
Flora and Fauna Assessment 21 Einsporns Road, Ashbourne

Prepared for Ashbourne Landcare Group



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In 2021, the Ashbourne Landcare Group commissioned the author to conduct flora and fauna assessments across twelve private properties occurring within the Ashbourne district. The project was funded by a grant provided by the North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA).

The surveys confirmed that the private lands across the Ashbourne district are of very high conservation significance. The following ecological values were recorded across the 12 properties:

- 306 separate plant species, 220 which are indigenous and 86 introduced,
- 59 separate bird species,
- eight plant species listed as *Endangered* or *Critically Endangered* under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee List 1988,
- numerous plant species of regional significance,
- 43 of the plant species observed have not previously been (officially) recorded in the area according to a 10km radius search of the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA). Twenty-five of these are indigenous and 18 are introduced.

This report presents the results of the flora and fauna assessment at 21 Einsporns Road, Ashbourne. It provides a list of the flora and fauna species that were recorded, a description of vegetation and habitat values and some recommendations for the maintenance and enhancement of ecological values.

1.2 Study area

21 Einsporns Road is a roughly triangular-shaped block that is approximately 4.1 hectares in size. The entire property supports bushland except for an area of approximately 0.3 hectares in the centre of the site that contains the house and gardens.

1.3 Methods

The property was assessed for approximately three hours on the 2nd of November 2021. All areas of bushland were traversed on foot and a list was compiled of all flora and fauna species observed. For fauna, most species were recorded from identification of calls (e.g. birds, frogs) or scats and tracks (e.g. Black Wallaby). Notes were taken on the vegetation, habitat features and management issues, whilst photographs were taken of representative areas.

2.0 RESULTS

2.1 Flora species

During the November 2021 survey, a total of 96 flora species were recorded at 21 Einsporns Road (see Appendix 1). Of these, 70 are indigenous species and 26 are introduced or non-indigenous native species (e.g. Sticky Wattle from the Gippsland region). Five of the species recorded are considered to be locally significant (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1 Locally significant flora species recorded at 21 Einsporns Road, November 2021

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Podolepis decipiens</i>	Showy Podolepis
<i>Podolobium procumbens</i>	Trailing Shaggy-pea
<i>Stylidium armeria</i>	Common Trigger-plant
<i>Thysanotus tuberosus</i>	Common Fringe-lily
<i>Viola betonicifolia</i>	Showy Violet

2.2 Vegetation description

The vegetation at 21 Einsporns Road is dominated by Messmate Stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) with occasional Narrow-leaf Peppermint (*Eucalyptus radiata*) and Candelbark (*Eucalyptus rubida*). The understorey contains scattered shrubs and small trees including Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) and Cherry Ballart (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*). The ground-layer includes a rich diversity of small shrubs, grasses, lilies and herbs including Silky Daisy-bush (*Olearia myrsinoides*), Red-anther Wallaby-grass (*Rytidosperma pallidum*), Common Trigger-plant (*Stylidium armeria*), Common Everlasting (*Coronidium scorpioides*), Blue Pincushion (*Brunonia australis*), Pale Vanilla-lily (*Arthropodium milleflorum*), Common Fringe-lily (*Thysanotus tuberosus*) and Milkmaids (*Burchardia umbellata*). Notably, the patch of Common Trigger-plant (located on the slopes to the east of the house) consists of hundreds of plants and is one of the densest populations of this species the author has seen.

