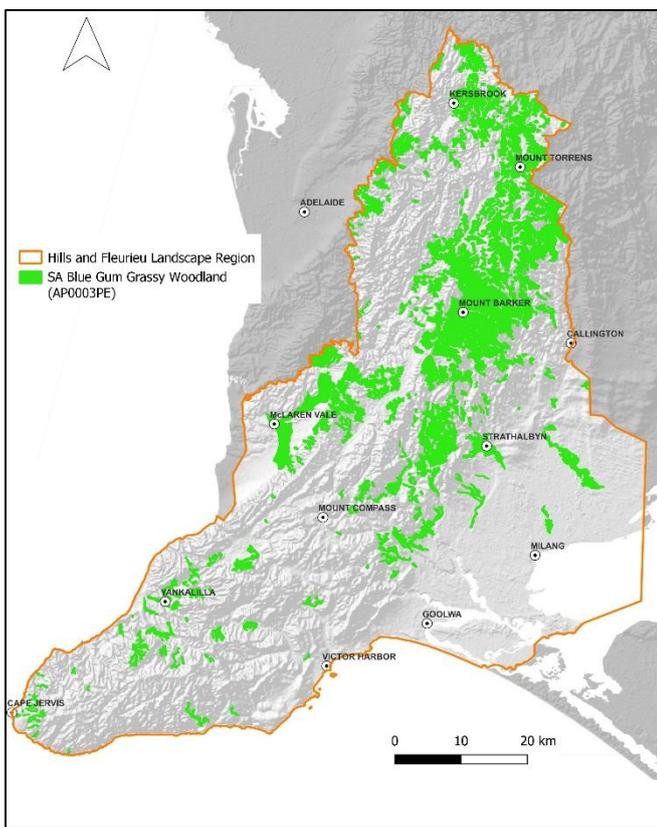


Figure 1: Pre-European distribution of South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) Grassy Woodland community within the Hills and Fleurieu landscape region



South Australian Blue Gum Grassy Woodland over heavy leaf litter and herbaceous groundcover species. Cleland National Park. (Source S. Croft 2025)

Distribution within the Hills and Fleurieu

South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) Grassy Woodland has an extensive occurrence within the region including the western, central and eastern slopes of the Mt Lofty Ranges and the undulating plains east of the Ranges. Of the 47,000 ha mapped as being present prior to European settlement, 1,690 ha (3.6%) has been mapped in the Department for Environment and Water's extant

Landform and aspect

South Australian Blue Gum Grassy Woodland occurs on hill slopes, ridges and undulating plains. At the lower rainfall limits of its occurrence (400 mm to 700 mm per annum), South Australian Blue Gum is more common on the moister south-facing slopes; at about 750 mm per annum it occurs on both north and southerly aspects; and where rainfall is > 750 mm per annum, it occurs mainly on north-facing slopes and ridges (Specht and Perry 1948).

Soil types

Sandy loam, loam and clay loam.

Rainfall

Approximately 400 mm to 900 mm per annum, but with the majority of this community occurring between 500 mm and 850 mm per annum.

Revegetation

A table of plant species likely to have occurred in this community is provided at the end of this document. Please note that the list includes species likely to occur across the plant community's entire range within the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape region. There may be other plant species that occurred on your property with a more restricted distribution. A native plant nurseries list can be found on the Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu website.



South Australian Blue Gum Woodland over an open understorey with the grassy/herbaceous ground cover the prominent layer. Waite Conservation Reserve (Source S. Croft 2025)

Vegetation structural layers

Tree Layer

South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) is often the sole overstorey tree.

Region 1: In lower rainfall locations (< 550 mm), the trees may be widely spaced, with a combined canopy cover of 10%-30%, and Peppermint Box (*Eucalyptus odorata*) may also be present.

Region 2: In higher rainfall locations (> 550 mm), the canopy cover may be up to 70%. The Blue Gums are generally 10 to 15 m tall.

In both regions Drooping Sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) and/or Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) are often present as small trees.

