

## 9 Myrtle Beech Cool Temperate Rainforest (EVC 31 Cool Temperate Rainforest)

Grouping plants into Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC's) is an artificial means of grouping plants which commonly occur together in similar vegetation communities. This can be determined by the type of soil, rainfall, moisture level retained in the soil, altitude and slope (eg low-lying, flat, foothills, mountains), aspect (north facing, south facing) and amount of canopy and resulting sunlight (from open to closed forest and rainforest). Where a certain combination of these factors recurs, the plant community is likely to be made up of a similar group of species.

Within a typical community there may be a single vegetation layer or up to 3 different layers, known as upper storey, middle storey and lower (or ground) storey.

The same plant may occur in a number of different EVC's. Not all plants listed for a particular community will occur everytime that community is encountered. Some plants may be more common in one section of the Shire of Yarra Ranges, but may not occur in another section even though the EVC is the same. Other plants may only occur in a specific EVC. "Indicator Species" may be common to one EVC only or may be a group that almost always tend to occur together. They help to identify the EVC.

All plants in this Guide to the Indigenous Plants of the Shire of Yarra Ranges have been found within the Shire, although some plants may now be locally rare or extinct. It can never be a definitive list. Many plant communities throughout the Shire are now degraded or no longer exist as urbanisation, agricultural and forestry pursuits and weed invasion have changed the local landscape. Lists have been collated using often small remnant patches which may not give an accurate overall picture of the original plant community.

The vegetation classes used within the Shire are similar to the EVC's used by the Department of Sustainability and the Environment. However they differ in that sometimes classes have been split into separate areas within the Shire (Dandenong Ranges, Central Highlands, Upper Yarra) while others have been included in one all encompassing class. Classes reflect the dominant Indicator Species, usually a eucalypt.

### Community structure

Closed forest to 25 m tall dominated by *Nothofagus cunninghamii* (Myrtle Beech) and *Atherosperma moschatum* (Southern Sassafras) with occasional emergent *Eucalyptus regnans* (Mountain Ash). A limited range of mostly broad-leafed lower trees and shrubs and tree ferns form the mid-storey while the ground storey is characterised by a diversity of ground ferns and herbs and a rich epiphytic flora.

### Distribution

Restricted to medium altitude gullies and protected slopes from 550-800m within Wet Forest in high rainfall areas protected from fire. The main occurrences in the Shire are between the Watts and O'Shannessy Rivers from the Mt. Donna Buang area to the northeast near Marysville and in two isolated sections along Britannia Creek and the upper reaches of McMahons Creek.

### Typical suburbs/areas occurring in this EVC are:

Mt Donna Buang area, Acheron River area, Smith Creek area north of McMahons Creek, O'Shannessy River; Britannia Creek; upper reaches of McMahons Creek.

## Indicator Species

### Upper Storey

<i>Eucalyptus regnans</i>	Mountain Ash
<i>Nothofagus cunninghamii</i>	Myrtle Beech

### Middle Storey

<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle
<i>Atherosperma moschatum</i>	Southern Sassafras
<i>Hedycarya angustifolia</i>	Austral Mulberry
<i>Lomatia fraseri</i>	Tree Lomatia
<i>Olearia argophylla</i>	Musk Daisy-bush
<i>Pittosporum bicolor</i>	Banyalla
<i>Coprosma quadrifida</i>	Prickly Currant-bush
<i>Cyathea australis</i>	Rough Tree-fern
<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>	Soft Tree-fern
<i>Olearia phlogopappa</i>	Dusty Daisy-bush
<i>Polyscias sambucifolia</i>	Elderberry Panax
<i>Tasmannia lanceolata</i>	Mountain Pepper
<i>Clematis aristata</i>	Mountain Clematis

### Lower Storey

<i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i>	Bidgee-widgee
<i>Australina pusilla</i>	Shade Nettle
<i>Blechnum fluviatile</i>	Ray Water-fern
<i>Blechnum wattsii</i>	Hard Water-fern
<i>Histiopteris incisa</i>	Bat's Wing Fern
<i>Hydrocotyle hirta</i>	Hairy Pennywort
<i>Polystichum proliferum</i>	Mother Shield-fern
<i>Sambucus gaudichaudiana</i>	White Elderberry
<i>Tetrarrhena juncea</i>	Forest Wire-grass
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Ivy-leaf Violet
<i>Cyathophorum bulbosum</i>	False Fern-moss
<i>Microsorium pustulatum</i>	Kangaroo Fern

If you would like further information on the plants of this community go to Recommended Landscape Plants for this EVC or the Complete Species List. Plants are described and illustrated in the Yarra Ranges Local Plant Directory.