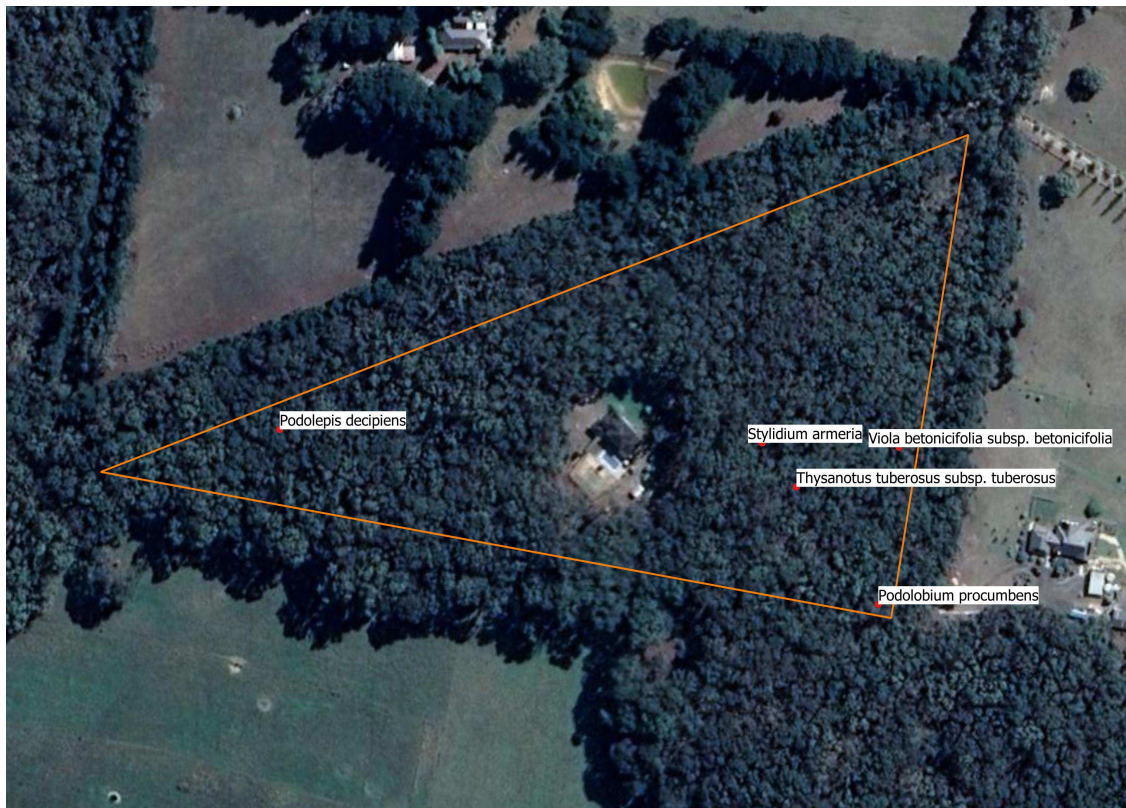


Plate 1 Locally significant flora species recorded at 21 Einsporns Road, November 2021



Plate 2 Large population of Common Trigger-plant (*Stylidium armeria*) occurring east of the house

2.3 High threat weeds

Of the weeds recorded within the property, 12 are considered to be high threat species that are recommended for control. These species are listed in Table 2 below. All are scattered at low density throughout the property.

Table 2 High threat weeds recorded at 21 Einsporns Rd, November 2021

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Acacia howittii</i>	Sticky Wattle
<i>Agapanthus praecox subsp. orientalis</i>	Agapanthus
<i>Billardiera heterophylla</i>	Bluebell Creeper
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	English Broom
<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	Montpellier Broom
<i>Hedera hibernica</i>	Atlantic Ivy
<i>Lavandula ssp.</i>	Lavender
<i>Pinus radiata var. radiata</i>	Radiata Pine
<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	Sweet Pittosporum
<i>Rubus anglocandicans</i>	Common Blackberry
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse

2.4 Fauna

During the November 2021 survey, a total of 22 fauna species were recorded, including 18 bird, two frog and two mammal species (see Appendix 2). The property would support a much greater diversity of fauna, however due to the high mobility and cryptic nature of many species, it would take a survey across multiple years and seasons to compile a detailed list.

Habitat features observed within the property included:

- Several large trees with hollows. These trees are essential for many local birds and mammals which rely on hollows for breeding.
- Scattered small to large logs. These are important for fauna that live or feed at ground level to provide cover from predators. Large-old logs often have hollows that may be utilised for shelter and nesting.
- Healthy litter layer, including sticks, leaves, bark and humus. A healthy litter layer is essential for many insects.

- Diverse plant community, providing food and habitat for various mammals, birds, insects and other fauna. Plant communities with many different species are better quality habitat than low diverse communities due to the variation in different flowers that attract specific insects. They are also more structurally diverse and provide better cover and shelter.
- A small pond to the east of the driveway. This pond provides habitat for frog species which rely on water for breeding, as well as a small diversity of water-bugs.

The bushland within the property is also connected to other extensive areas of bushland and is therefore an important part of a network of corridors that allow fauna to move across the landscape.