Where Blue Gum occurs with Pink Gum (*Eucalyptus fasciculosa*), or Rough-barked Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis* ssp. *cygnetensis*), or Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) these are described as separate communities (ML2001PE, WM7401PE, and AP0008, respectively).

Shrub Layer

Region 1: The shrub layer is generally sparse (combined cover less than 10%).

Region 2: The shrub layer is generally denser, with a combined cover of up to 30%. This coincides with the community occurring on less fertile, shallower soils of steeper slopes compared with Region 1.

Shrubs common to both regions typically include Sticky Hopbush (*Dodonaea viscosa* ssp. *spatulata*), Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa* ssp. *spinosa*) and Round-leaved Wattle (*Acacia acinacea*).

Groundcover Layer

The community is characterised by the well-developed ground cover of ferns, herbs, tussocks, grasses and small shrubs. Widespread groundcovers include Spear-grasses (*Austrostipa* species), Wallaby Grasses (*Rytidosperma* species), Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*), Soft Mat-rush (*Lomandra densiflora*), Raspwort (*Gonocarpus tetragynus*) and Annual Rock-fern (*Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia*). On shallow soils, Sticky Sword-sedge (*Lepidosperma viscidum*) and/or Hard Mat-rush (*Lomandra multiflora* ssp. *dura*) may be common (Hyde 1999).

In region 2 (> 550 mm rainfall), Little Sword-sedge (*Lepidosperma curtisiae*), Cotton Groundsel (*Senecio quadridentatus*), Matted Bush-pea (*Pultenaea pedunculata*) and Pale Flax-lily (*Dianella longifolia* ssp. *grandis*) are strongly tied to this community.

Caring for Country and native vegetation

This vegetation community reflects the landscapes and ecosystems that existed at the time of European colonisation. First Nations peoples have cared for these lands for thousands of years, maintaining deep connections to Country through knowledge, culture, and stewardship. This guide supports efforts to understand, protect and restore native vegetation in a way that respects those enduring relationships.

References

Data SA (2025). Native Vegetation Floristic Areas – NVIS – Statewide. *Government of South Australia*. <https://data.sa.gov.au/data/dataset/native-vegetation-floristic-areas-nvis-statewide>. Accessed April 2025

Hyde, M (1999) Native Vegetation of the Bremer Barker Catchment. *Wallowa Research*.

Specht, R and Perry, R (1948) The Plant Ecology of the Mount Lofty Ranges. *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Aust.* 72 (1), 91-130.

Acknowledgment

We gratefully acknowledge the valuable work and research of the staff and volunteers of the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre and Botanic Gardens of South Australia. The information available on their public websites 'Seeds of South Australia' and affiliated 'www.syzygium.xyz' has been widely referenced for the germination and propagation content of the Vegetation Community species lists.

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When citing multiple profiles:

Croft, S & Croft, T (2025). Pre-European Vegetation Community Profiles for the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape region. *Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board*.

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South Australian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*) Grassy Woodland (AP0003PE)

