

Planning for planting in the southern tablelands

**Text and photos
of talk presented by Sue McIntyre
(CSIRO / Australian National University)**

**Murrumbateman Landcare Group
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Why use local species?

- **Better results**
- **Maintain regional character**
- **Maintain integrity of local gene pools**
– **conserving biodiversity**

Exceptions?

- **Climate-adjusted provenancing**
- **Highly modified environments**

Two main vegetation types in the district

Southern Tablelands Dry Sclerophyll Forest and Southern Tablelands Grassy Woodland (no trees visible) on the deeper soils and (after Keith 2004)



Landscape position linked to ecosystem type

Sclerophyll forest (hills, shrubby)

Grassy woodlands (lower slopes and flats, grassy)

Both are eucalypt dominated

← E. mannifera →

← E. rossii →

← E. macroryhncha →

← E. polyanthemos →

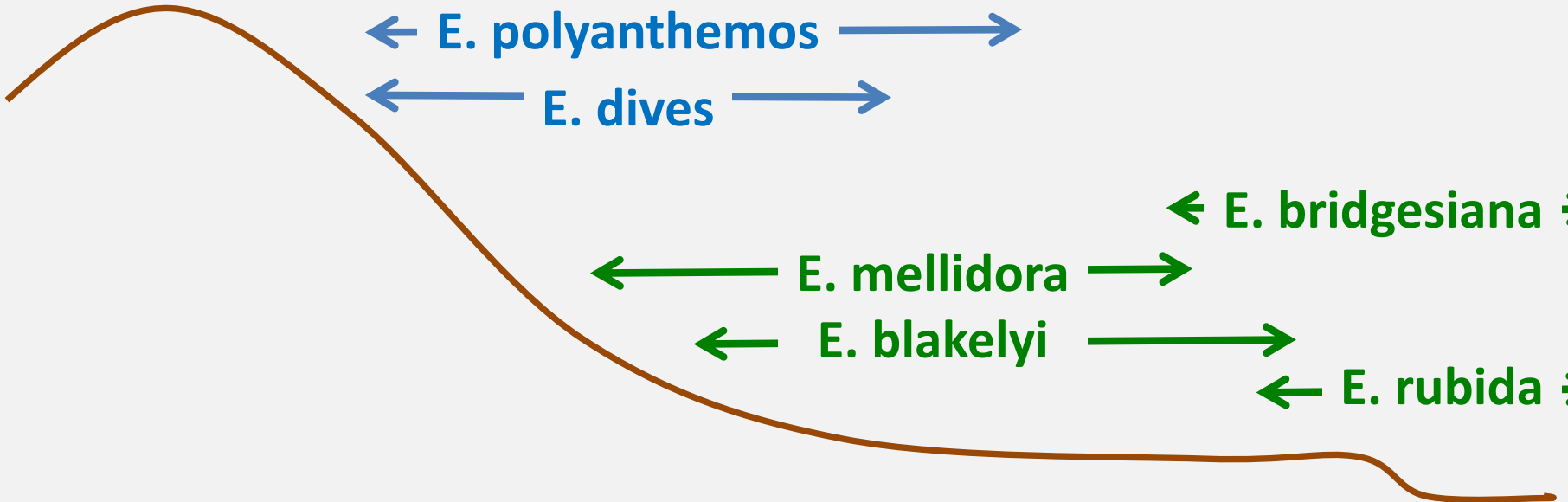
← E. dives →

← E. bridgesiana →

← E. mellidora →

← E. blakelyi →

← E. rubida →



Landscape position linked to ecosystem type

Sclerophyll forest (hills, shrubby)

Grassy woodlands (lower slopes and flats, grassy)

