

# Randwick Environmental Park

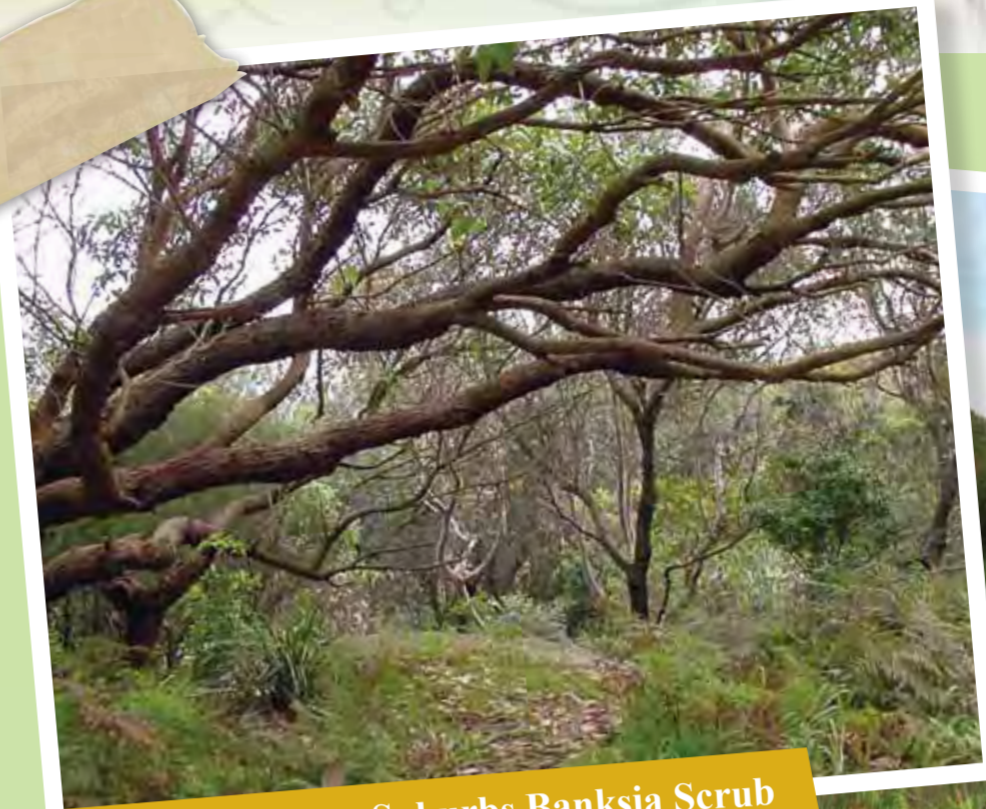
## Vegetation

Australia's natural vegetation is categorised according to the types of plants present, their height and density. These are called plant communities. In the eastern suburbs of Sydney a range of plant communities existed prior to European occupation, such as woodland on sandstone, dry heath on sandstone, scrub on sand and freshwater sedge swamp.