Species	Common Name	Region 1	Region 2	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further Info
TREE (10 - 30% combined cover in areas receiving < 550 mm annual rainfall; 30 - 70% cover in areas receiving > 550 mm annual rainfall)									
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	x	x	Y	S	HW, Sc		Insect (Native Bees, Honey bees, Hoverflies, Butterflies, Moths, Beetles Flies), Bird (including honeyeaters and thornbills)	https://www.publish.csiro.au/BT/BT9880519
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Drooping Sheoak	x	x	Y	S, C	CS		Wind	https://revegetation.org.au/?project=allocasuarina-verticillata
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i> ssp. <i>leucoxylon</i>	South Australian Blue Gum	x	x	Y	S	N		Insect (Native bees, Honey bees, Hoverflies, Wasps, Butterflies, Moths, Beetles, Flies)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Myrtaceae/Eucalyptus/Eucalyptus_leucoxylon_ssp_leucoxylon.html
MEDIUM AND TALL SHRUBS (5 - 10% combined cover in areas receiving < 550 mm annual rainfall; 10 - 30% cover in areas receiving > 550 mm annual rainfall)									
<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Round-leaved Wattle	x	x	Y	S	HW, Sc		Bird, Insect (Bees, Butterflies)	Microsoft Word - Acacia acinacea Gold Dust Wattle.docx
<i>Acacia brachybotrya</i>	Grey Wattle		x	Y	S	HW, Sc		Bird, Insect (Bees, Butterflies)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Fabaceae/Acacia/Acacia_brachybotrya.html
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i> ssp. <i>spinosa</i>	Sweet Bursaria	x	x	Y	S, C	N		Insect (Bees)	https://revegetation.org.au/?project=bursaria-spinosa
<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> ssp. <i>spatulata</i>	Sticky Hop-bush	x	x	Y	S, C	HW		Insect (Native bees, Honey bees, Hoverflies)	https://www.anpsa.org.au/APOL27/sep02-1.html
<i>Olearia ramulosa</i>	Twiggy Daisy-bush	x		Y	S, C	Sm		Insect	https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/twiggy-daisy-bush/
<i>Pultenaea largiflorens</i>	Twiggy Bush-pea	x		Y	S, C	HW, Sc		Insect (Bees)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Fabaceae/Pultenaea/Pultenaea_largiflorens.html
<i>Xanthorrhoea semiplana</i> ssp. <i>semiplana</i>	Yacca	x		Y	S	N		Insect (Honeybees, Butterflies, Beetles)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asphodelaceae/Xanthorrhoea/Xanthorrhoea_semiplana_ssp_semiplana.html
MAT PLANT (1 - 2% cover)									
<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney Weed	x	x	Y	D				https://aussiegreenthumb.com/dichondra-repens-growing-guide/

<i>Styphelia humifusa</i>	Cranberry Heath	x		N	C	N		Bird, Insect (Wasps, Moths, Beetles)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Ericaceae/Styphelia/Styphelia_exarrhena.html
Species	Common Name	Region 1	Region 2	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further info
SEDGE/ TUSSOCK (1 - 5% cover)									
<i>Dianella longifolia</i> var. <i>grandis</i>	Pale Flax-lily	x		Y	S, D	N		Insect (Native bees (buzz pollination))	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asphodelaceae/Dianella/Dianella_longifolia_var_grandis.html
<i>Dianella revoluta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i>	Black-anther Flax-lily	x	x	Y	S, D	N		Insect (Native bees (buzz pollination))	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asphodelaceae/Dianella/Dianella_revoluta_var_revoluta.html
<i>Juncus subsecundus</i>	Finger Rush		x	Y	S, D	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Juncaceae/Juncus/Juncus_subsecundus.html
<i>Lepidosperma curtisiae</i>	Little Sword-sedge	x		N	S, D		D	Wind	Lepidosperma curtisiae ; Search
<i>Lepidosperma viscidum</i>	Sticky Sword-sedge		x	N	S, D		D	Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Cyperaceae/Lepidosperma/Lepidosperma_viscidum.html ; Search
<i>Lomandra densiflora</i>	Soft Mat-rush		x	Y	S, D, C	HW	D	Insect (Beetles)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asparagaceae/Lomandra/Lomandra_densiflora.html
<i>Lomandra multiflora</i> ssp. <i>dura</i>	Hard Mat-rush	x	x	Y	S, D	N		Insect (Beetles)	FACT-SHEET Lomandra multiflora.pdf
TWINER/ SCRAMBLER (< 1% cover)									
<i>Glycine rubiginosa</i>	Twining Glycine		x	Y	S, C	HW		Insect	https://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FACT-SHEET_Glycine-clandestina.pdf
<i>Thysanotus patersonii</i>	Twining Fringe-lily	x		N	S	Sm		Insect (Bees)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asparagaceae/Thysanotus/Thysanotus_patersonii.html
FERNS (5 - 10% cover)									
<i>Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia</i>	Annual Rock-fern	x	x	Y	D			Insect	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Pteridaceae/Cheilanthes/Cheilanthes_austrotenuifolia.html
HERBS (5 - 30% cover)									
<i>Acaena echinata</i>	Sheep's Burr	x		Y	S	N		Wind	https://grasslands.ecolinc.vic.edu.au/fieldguide/flora/sheeps-burr
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Common Vanilla-lily	x	x	Y	S, D	Sm, St		Insect	https://aussiegreenthumb.com/chocolate-lily-arthropodium-strictum/
<i>Brunonia australis</i>	Blue Pincushion	x		Y	S, D	Sm, So	D	Insect (Butterfly)	https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/blue-pincushion/
<i>Bulbine bulbosa</i>	Bulbine-lily	x		Y	S	N		Insect	https://aussiegreenthumb.com/bulbine-bulbosa-bulbine-lily/
<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids	x		Y	S	N		Insect	https://resources.austplants.com.au/plant/burchardia-umbellatamilkmaids/

