

WETLANDS

(TASVEG codes – AHL, ASF, AHS, AHF)

Conservation status: VULNERABLE

What is a Wetland?

- *Wetlands* contain plants that grow in water for all or part of the year.
- Water can range from fresh to brackish (slightly salty) to saline (salty like sea water). The water may be still or it may flow from one part of the Wetland to another. It may vary in depth from a few centimetres to several metres. In some cases, water movement may be tidal, like at the mouth of a river.
- Some *Wetlands* may only be flooded for a few weeks per year.
- Wetland plants may grow entirely under the water or partially above water. During dry periods, plants may persist as roots, tubers or seeds that sprout once water returns.



Photo: Mary Whittaker



Photo: Louise Gilfedder

What kinds of Wetland are considered threatened?

- Not all *Wetlands* are threatened. Most types of freshwater wetland and one type of saline wetland are listed as threatened. The flow chart overleaf will help you to decide if you have a threatened *Wetland* on your property.

Where can I see threatened Wetlands?

- Threatened *Wetlands* occur from highland areas to the coast, including off-shore islands. Examples of threatened *Wetlands* include Colliers Swamp (King Island), Camerons Lagoon (Flinders Island), Diprose Lagoon, Township Lagoon and Lake Dulverton (Midlands), Apsley Marshes (East Coast) and Double Bar Lagoon (Central Highlands).

Why are Wetlands important and what are their management issues?

- *Wetlands* are among the most productive of Tasmania's native ecosystems. They are stopover points for migratory birds and breeding grounds for fish, frogs and invertebrates. They also filter water and disperse heavy flow in times of flood.
- Many threatened species of plants and animals occur in Tasmania's threatened *Wetlands*, including Dwarf Galaxiid, Scottsdale burrowing crayfish, and several sedge, rush and herb species.
- *Wetlands* can be easily disturbed and damaged by livestock grazing and trampling, drainage works, vehicle use and fire. Surrounding land uses can pollute *Wetlands* and change their normal flooding and drying cycles.

Do I have a threatened Wetland on my property?

- Use the flow chart overleaf to decide if you may have a threatened *Wetland* on your property.
- You may need to take account of climatic conditions (seasonal variations and drought) or time since disturbance (e.g. grazing).

What does it mean if I have a threatened Wetland on my property?

- If you want to **clear and convert** or **drain** an area which **may be a threatened Wetland** you will need a Forest Practices Plan. You should seek advice from the Forest Practices Authority or the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association. **Please check if you are in doubt.**
- Information on ways to make sure grazing and other land uses are compatible with environmental values can be obtained from the Forest Practices Authority or Dept of Primary Industries and Water.

Do I have a threatened *Wetland* on my property?



Need help?

Contact the FPA or TFGA

Imagine that each native shrub or small tree is an 'umbrella'. **Do they collectively shade more than 10% of the ground?** (Answer NO if these are absent.)

YES

NO

Is the site **subject to tidal flow** or does it **normally become flooded or covered by water for some time of the year?**

NO

YES

Is the impoundment of water **caused entirely by a constructed barrier or structure**, such as a dam wall or levee, which was built before 1985?

YES

NO

You may have a **Wetland** at your site. Answer **each of the 3 questions below** to decide if you have a **threatened *Wetland***.

YES

1. Is the native vegetation **aquatic (submerged or floating)** in an area that is **inundated with freshwater** for most of the year?

NO

YES

2. Is the vegetation **dominated by native rushes or sedges** in an area that is inundated with **freshwater or slightly brackish** (salty to taste) for most of the year?

NO

YES

3. Is the vegetation **dominated by native low growing herbs and sedges** (resembling a 'lawn'), with **woody plants and saltbushes sparse or absent?**

NO

You may have a **threatened *Wetland***



Use the boxes to record your decisions

You don't have a **threatened *Wetland***



Need help or more information on threatened native vegetation communities?

Forest Practices Authority: 30 Patrick St, Hobart 7000; phone – 6233 7966; Online - www.fpa.tas.gov.au

DPIPWE: 134 Macquarie St, Hobart 7000; phone – 6233 8538; Online – www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au

Information and assistance for landholders is also available from the Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association: cnr Cimitiere and Charles St, Launceston 7250; phone – 6332 1800