2.5 Management issues and recommendations

Maintaining and enhancing the ecological values of the property will require protection of the bushland and occasional management. The following actions should be considered by the landowners:

- Control of high threat weeds shown in Table 2. Smaller plants can be removed by hand, however larger plants may need to be cut at ground level and painted with herbicide. If the landowners wish to avoid using herbicide, plants can be regularly cut at ground level. They will continue to re-shoot but at least will be kept at a low height and will not spread further seed.
- Retention of as many logs across the bushland area as possible, particularly the larger ones.
- Additional areas for hollow dependant fauna could be provided by installing nest-boxes. These are often a nice feature if installed near the house where animals can be more clearly observed entering and leaving the box.
- Avoid excessive disturbance in the bushland areas, particularly where there are dense areas of wildflowers (e.g. slopes east of the house).
- In small bush-blocks, it is worth considering defining a boundary between the house/garden site and the area to be retained as bushland by constructing a low fence. This could be either a post and rail fence or a wire fence using star pickets, with several gates to allow easy access. This greatly minimises disturbance to the edge area between garden and bushland, which otherwise over time can become degraded by many years of 'small disturbances' that are generally inevitable around houses.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The property at 21 Einsporns Road contains bushland of high ecological significance. A total of 96 flora species and 22 fauna species were recorded during the brief assessment, including several locally significance plant species. The property also supports good quality habitat and is part of an important biolink that allows fauna to travel across the landscape.

Maintaining and enhancing the ecological values of the property will require protecting the bushland from excessive disturbance and control of high threat weeds.

Appendix 1 - Flora species recorded at 21 Einsporns Road, November 2021

Key to symbols	
*	Introduced species
#	Non-indigenous native species

Status	Scientific Name	Common Name	FFG Status
	<i>Acacia dealbata subsp. dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle	
#	<i>Acacia howittii</i>	Sticky Wattle	
	<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Blackwood	
	<i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i>	Bidgee-widgee	
*	<i>Acetosella vulgaris</i>	Sheep Sorrel	
	<i>Acrotriche serrulata</i>	Honey-pots	
*	<i>Agapanthus praecox subsp. orientalis</i>	Agapanthus	
*	<i>Aira elegantissima</i>	Delicate Hair-grass	
*	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal-grass	
	<i>Arthropodium milleflorum s.s.</i>	Pale Vanilla-lily	
	<i>Asperula scoparia subsp. scoparia</i>	Prickly Woodruff	
*	<i>Billardiera heterophylla</i>	Bluebell Creeper	
	<i>Brunonia australis</i>	Blue Pincushion	
	<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids	
	<i>Cassinia aculeata subsp. aculeata</i>	Common Cassinia	
	<i>Cassinia longifolia</i>	Shiny Cassinia	
	<i>Chiloglottis valida</i>	Common Bird-orchid	
*	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	
	<i>Coronidium scorpioides s.s.</i>	Button Everlasting	
*	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	
*	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	English Broom	
	<i>Daviesia leptophylla</i>	Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea	
	<i>Dianella admixta</i>	Black-anther Flax-lily	
	<i>Dianella tasmanica</i>	Tasman Flax-lily	
	<i>Dillwynia cinerascens s.s.</i>	Grey Parrot-pea	
	<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew	
	<i>Epacris impressa var. impressa</i>	Common Heath	
	<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	Messmate Stringybark	
	<i>Eucalyptus radiata subsp. radiata</i>	Narrow-leaf Peppermint	
	<i>Eucalyptus rubida</i>	Candlebark	
	<i>Euchiton japonicus s.s.</i>	Creeping Cudweed	
	<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>	Cherry Ballart	
*	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	
*	<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	Montpellier Broom	

Status	Scientific Name	Common Name	FFG Status
	<i>Geranium potentilloides</i>	Soft Crane's-bill	
	<i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i>	Common Raspwort	
	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral-pea	
*	<i>Hedera hibernica</i>	Atlantic Ivy	
*	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	
	<i>Hovea heterophylla</i>	Common Hovea	
	<i>Hydrocotyle hirta</i>	Hairy Pennywort	
	<i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i>	Stinking Pennywort	
*	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Flatweed	
*	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Flag Iris	
	<i>Juncus amabilis</i>	Hollow Rush	
*	<i>Juncus articulatus subsp. articulatus</i>	Jointed Rush	
#	<i>Juncus bufonius</i>	Toad Rush	
	<i>Juncus pallidus</i>	Pale Rush	
	<i>Lagenophora stipitata s.l.</i>	Common Bottle-daisy	
*	<i>Lavandula ssp.</i>	Lavender	
	<i>Leptospermum continentale</i>	Prickly Tea-tree	
	<i>Leucopogon virgatus var. virgatus</i>	Common Beard-heath	
	<i>Lomandra filiformis subsp. coriacea</i>	Wattle Mat-rush	
	<i>Lomandra filiformis subsp. filiformis</i>	Wattle Mat-rush	
	<i>Lomandra longifolia subsp. exilis</i>	Cluster-headed Mat-rush	
	<i>Luzula meridionalis var. flaccida</i>	Common Woodrush	
	<i>Microlaena stipoides var. stipoides</i>	Weeping Grass	
	<i>Monotoca scoparia</i>	Prickly Broom-heath	
	<i>Myriophyllum crispatum</i>	Upright Water-milfoil	
	<i>Olearia myrsinoides</i>	Silky Daisy-bush	
	<i>Opercularia varia</i>	Variable Stinkweed	
*	<i>Oxalis corniculata s.s.</i>	Creeping Wood-sorrel	
	<i>Oxalis exilis</i>	Shade Wood-sorrel	
*	<i>Pinus radiata var. radiata</i>	Radiata Pine	
#	<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	Sweet Pittosporum	
*	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort	
	<i>Plantago varia</i>	Variable Plantain	
	<i>Poa sieberiana var. sieberiana</i>	Grey Tussock-grass	
	<i>Podolepis decipiens</i>	Showy/Basalt Podolepis	
	<i>Podolobium procumbens</i>	Trailing Podolobium	
	<i>Poranthera microphylla s.s.</i>	Small Poranthera	
	<i>Pteridium esculentum subsp. esculentum</i>	Austral Bracken	
	<i>Pterostylis melagramma</i>	Tall Greenhood	
	<i>Pultenaea gunnii subsp. gunnii</i>	Golden Bush-pea	
	<i>Ranunculus lappaceus</i>	Australian Buttercup	
*	<i>Rubus anglocandicans</i>	Common Blackberry	