Species	Common Name	Region 1	Region 2	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further Info
<i>Caesia calliantha</i>	Blue Grass-lily	x	x	Y	S	CS		Insect (Bees)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asphodelaceae/Caesia/Caesia_calliantha.html
<i>Cymbonotus preissianus</i>	Austral Bear's-ear	x		N	S	N		Insect	Cymbonotus preissianus ; Search
<i>Drosera macrantha ssp. planchonii</i>	Climbing Sundew	x		N	S, C, D	N		Insect	https://carnivorousplants.org/grow/guides/tuberousDrosera
<i>Geranium retrorsum</i>	Geranium	x		Y	S, C	N		Insect (Bees)	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Geraniaceae/Geranium/Geranium_retrorsum.html
<i>Gonocarpus elatus</i>	Hill Raspwort	x		Y	S, C	N	D	Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Haloragaceae/Gonocarpus/Gonocarpus_elatus.html
<i>Gonocarpus megianus</i>	Broad-leaf Raspwort	x		Y	S, C	N	D	Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Haloragaceae/Gonocarpus/Gonocarpus_megianus.html
<i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i>	Raspwort	x	x	Y	S, C	N	D	Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Haloragaceae/Gonocarpus/Gonocarpus_tetragynus.html
<i>Hackelia suaveolens</i>	Sweet Hound's-tongue	x		Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Boraginaceae/Hackelia/Hackelia_suaveolens.html
<i>Lagenophora gunniana</i>	Coarse Bottle-daisy	x		Y	S	N		Insect	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asteraceae/Lagenophora/Lagenophora_gunniana.html
<i>Leptorhynchos squamatus ssp. squamatus</i>	Scaly Buttons	x		Y	S, C	N		Insect	https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/scaly-buttons/
<i>Linum marginale</i>	Native Flax	x		Y	S	N		Insect	Microsoft Word - Linum marginale Native Flax.docx
<i>Maireana enchylaenoides</i>	Wingless Fissure-plant		x	N	S, C	N		Insect	https://www2.csu.edu.au/cgi-bin/herbarium/db/species-2.pl
<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Yam Daisy	x		Y	S	N		Insect (Butterfly)	Search
<i>Oxalis perennans</i>	Native Oxalis	x	x	N	D			Insect (Flies, Bees)	https://www.picturethisai.com/care/Oxalis_perennans.html
<i>Pimelea glauca</i>	Smooth Riceflower	x		Y	C		D	Insect (Flies, Bees)	FACT-SHEET Pimelea glauca.pdf ; Search
<i>Plantago varia</i>	Variable Plantain	x		N	S	N		Insect, Wind	Search
<i>Ptilotus spathulatus</i>	Pussy-tails		x	Y	S, C, D	N, Sm		Insect, Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Amaranthaceae/Ptilotus/Ptilotus_spathulatus.html
<i>Scaevola albida</i>	Pale Fanflower	x		Y	S, C	N		Insect (Bees, Butterflies)	https://www.aaeesa.org.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Scaevola-albida-Small-fruit-Fanflower.pdf
<i>Senecio quadridentatus</i>	Cotton Groundsel	x	x	Y	S	N		Insect	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asteraceae/Senecio/Senecio_quadridentatus.html

