

FRESHWATER SWAMP

The Norfolk Island Vegetation Mapping Project has described and mapped 14 distinct native plant communities on Norfolk Island. This series of fact sheets presents information about each of the communities.

Freshwater Swamp

Along watercourses, particularly in shallow, wide valleys. Was probably once much more widespread.

Prior to convict times, a large freshwater swamp existed across the Kingston Common. While that swamp is largely gone, a few swamps occur elsewhere on broad valley floors with a very

low gradient and other similar valleys probably supported swamps prior to infilling caused by erosion after clearing of the surrounding forests.

These swamps would have been surrounded by dense forest. Today, many introduced species are also found in the wetland habitats.



Freshwater Swamp along valley floor at Headstone. Photo: Kevin Mills

FRESHWATER SWAMP

Plant community	Key species	Other species	Threatened species
Freshwater Swamp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club rush (<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>) • Drain flax (<i>Typha orientalis</i>) • Bull rush (<i>Juncus continuus</i>) • Common spike-rush (<i>Eleocharis acuta</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batwing fern (<i>Histiopteris incisa</i>) • Swamp hibiscus (<i>Hibiscus diversifolius</i>) • Slender knotweed (<i>Persicaria decipiens</i>) 	

Indicative species composition

The table above identifies the key species present (those species that are most characteristic of the plant community), other species (additional species that are likely to be present and assist in defining the community), and some of the threatened species present.

Further information

These fact sheets are based on the Norfolk Island Vegetation Mapping Project conducted by the Invasive Species Council between 2018 and 2020. Naomi Christian and Dr Kevin Mills conducted the vegetation surveys, and described and mapped the native plant communities. Two maps were produced – one showing the estimated distribution of native plant communities in 1750, and one showing their distribution in 2020.

The plant community maps are available at:

- www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/services/waste-and-environment/native-vegetation/native-vegetation-mapping-project
- www.invasives.org.au/niveg

There are 180 native plant species on the Norfolk Island Group, of which around 25% are endemic.

Forty-six species have been identified as threatened with

extinction. Describing and mapping the 14 native plant communities was done to help land managers protect and restore habitat for these threatened species and other wildlife of Norfolk Island.

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