Status	Scientific Name	Common Name	FFG Status
	<i>Rytidosperma geniculatum</i>	Knead Wallaby-grass	
	<i>Rytidosperma pallidum</i>	Silvertop Wallaby-grass	
	<i>Rytidosperma spp.</i>	Wallaby Grass	
	<i>Senecio glomeratus</i>	Annual Fireweed	
	<i>Senecio linearifolius</i>	Fireweed Groundsel	
	<i>Senecio phelleus</i>	Stony Fireweed	
*	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Common Sow-thistle	
	<i>Stellaria pungens</i>	Prickly Starwort	
	<i>Stylidium armeria</i>	Common Triggerplant	
	<i>Tetralochea ciliata</i>	Pink-bells	
	<i>Thelymitra pauciflora s.s</i>	Slender Sun-orchid	
	<i>Thelymitra spp.</i>	Sun Orchid	
	<i>Thysanotus patersonii</i>	Twining Fringe-lily	
	<i>Thysanotus tuberosus</i>	Common Fringe-lily	
*	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	
	<i>Veronica calycina</i>	Hairy Speedwell	
	<i>Viola betonicifolia</i>	Showy Violet	
	<i>Viola hederacea sensu Entwisle (1996)</i>	Ivy-leaf Violet	
*	<i>Vulpia bromoides</i>	Squirrel-tail Fescue	
	<i>Wahlenbergia stricta subsp. stricta</i>	Tall Bluebell	

Appendix 2 - - Fauna species recorded at 21 Einsporns Road, November 2021

Key to symbols	
*	Introduced species
L	Recorded previously by the landowner

Status	Common name	Scientific Name	Type	FFG Status
	Australian Magpie	<i>Cracticus tibicen</i>	Bird	
	Banjo Frog	<i>Limnodynastes dumerilii</i>	Frog	
	Black Wallaby	<i>Wallabia bicolor</i>	Mammal	
	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i>	Bird	
	Brown Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza pusilla</i>	Bird	
*	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Bird	
	Crimson Rosella	<i>Platycercus elegans</i>	Bird	
	Eastern Grey Kangaroo	<i>Macropus giganteus</i>	Mammal	
	Eastern Spinebill	<i>Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris</i>	Bird	
	Eastern Yellow Robin	<i>Eopsaltria australis</i>	Bird	
	Golden Whistler	<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>	Bird	
	Grey Fantail	<i>Rhipidura albiscapa</i>	Bird	
	Laughing Kookaburra	<i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i>	Bird	
	Little Raven	<i>Corvus mellori</i>	Bird	
	Long-billed Corella	<i>Cacatua tenuirostris</i>	Bird	
	Pied Currawong	<i>Strepera graculina</i>	Bird	
	Plains Froglet	<i>Crinia parasignifera</i>	Frog	
	Spotted Pardalote	<i>Pardalotus punctatus</i>	Bird	
	Striated Pardalote	<i>Pardalotus striatus</i>	Bird	
	Striated Thornbill	<i>Acanthiza lineata</i>	Bird	
	White-throated Treecreeper	<i>Cormobates leucophaea</i>	Bird	
	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus chrysops</i>	Bird	