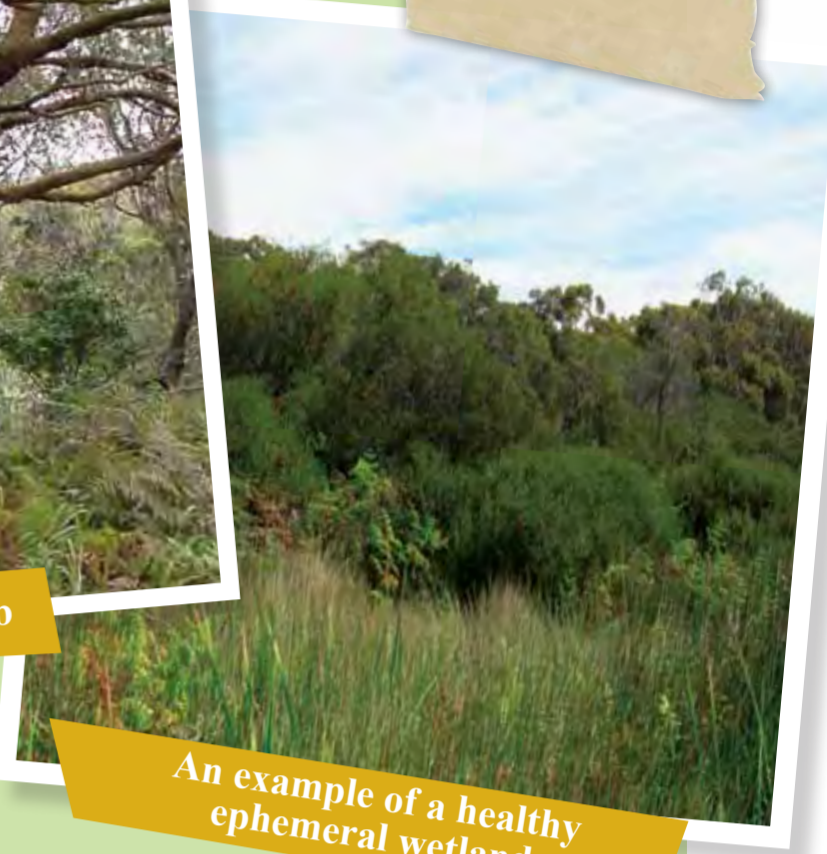
The dominant plant communities in Randwick Environmental Park are **scrub on sand**, **scrub on sandstone** and **freshwater swamp**. These plant communities prefer the older wind-blown sand dunes deposited into the eastern suburbs after the last Ice Age about 10,000 – 15,000 years ago.

The scrub on sand vegetation in Randwick Environmental Park is further classified as **Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS)**. This scrub is made up of plants species that prefer the deep, nutrient poor sands and generally have dry-textured (sclerophyllous) small leaves. Many plant species in Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub have a **sympiotic relationship**, or mutually beneficial relationship, with soil micro-organisms living in their roots. These relationships allow the plants to extract nutrients from the poor soils and give the micro-organism a host as they cannot exist outside a plant.

Characteristic plant species of Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub include *Banksia aemula* (after which it takes its name), *Banksia serrata*, *Lepidosperma laterale*, *Leptospermum laevagutum*, *Monotoca elliptica*, *Pimelia linifolia*, and *Dianella revolute*. However, over 100 plant species may make up the plant community and possibly hundreds of microscopic soil organisms such as fungi and bacteria species.



Healthy Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub



An example of a healthy ephemeral wetland

Two small areas of **scrub on sandstone** occur in Randwick Environmental Park. One is a dry area on the eastern side of the wetland, with a mix of plant species similar to the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub. The other is located to the east of the picnic area where natural seepage of water occurs from the natural rock outcrop. Moisture-loving plants can be found such as *Blechnum sp*, *Centrolepis fascicularis*, *Gleichenia dicarpa*, *Isolepis nodosa*, *Lobelia alata*, *Persoonia lanceolata* and *Pittosporum undulatum*.

Due to disturbance in the past, the wetland does not have the original mix of plant species representative of a **sedgeland**. However, because wetland plant species are carried around on the feet and feathers of water-birds, and they are able to survive long periods of dry, many have either been re-introduced or have survived in the base of the wetland. Quite a few weed species are present in the wetland, carried in by stormwater from gardens in the surrounding houses and thriving in the moist, nutrient rich silt. Old plastic litter is also visible on the shoreline, deposited in the wetland from before 2000 when gross pollutant traps were installed on the stormwater pipes.

Randwick Environmental Park also contains a population of the Sunshine Wattle, *Acacia terminalis ssp. terminalis*, a species of wattle listed as endangered under NSW's Threatened Species Conservation Act (TSC Act) and the Commonwealth's Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act). This wattle species only occurs in a coastal area of 23 km from North Head to Botany Bay and was one of the first Australian plants collected by Sir Joseph Banks in 1770. A State and National draft recovery plan has been developed for this species to identify actions to be taken to ensure the long-term viability of this species.



Melaleuca thymifolia



Hibbertia scandens



Darwinia fascicularis



Melaleuca nodosa



Eriostemon australasius