

KING BILLY



TREE



**HERITAGE
SERIES**

KING BILLY TREE

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INTRODUCTION

Name: King Billy Tree
Species: *Eucalyptus pauciflora*
Subspecies: *Pauciflora*
Location: Bluff Road, The Bluff
GPS: S37.196183, E146.594073

The King Billy Tree is a large and extremely old Snow Gum tree found on The Bluff, in the High Country of Central Victoria. The tree is considered the oldest and largest Snow Gum that is easily accessible.



King Billy Tree



The King Billy Tree is located along Bluff Road near Picture Point, in the Victorian High Country, and has become a tourist attraction due to it being considered one of the oldest and largest snow gums left in the High Country that can be easily accessed. The tree is listed by the National Trust and believed to be over 200 years old. The trunk has a diameter of three metres at its widest point and a height of six metres in 1995 when measured by the Trust.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

The trip to the King Billy Tree is 4WD only and there is no water to be found during the climb in the warmer months, so ensure you take plenty of water. When travelling to the King Billy Tree from Sheeppark Flats, near Mansfield, you will travel past both the Bluff and Lovicks huts, which are both excellent spots to camp.

Introducing the Snow Gum

Also known as White Sallee, the Cabbage Gum and the Weeping Gum (a term likely based on how it hangs when snow weighs down its limbs), it is an small evergreen tree native to south-eastern Alpine Australia and Tasmania. It is usually found above 1400 meters, such as on the slopes of the Great Dividing Range where it grows extremely well. However this species will grow very well in flatter areas and it is not uncommon to see one growing well below its normal altitude and nearly to seal level.

There are six subspecies currently recognised, with the King Billy Tree being the *pauciflora* subspecies, which is the most common and widespread subspecies.

In lower altitudes, it is often referred to as White Sallee and is even sold in nurseries, as it is considered an attractive tree and its sparse canopy allows good light to the ground under it, where other plants or lawn can still have enough light to grow.

It is an extremely hardy tree against the cold and is known for its ability to mitigate soil erosion in alpine areas. However regular bushfires reduce overall numbers. There are a number of sub species of the Snow Gum. Their wood makes great long-lasting fence posts. Pauciflora is Latin for 'few flowered', but they actually have abundant flowers.

According the Atlas of Living Australia, there are six subspecies of the Snow Gum.

TIMELINE

BASIC TIMELINE OF EVENTS



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

- ????** The species was first described.
- 4 April 2018** Artworkz conducted their first photoshoot of the King Billy Tree.
- 5 April 2018** Artworkz commenced work on this factsheet.

GALLERY

RELATED IMAGERY

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



King Billy Tree in April 2018

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



King Billy Tree in April 2018

The left photo shows where a yellow-tailed black cockatoo has stripped away the bark of the King Billy Tree to feed on wood-boring larvae that was boring holes into the soft wood.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



King Billy Tree in April 2018

New growth (left)



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



King Billy Tree in April 2018

Smooth bark (left)



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



**View looking west from the King Billy Tree
in April 2018**

Tree lichen (left)



