

Tasmanian Threatened Native Vegetation Communities

ATHROTAXIS CUPRESSOIDES RAINFOREST

Conservation status

Threatened: Community 5 - Schedule 3A *Nature Conservation Act 2002*

What is *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest?

This is open or closed montane forest, or woodland (excluding open woodland) vegetation dominated by *Athrotaxis cupressoides* (pencil pine), with other rainforest species such as *Nothofagus cunninghamii* (myrtle beech) and *Phyllocladus aspleniifolius* (celerytop pine) sometimes common. Sparse (< 5%) *Eucalyptus coccifera* (snow peppermint) may also co-occur in the canopy or at the margins of the community.

The understorey varies with substrate. Rocky sites support heathy or coniferous vegetation; bogs are composed of *Sphagnum* species and species of *Richea* (candleheath); mineral soils tend to have an understorey of grasses and herbs with scattered shrubs. The community is distinguished from other *Athrotaxis cupressoides*-dominated vegetation by its relatively greater canopy closure, larger patch size and generally lower understorey diversity.

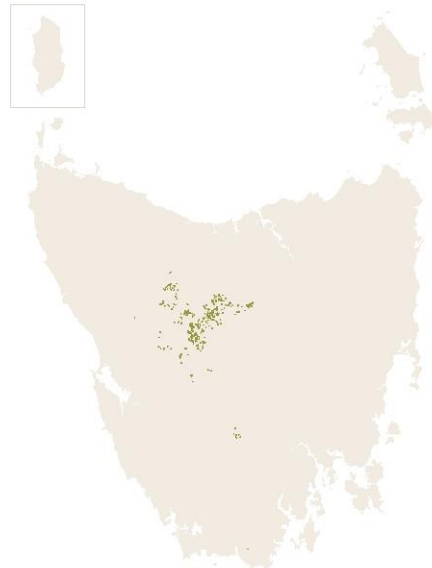
Athrotaxis cupressoides rainforest is largely confined to fire-protected sites on dolerite in central Tasmania at altitudes between 600 and 1400 m; generally above about 1200 m.

To help you decide if this Threatened Native Vegetation Community is on your site, a forest and woodland decision tree is provided further below. This is a guide only. Assessment by a qualified ecologist is needed to confirm the presence (or absence) of a listed threatened community.



An example of the *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest community at Pinestone Valley, below Mount Ossa. Keith Corbett.

Distribution, extent and reservation status



Indicative *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest distribution from TNVC 2014

Athrotaxis cupressoides rainforest

The Threatened Native Vegetation Communities 2014 (TNVC 2014) distribution of *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest is derived from the TASVEG 3.0 mapping of RPP (*Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest). TASVEG mapping units provide only an indicative distribution of listed communities.

Athrotaxis cupressoides rainforest has an approximate Tasmania-wide extent of 3600 hectares. Of this, 100% of the community is mapped within the secure National Reserve System.

A snapshot of the reservation status of *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest for Local Government Regions is available on the Department of Primary Industry, Parks Water and Environment [website](#) and via the 'By Council Area' tab at this [link](#).

Why is *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest important and what are its management issues?

The average patch size of this community is 6 ha, with 88% of patches below 10 ha in area and 51% falling into the 1-5 ha patch size range. Only 2 patches above 50 ha have been identified.

Athrotaxis cupressoides rainforest is adapted to a low level of disturbance. Any increase in disturbances such as fire poses a risk to this community through changes in floristic composition and forest structure.

Increase in disturbances such as roading, logging and fire have the capacity to damage this forest and increase the risk of weeds and disease. The alpine climatic zone is potentially at risk of reduction through the impacts of climate change.

How can the condition of the vegetation be assessed?

To help you to assess the condition of *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest, the following [TASVEG VCA benchmarks](#) are recommended:

- ❖ RPP *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest: grassy facies
- ❖ RPP *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest: heathy facies
- ❖ RPP *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest: *Sphagnum* peatland facies

What does it mean if you have a Threatened Native Vegetation Community?

If you are planning an activity that will potentially impact a Threatened Native Vegetation Community you should seek advice from the authority responsible for regulating this activity. The authority responsible will depend upon the nature of the planned activity (see [Further information](#)).

In the first instance you can check the [Information for landowners on the Forest Practices Authority \(FPA\) website](#) for comprehensive advice on when a Forest Practices Plan may be required.

Some vegetation communities can represent important habitat for threatened species. This may have implications when development applications are assessed or for land use.

Matters of National Environmental Significance as listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBCA) should also be considered to determine if the proposal will need to be assessed under that Act.

