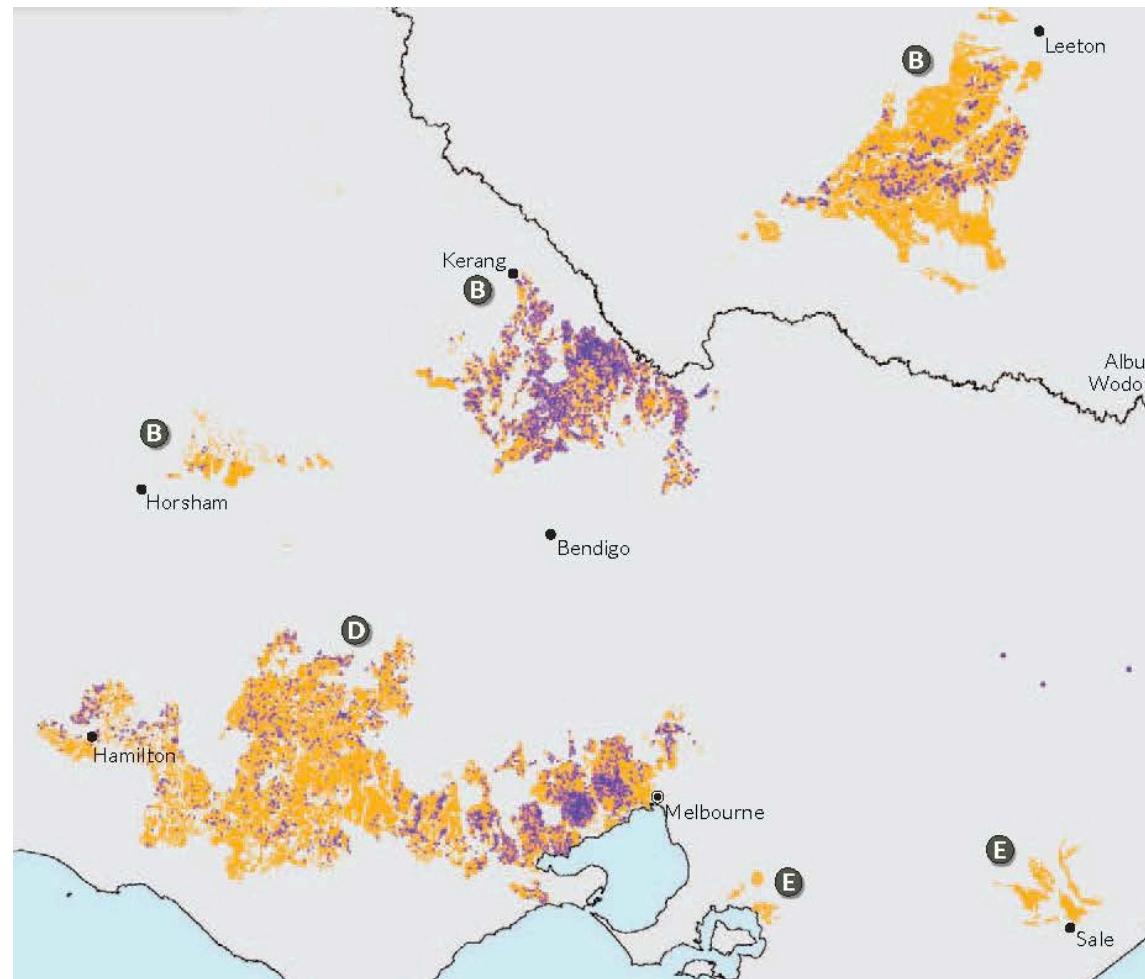


Watch your step - grasslands afoot!