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



**Old and new wood on the King Billy Tree
in April 2018**



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

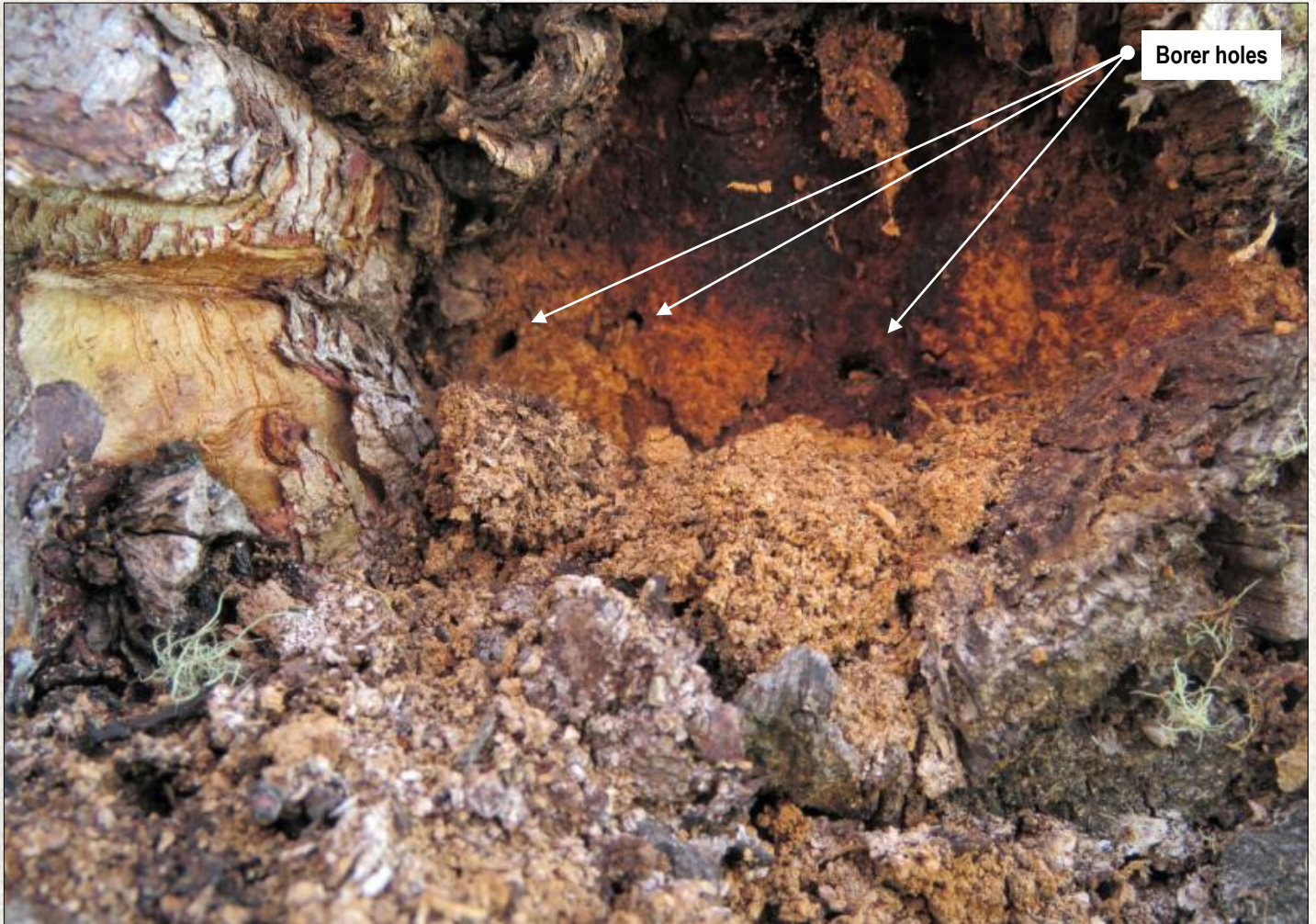
GALLERY



Lichen on the King Billy Tree in April 2018

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



The King Billy Tree is being attacked by a boring insect, and the damage of these can be seen here in April 2018.

On the left a small hole can be seen at the top left of the sawdust, which is where the borer has entered the tree.

eSPLASH
MEDIA
ARTICLES

ARTICLES FROM THE ESPLASH EMAGAZINE

KING BILLY TREE

ONE OF THE OLDEST AND LARGEST SNOW GUMS IN THE HIGH COUNTRY

4 April 2018



A natural gem of the High Country

During the holidays, visited the King Billy Tree, a Snow Gum found on Bluff Road, and considered to be one of the oldest and largest easily accessible snow gums left in the Victorian High Country. It is also a well visited tourist attraction.

