

# What have we got here?



## Threats

Even though Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands only survive in small areas, they are very important - they stop soil erosion and salinity; and provide homes for native animals, birds, reptiles and insects. But they are under threat and need our help to survive and continue to provide benefits for farmers, the environment and communities.

- **Clearing:** Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands often occur on highly productive farming land that has been cleared. These areas are at risk of further clearing for agriculture, forestry, rural and residential development. Patches of woodland that remain are often **fragmented** (very small, isolated patches) meaning the sites are easily degraded and at risk from weeds. Plants and animals are threatened if they are isolated and cannot move from one patch of woodland to another. **Roadsides, travelling stock reserves and revegetated corridors on farms are important to link patches together.**
- **Overgrazing:** Heavy or constant livestock grazing in Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands reduces regeneration. This reduces species, as plants that are easy to eat are removed and plants that are tougher to eat such as weeds, dominate. Kangaroo grass is often one of the first species to disappear in sites that are constantly grazed because it is highly edible. Stock can also increase the nutrient level of a site, disturb and compact the soil leading to invasion of weeds and soil erosion. **When restoring grassy woodland sites, some grazing, when carefully managed, can be useful.**
- **Weeds:** Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands are at risk of invasion from weeds. Weeds can be introduced by livestock, grazing, vehicles, machinery, birds, pest animals and surrounding agricultural disturbances. Weeds spread rapidly and once introduced, can be hard to manage or remove. Weedy pasture grasses are often present in grassy woodlands and can eventually replace many native tussock grasses and wildflowers. **Controlling weeds in the woodlands as well as surrounding areas can help weeds from spreading.**
- **Pest Animals:** Pest animals such as rabbits, foxes and feral cats can have a big impact on Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands. Foxes and cats prey on native birds and other small animals. The Bush-Stone Curlew, which was once a common bird, is now endangered due to foxes and removal of habitat. Rabbits degrade sites by eating native vegetation, burrowing and creating bare areas that lead to increased weeds and soil erosion. **With help from farmers and community groups, eradication of foxes and rabbits will help protect the species that live in Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands.**
- **Collection of fallen timber:** Fallen timber provides important shelter, feeding and breeding habitat for many native birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands are often the only source of timber in cleared agricultural areas, sites near roads and towns are particularly at risk of removal. **It is important that fallen timber is left in these areas so vital habitat is maintained.**

# Activities



## Threats

1. Why has so much of the Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands been cleared?
2. Why is it important to leave dead timber on the ground?
3. Name some animals that need fallen timber to survive.
4. What is a "revegetated corridor"?
5. How do weeds get into Box-Gum Grassy Woodland areas?
6. What can people do to help prevent weed getting in Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands?
7. List some of the major pest species in Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands.