Further information

For further detail about the possible variation within *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest refer to the description of the TASVEG mapping unit RPP within the 'Rainforest and related scrub' section of the online publication [From Forest to Fjaeldmark \(Edition 2\)](#) and to the Forest Practices Authority's [Forest Botany Manual](#) keys to the floristic communities equivalent to RFA PP.

Further information to assist developers and their representatives in assessing the impacts of proposed developments on natural values is provided in DPIPWE's [Guidelines for Natural Values Surveys – Terrestrial Development Proposals](#) and the [Threatened Species Link - Activity Advice](#).

Contact details

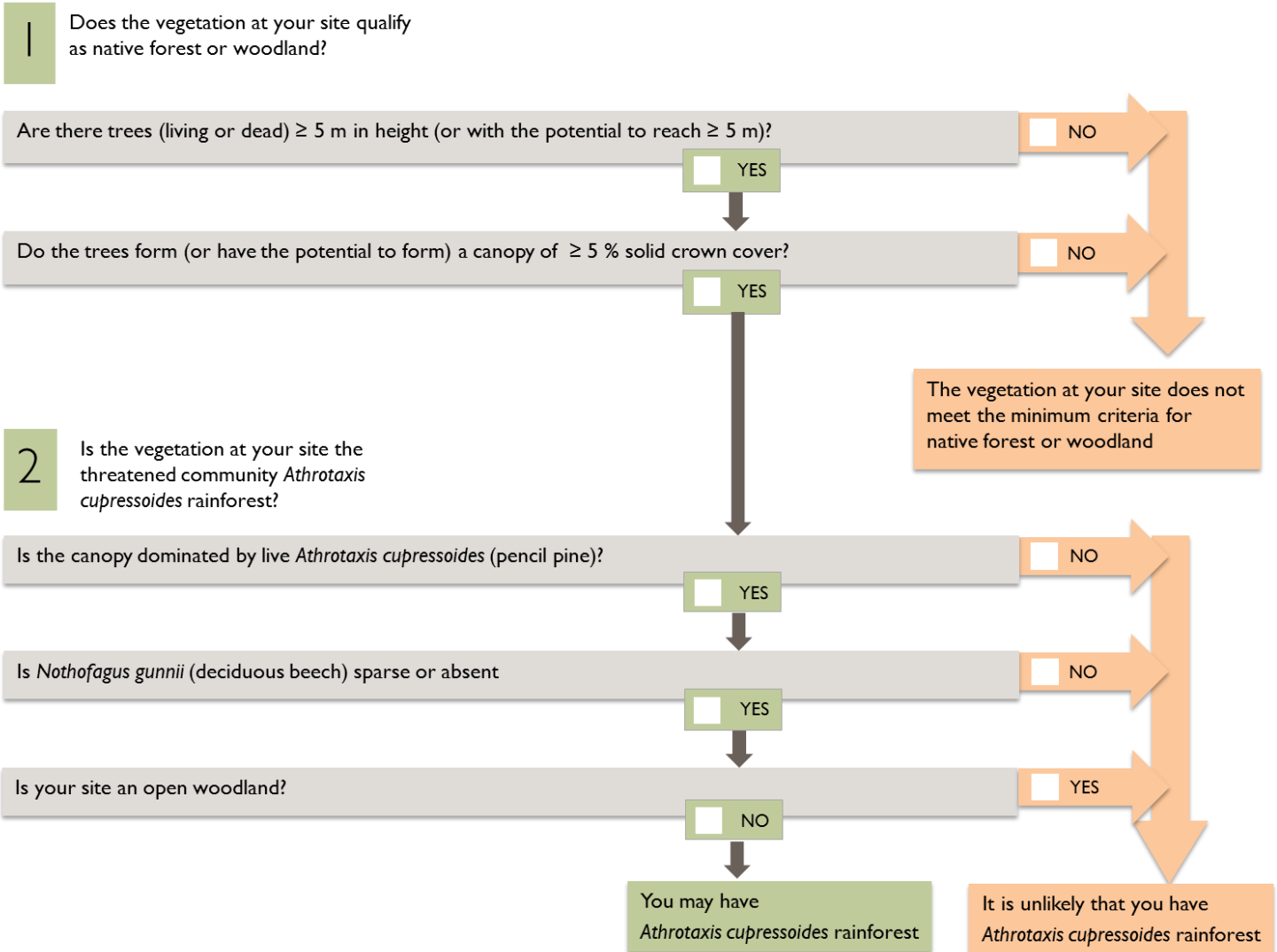
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Is *Athrotaxis cupressoides* rainforest present at your site?



Note

- ❖ Where the canopy of trees has a solid crown cover at the lower end of the defined cover range for woodland (i.e. approximately 10% or less), it may be advisable to refer to the information provided for 4 *Athrotaxis cupressoides* open woodland.