2024-11-20

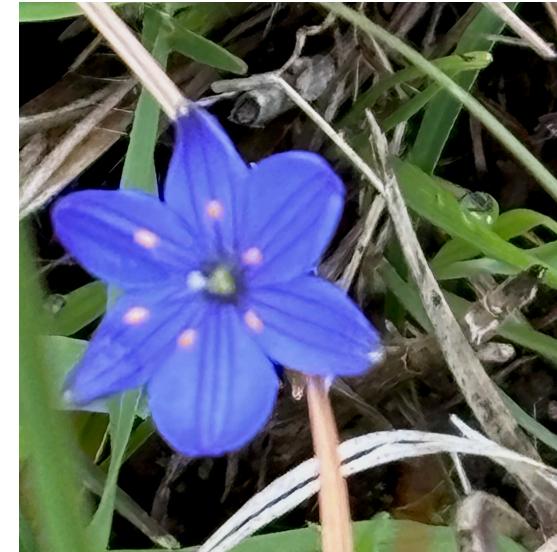


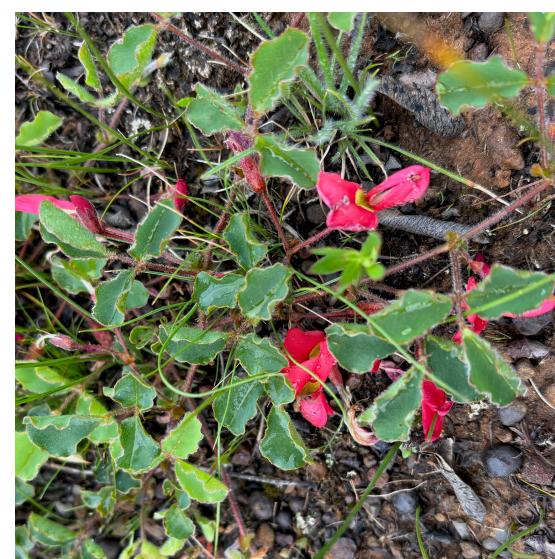
Native temperate grasslands of south-east Australia¹

¹: Williams et al. 2015. Land of Sweeping Plains.

Wickliffe & Woorndoo







Why bother about grasslands?

- There are plenty of “improved” grasslands - fields of wheat, oats, ryegrass, phalaris ...
- Little native grassland remains - 2, 1, 0.5, 0.1 ... % ?
- Native temperate grasslands are among Australia’s most endangered plant communities
- High biodiversity
- Support substantial proportion of threatened plants and animals
- Provide ecosystem services
 - store carbon
 - support pollinators
 - reduce salinity, soil acidity and erosion

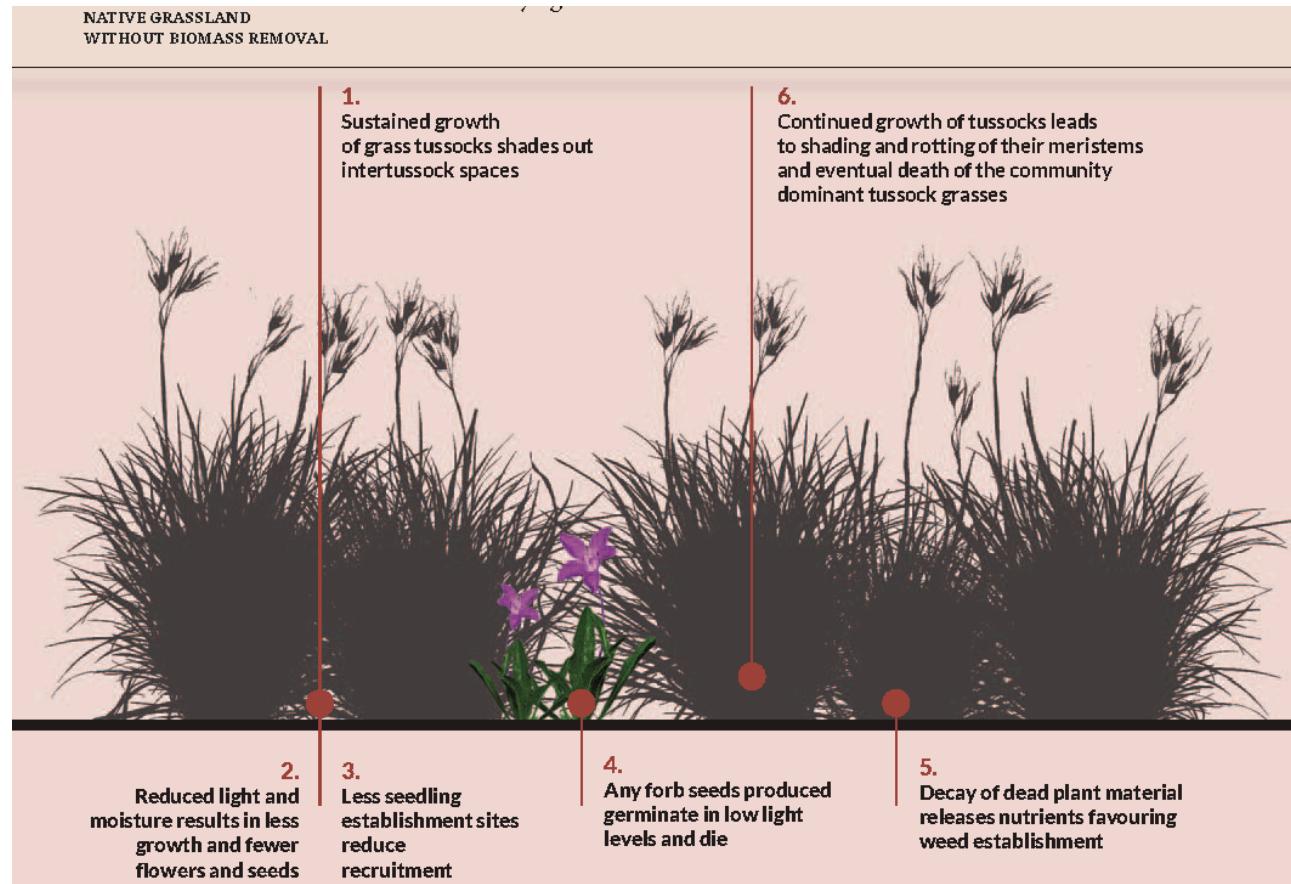
How can we conserve them?