Both are eucalypt dominated

← Brittle Gum →

← Scribbly Gum →

← Red Stringybark →

← Red Box →

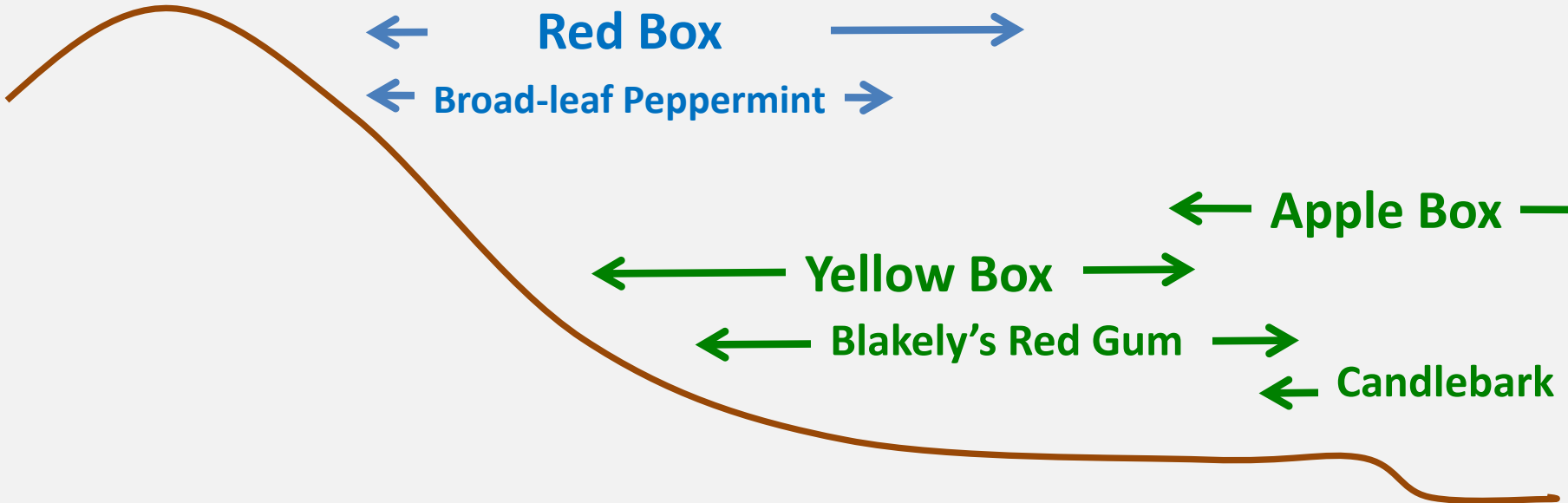
← Broad-leaf Peppermint →

← Apple Box →

← Yellow Box →

← Blakely's Red Gum →

← Candlebark →



Do you need to plant at all?

Three scenarios :-

YES – Native vegetation +/- entirely lost

NO – Functional diverse vegetation present

RESTRAINED – augmenting what is there

YES



NO



NO



Restrained planting

- respect and nurture what is there**

Give time for natural regeneration:

- Seed throw distance from established eucalypts**
- Around existing shrubs**
- In eroded and low fertility areas**
- Respect what is already there**

Use low intervention planting methods:

- Avoid fertilizers**
- Avoid herbicide treatments**
- Avoid ripping**

Use a naturalistic planting design:

- Avoid straight lines**
- Avoid even spacings**
- Avoid the hair transplant look**

Tree and shrub restoration in a native grassland with widely scattered trees. Mixture of natural regeneration, direct seeding and tube stock. No ripping, cultivation, fertilizers or ongoing watering (this slide and next).





A case for *Acacias*

They have often been historically grazed out by livestock

They provide good resources for wildlife

- Seeds for parrots**
- Pollen for insects**
- Grubs for cockatoos**
- Mid-level habitat structure**
- Different species flower at different times of year**

They are a gentle way to restore vegetation productivity

- Nitrogen fixation**
- Fast turnover of litter**

Some of them sucker, a very useful trait for persistence.

