

# Wetlands: SEASONAL HERBACEOUS WETLANDS

Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands occur on the lowland plains of temperate south-eastern Australia. The Glenelg Hopkins region contains the largest distribution of these threatened wetlands in Victoria.

## What are they?

Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (SHW) are isolated freshwater wetlands that fill seasonally with rainfall. They are generally inundated by water in Winter-Spring and dry by late Summer, so while they are regarded as wetlands, surface water is not always present.

## Why are they important?

This type of wetland provides habitat for many plants and animals which are not found in other wetland areas. These plants and animals rely on seasonal inundation of these wetlands. For example - seeds, spores and eggs in the ground can rapidly turn into a thriving diverse wetland system with the addition of water, despite being dry for extended periods.

## Why protect these wetlands?

SHWs are an extraordinary example of nature at work. However, due to their wet/dry nature, they often seem to disappear from the landscape during dry periods. Due to the large number of these wetlands being disturbed and lost, they are now nationally listed as Critically Endangered and are protected by law.

## Is any funding available?

Contact Glenelg Hopkins CMA to check if funding is available to assist with wetland protection.

THESE WETLANDS ARE LISTED AS **CRITICALLY ENDANGERED** UNDER THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S **ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999**

## MANAGING A SEASONAL HERBACEOUS WETLAND

The aim of managing SHWs is to stop the decline in number and quality of these critically endangered wetlands. However, this does not mean areas are lost to productive farming business.

What you can do:

- ✓ OBSERVE, MONITOR AND RECORD SITE INFORMATION
- ✓ PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OR DISTURBANCE
- ✓ PROTECT (OR REINSTATE) WATER FLOW
- ✓ MANAGE PEST PLANTS AND ANIMALS
- ✓ CONTROL STOCK GRAZING
- ✓ REHABILITATE WITH EXPERT ADVICE

## Did you know?

Around two thirds of Victoria's wetlands have been drained or degraded since European settlement

Shallow, temporary wetlands have larger numbers of plants and animals than deeper, more permanent wetlands and lakes

Wetlands rely on wetting and drying phases to regenerate

The conversion of wetlands to pasture, cropland, plantation forests and dams can cause irreversible damage



# Wetlands: SEASONAL HERBACEOUS WETLAND PHASES

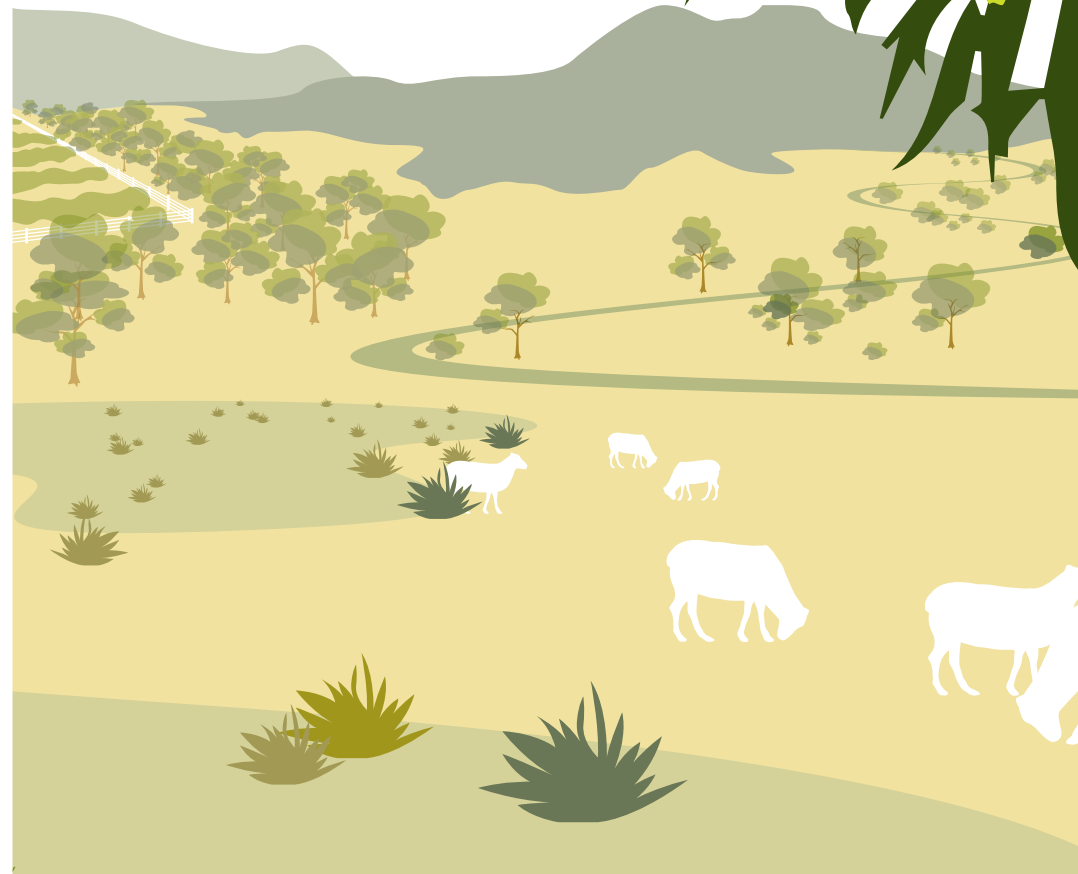
## Winter

- Wetland is wet
- Lots of wildlife present
- Plants are actively growing and flowering



## Summer

- Wetland is dry
- Can be grazed by stock
- Plants are not actively growing



Glenelg Hopkins



CMA

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