- Best remnants are in cemeteries, road and railway reserves, travelling stock routes
- In Victoria, many 2- and 3-chain roads with the best remnants are old travelling stock routes
- Degradation continues so conserving these plant communities means constructing them
- In Australia, Victoria leads the way in this
- How? From scratch:
 - find a road reserve
 - make sure you've got enough seed for the project
 - scalp the top 100 mm of soil off to remove the weed seed bank and nutrient load
 - direct sow a mix of grass and forbs

How can we conserve them?



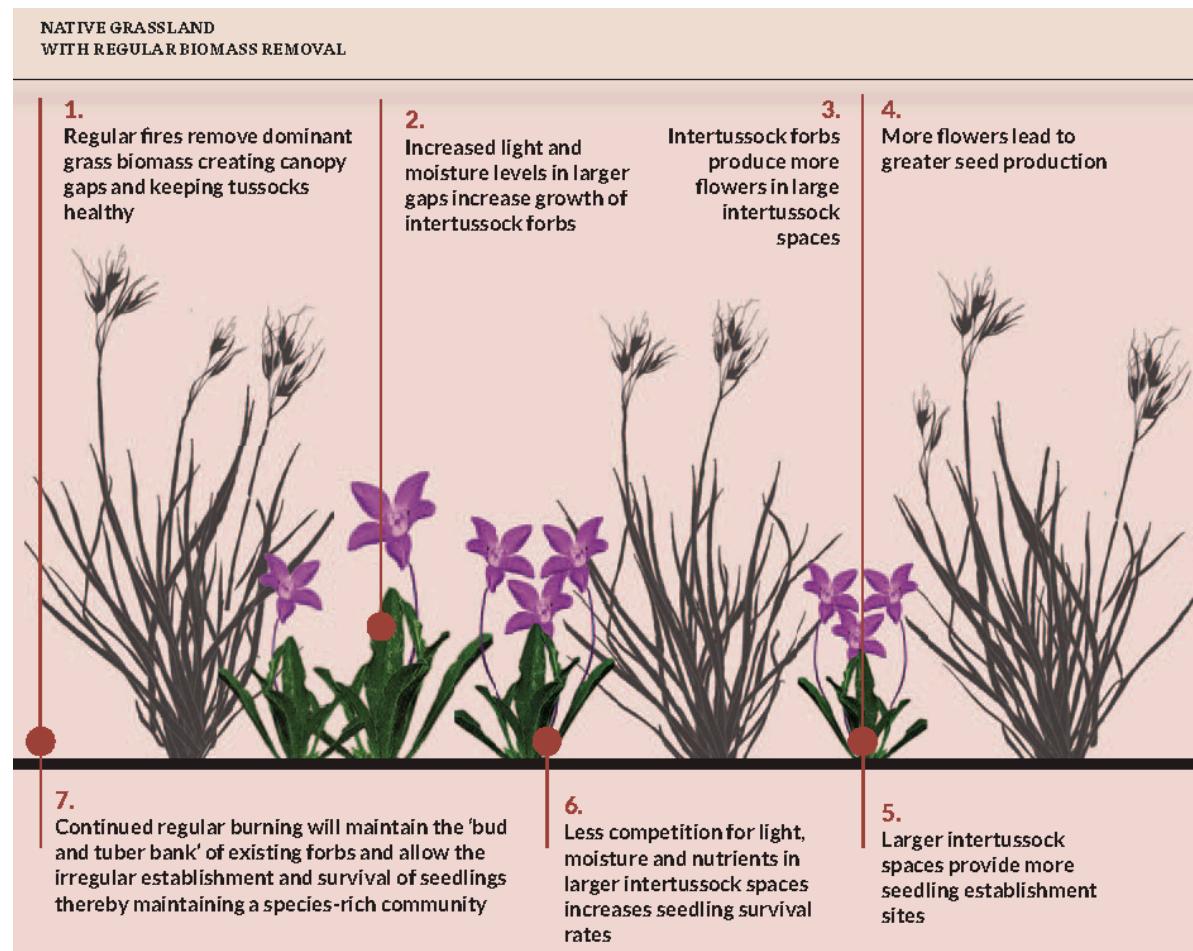
How can we conserve them?



Unrestricted tussock growth smothers forbs²

²: Williams et al. 2015. Land of Sweeping Plains.

How can we conserve them?



Regular burning allows forbs to survive³

³: Williams et al. 2015. Land of Sweeping Plains.