Species	Common Name	Region 1#	Region 2#	Nursery Availability*	Propagation Method**	Seed Treatment***	Seed Propagation Difficulty****	Pollination	Links to further Info
<i>Senecio phelleus</i>	Woodland Groundsel	x		Y	S	N		Insect	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Asteraceae/Senecio/Senecio_phelleus.html
<i>Stackhousia aspericocca</i> ssp.	Bushy Candles	x	x	N	C, D			Insect (Moths, Wasps, Butterflies)	Stackhousia aspericocca ssp. Cylindrical inflorescence (W.R.Barker 1418).
<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	Creamy Candles	x	x	Y	C, D			Insect	https://anpsa.org.au/plant_profiles/stackhousia-monogyna/ ; Search
<i>Wahlenbergia stricta</i>	Tall Bluebell	x	x	Y	S	CS		Insect	Search
GRASSES (10 - 50% cover)									
<i>Anthosachne scabra</i>	Tall Wheat-grass	x	x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://treeproject.org.au/seedlings/common-wheat-grass-previously-known-as-elymus-scaber/
<i>Aristida behriana</i>	Brush Wire-grass		x	Y	S	N		Wind	Aristida behriana
<i>Austrostipa blackii</i>	Crested Spear-grass		x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Austrostipa/Austrostipa_blackii.html
<i>Austrostipa drummondii</i>	Cottony Spear-grass	x	x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Austrostipa/Austrostipa_drummondii.html
<i>Austrostipa mollis</i>	Soft Spear-grass	x		Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Austrostipa/Austrostipa_mollis.html
<i>Austrostipa scabra</i> ssp. <i>falcata</i>	Slender Spear-grass		x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Austrostipa/Austrostipa_scabra_ssp._falcata.html
<i>Microlaena stipoides</i> var. <i>stipoides</i>	Weeping Rice-grass	x		Y	S	N		Wind	Search
<i>Rytidosperma auriculatum</i>	Lobed Wallaby-grass	x	x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Rytidosperma/Rytidosperma_auriculatum.html
<i>Rytidosperma caespitosum</i>	Common Wallaby-grass	x	x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Rytidosperma/Rytidosperma_caespitosum.html
<i>Rytidosperma erianthum</i>	Hill Wallaby-grass	x		N	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Rytidosperma/Rytidosperma_erianthum.html
<i>Rytidosperma setaceum</i>	Small-flower Wallaby-grass	x	x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Rytidosperma/Rytidosperma_setaceum.html
<i>Themeda triandra</i>	Kangaroo Grass	x	x	Y	S	N		Wind	https://syzygium.xyz/saplants/Poaceae/Themeda/Themeda_triandra.html

If cells are blank, no information was readily available at the time of writing.

#Region

Region 1 = East of a line passing through approximately Mount Torrens and Strathalbyn, corresponding to < 550 mm rainfall.

Region 2 = West of a line between approximately Mount Torrens and Strathalbyn corresponding to > 550 mm rainfall

x = Present

*** Nursery Availability**

N = No

Y = Yes

**** Propagation Method**

C = Cuttings

D = Division

S = Seedlings

***Seed Treatment Code	Treatment name	Procedure
CS	Cold Storage	Stored at 3 to 5 degrees Celsius
HW	Hot Water	Water just off the boil poured over the seed and allowed to stand for 8 - 24 hours
N	None	
Sc	Scarify	Mechanical abrasion of seed coat e.g. lightly scratch with sandpaper
Sm	Smoke	Soaking seeds in smoke water
So	Soak	Seed placed in rainwater for 24 hours
St	Stratify	Seed placed in freezer for 2 weeks

******Seed Propagation Difficulty**

D = Difficult