

Valuing Biodiversity

Spotted Gum Forest is structurally diverse and provides a great range of habitat niches for fauna. As it is usually on better soils than other habitat types in Pittwater, its higher nutrient status means that it can support greater densities of fauna than other habitats.

As Spotted Gums flower mainly between May and September, they are a valuable winter food source. Apart from the abundant nectar favoured by honeyeaters, lorikeets, possums and gliders, these trees also develop hollows. Wattles also provide pollen and exudates (sap) consumed by gliders, including the endangered population of Squirrel Gliders. The thick ground -cover, fallen limbs and occasional rock outcrops also provide shelter areas for species inhabiting the forest floor.



Endangered Squirrel Glider

The regionally significant Long-nosed Bandicoot is probably the most obvious species favoured by this habitat feature.

The major remnants on the peninsula are mainly within Stapleton Park, and McKay, Crown of Newport, and Angophora bushland reserves.

Nurseries can supply local native plants

To preserve local genetic integrity, it is important to only plant species grown from seed collected in Pittwater. Due to irregular availability of local seed, Spotted Gum seedlings may not always be available on demand. Best to order in advance!

For further information, or specific plantings list for your locality, please contact
Natural Resources Unit on 9970 -1111

Natural Regeneration

Regeneration of Spotted Gum trees rely on native seeds stored on plants or in the top 10cm of intact natural soil to germinate when conditions are favourable. Natural regeneration provides a diversity of local native species which are generally healthier, resilient to drought, and fast growing.

To help natural regeneration, remove exotic lawn grasses and shrubs around base of remnant trees to dripline of canopy, allowing disturbed soil to remain open; mulch lightly. Regularly weeding of site will encourage natural regeneration, as most natives like some top surface soil disturbance.

Over 70% of Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest is found on private land, with only 30% existing in council bushland reserves. Protection of remnants on private land is *vital* to the future of our Spotted Gum Forest!

Living in Spotted Gum Forest- What you can do:

- Value natives on your block and maintain a diverse community
- Save your natural soil profile, it contains dormant seeds that can regenerate naturally
- Let natural mulch reduce erosion and retain moisture
- Plant local natives associated with Spotted Gum Forest
- Identify, control and remove weeds
- Limit the use of fertiliser – it encourages weeds

It is always best to seek advice from Council or a professional bush regenerator prior to carrying out any work!

PITTWATER SPOTTED GUM FOREST



Photo: Lynn Benson

*An Endangered Ecological
Community in NSW*



Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest:

A vegetation community at risk

Status

The Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest is listed as an Endangered Ecological Community in the Sydney Basin under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act (TSC)* (1995). Meaning that, all native plants occurring as part of this vegetation community are protected. This includes all trees, shrubs, ferns, groundcovers, grasses and native vines.

"In view of the small size of existing remnants, unless the circumstances and factors threatening its survival cease to operate, the NSW Scientific Committee is of the opinion that the Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest is likely to become extinct in nature (TSC)".

Description

Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest occurs on shale soils, and lower hillslopes with heavy rainfall. It is present on the Barrenjoey Peninsula, Scotland Island and the western Pittwater foreshores. This community is isolated from all other Spotted Gum forests – the nearest are at Liverpool and have a different genetic make-up.

Pittwater is renowned for its trees and in many places Spotted Gums dominate the canopy. They are easily identified by their straight grey and cream spotted trunks. Tree height is generally over 20 metres tall with individuals reaching 30 metres.

The structure of the community was originally open-forest but now exists as woodland or remnant trees. This community has been extensively cleared and is threatened by further clearing for housing, bushfire mitigation and onsite wastewater disposal. In many areas the canopy density has been reduced significantly. When native understory species are removed and exotic species are planted, local biodiversity is lost.

Remnants are also threatened by weed invasion especially *Lantana camara*, and by inappropriate fire regimes (no sooner than 12yrs or longer than 20yrs).

In the final determination for this community, Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest is characterised by the following assemblage of species. Please note: The total species list of this community is larger than that given below.

Botanical Name

Common Name

Special Characteristics



Canopy

<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Spotted Gum	Tall tree with smooth spotted bark
<i>Angophora floribunda</i>	Rough-barked Apple	Rough barked, with abundant flowers
<i>Eucalyptus umbra</i>	Broad-leaved White Mahogany	Deep fibrous bark eucalypt. Thick leaves
<i>Eucalyptus botryoides</i>	Bangalay	Rough reddish bark with salt resistant leaves
<i>Eucalyptus paniculata</i>	Grey Ironbark	Deeply furrowed tree with a long straight trunk
<i>Eucalyptus punctata</i>	Grey Gum	Grey bark with cream patches. Favoured Koala food tree
<i>Angophora costata</i>	Smooth-barked Apple	Spectacular specimen tree with smooth pink bark
<i>Corymbia gummifera</i>	Red Bloodwood	Rough barked, with heavily scented blossoms. Fruit urn shaped.
<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i>	Turpentine	Straight trunk with deep fibrous bark. Cream clustered flowers
<i>Allocauarina torulosa</i>	Forest Oak	Deep fissured bark and cones ball-like. Pine-like leaves
<i>Allocauarina littoralis</i>	Black She-oak	Good screen tree with small cones and pine-like leaves
<i>Glochidion ferdinandi</i>	Cheese Tree	Bushy small tree with pale yellow cheese-shaped fruits
<i>Livistona australis</i>	Cabbage Tree Palm	Tall subtropical palm with bright green shiny leaves

Shrub Layer

<i>Acacia floribunda</i>	Sally Wattle	Dense rounded shrub with showy pale yellow flowers
<i>Breynia oblongifolia</i>	Breynia	Flowers tiny and reddish with olive green leaves
<i>Hakea sericea</i>	Bushy Needlebush	Shrub with needle-like leaves and white flowers in clusters
<i>Macrozamia communis</i>	Burrawang	Dark green cycad bearing pineapple-cone like fruit
<i>Notelaea longifolia</i>	Mock Olive	Olive green leaves and black olive-like fruits
<i>Oxylobium ilicifolium</i>	Native Holly	Erect spiky shrub, flowers yellow with red markings
<i>Platylobium formosum</i>	Handsome Flat-pea	Pea-shrub with striking yellow & red flowers. Heart shaped leaves
<i>Pultenaea flexilis</i>	Graceful Bush-pea	Large shrub, spectacular in flower with large soft leaves.
<i>Synoum glandulosum</i>	Scentless Rosewood	Leafy shrub with large red fruit and creamy white to pink flowers
<i>Xanthorrhoea macronema</i>	Grass Tree	Long grass-like leaves with a tall flower spike

Ground Layer

<i>Billardiera scandens</i>	Apple Berry	Slender climber or scrambler with edible yellow fruits
<i>Dianella caerulea</i>	Flax Lily	Tufted native lily with rich blue flowers and edible berries
<i>Entolasia stricta</i>	Wiry Panic Grass	Wiry grass in dense spreading tuft
<i>Eustrephus latifolius</i>	Wombat Berry	Climber with edible succulent orange berries
<i>Gymnostachys anceps</i>	Settlers Flax	Graceful tufted herb with long fibrous leaves
<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Spiny Mat-Rush	Large tufted swordgrass with edible, scented flowers
<i>Pandorea pandorana</i>	Wonga Vine	Tall woody climber with pale pink cascades of Spring flowers
<i>Themeda australis</i>	Kangaroo Grass	Tufted native grass with brown to purplish flower clusters

*** Pittwater Council may be able to provide free canopy tubestock for your property.**