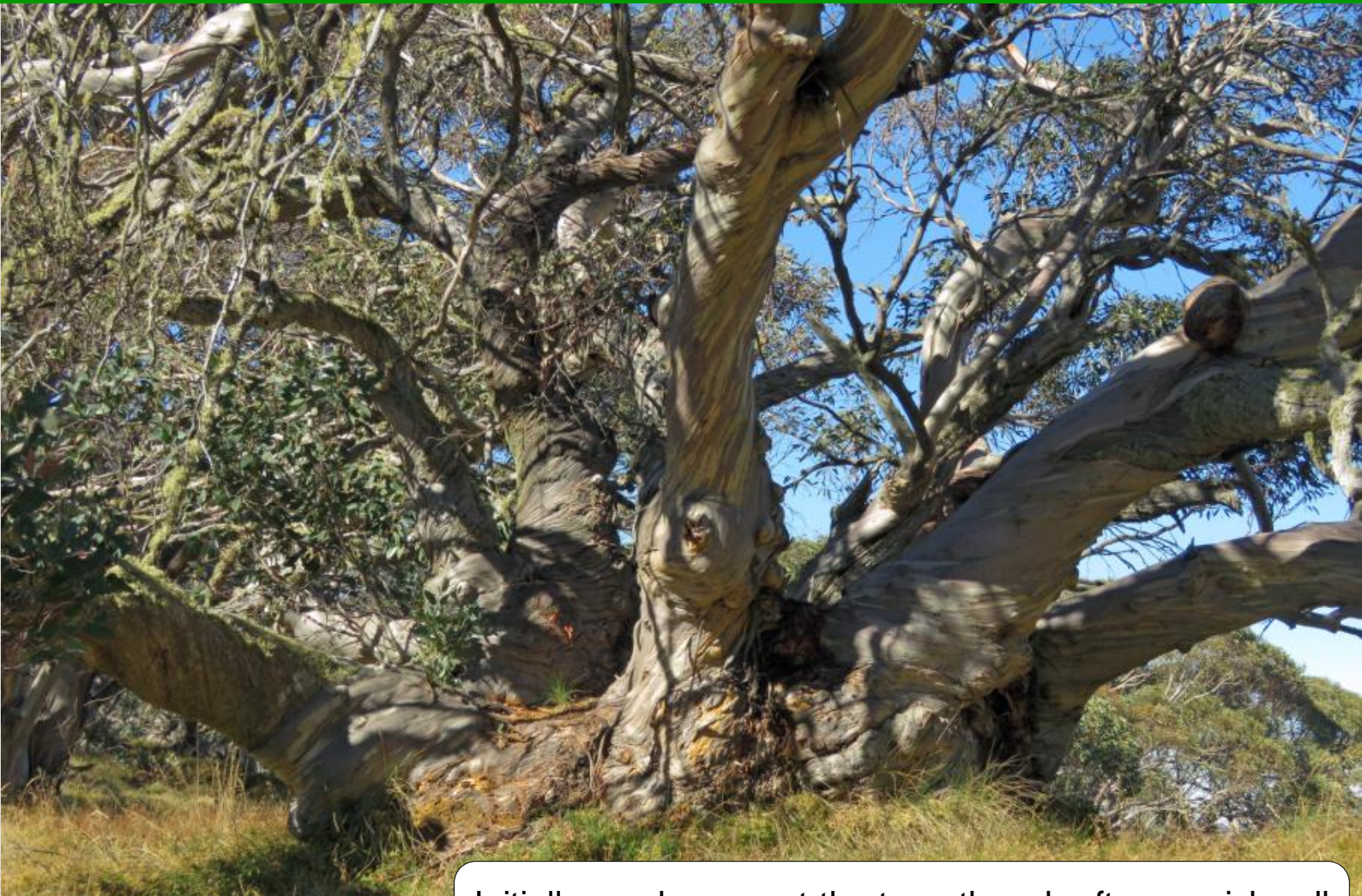


This holiday trip saw us travel to the Bluff in the Victorian High Country, and past both Bluff and Lovicks huts. This track is 4WD only, though we did manage to do it safely in an all-wheel-drive, but it was very slow.









Initially we drove past the tree, though after a quick call to Artworkz contributor Shez Tedford, we were back on track and found the tree soon after. The tree is found on the roadside below the 'King Billy No. 1' peak.







Tree boring insects are attacking the tree and the sawdust left behind by them can be seen in the top image where a gum nut is also sitting. Tree boring insects attach trees and bore through healthy wood, leaving holes and sawdust behind.



Snow gum nut (top) and dead wood patterns (bottom)



Peeling bark (top) and lichen (bottom and inset)



While at the tree, two hikers passed by. They were following the Australian Alps walking track between Walhalla in Victoria to Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory. One was from the USA and the other from the Netherlands. I called to them and introduced them to the tree. Like us, they were amazed at the beauty of this natural feature and stayed at the tree after we had left.

Interestingly, after telling them where we had travelled from, one of the men, Joshua, told us how he was currently working at a trout farm in Eildon and had

been for a few months. He was keen to report how beautiful our area was and how it was a central location to stay.

If you have a 4WD, then we recommend this as a great destination. Make sure you take your own water and remember that this area is closed off during the wetter months of the year.



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