Landscape position not as clearly defined as for eucalypts



***Acacia dealbata* – Silver Wattle**
Flowers late winter



***Acacia mearnsii* – Black Wattle**
Flowers summer

The 'bread-and-butter' wattles
Both frost-hardy, both sucker, Silver Wattle tolerates waterlogging

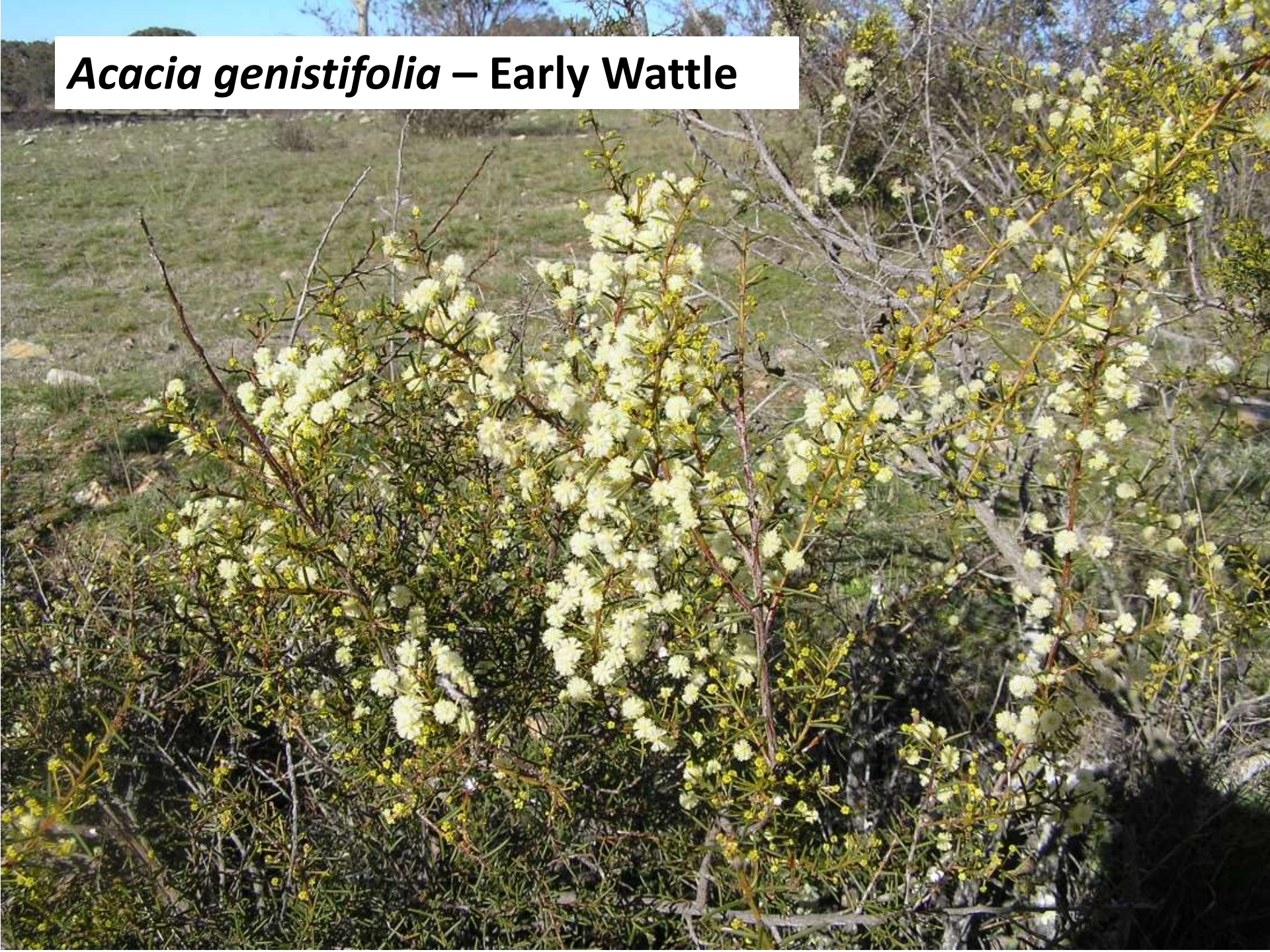
Acacia parramattensis
– Green Wattle



***Acacia buxifolia* –
Box-leaf Wattle**



***Acacia genistifolia* – Early Wattle**



***Acacia gunnii* – Ploughshare Wattle**





Acacia rubida
– Red-stemmed Wattle
local form



Acacia rubida
– ‘tree’ form,
sold at nurseries

Acacia rubida – 'tree' form





***Acacia implexa* – