

## 824131

### MELBA FLATS

Melba Flats land system comprises areas of low hills developed on Cambrian sediments. It includes a strip of country 13 km from north to south and averaging about 3 km wide, lying along the Murchison Highway east of Zeehan.

Gravelly yellowish brown and brown gradational soils occupy the crests, slopes and drainage lines. **On** the flats and in the swales it was too moist to determine the texture grading of the soils. However, they became more gravelly with depth and the colour changed from brown to blue. Occasional outcrops of iron-rich rock occur in these lower areas.

The swampy soils support a dense sedgeland community. Elsewhere is a tall forest dominated by Smithton peppermint, gum-topped stringybark and swamp gum. Manuka, woolly tea-tree and dogwood constitute a tall shrub layer on the crests and upper slopes, while along the drainage lines is a rainforest element represented by myrtle and sassafras.

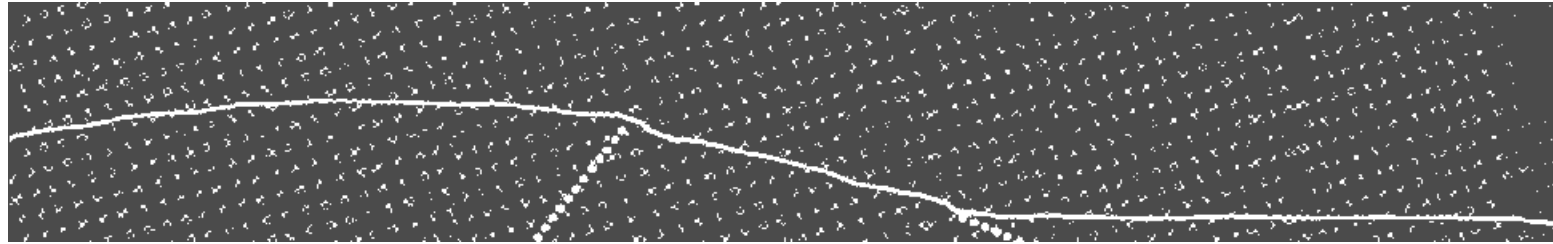
Nature conservation is an important land use but areas have been cleared for grazing sheep and cattle.

Waterlogging on the flat marshy areas is the principal constraint restricting the use of this land.

LAND SYSTEM

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Melba Flats



COMPONENT	1	2	3
PROPORTION %	40	20	40
CLIMATE	Average Annual Rainfall 2 000-2 500 mm		
GEOLOGY	Cambrian greywacke turbidite sequences		
		Colluvium	Alluvium
TOPOGRAPHY	Low hills		
Land form			
Position	Crests, gentle upper slopes	Moderate slopes, drainage lines	Swales, flats
Average Sideslope °	7	12	2
NATIVE VEGETATION			
Structure	Tall open forest		Closed sedgeland
Association	Smithton peppermint, gum topped stringybark, swamp gum, manuka, woolly tea tree, dog wood	Smithton peppermint, swamp gum, manuka, blackwood myrtle, sassafras	<i>Juncus</i> sp, tassel cord rush, <i>Helichrysum rosmarinifolium</i>
SOIL	Yellowish brown (10 YR 5/4) gradational soil	Gravelly brown (7.5 YR 5/4) gradational soil	Brown (7.5 YR 5/2) mud becoming very gravelly and bluish with depth
Surface Texture	Clay loam		Peat
Permeability		Moderate	
Average Depth m	1.0	0.5	0.8
PRESENT LAND USE	Nature conservation, grazing		
HAZARDS	Low sheet erosion	Moderate sheet and rill erosion	High waterlogging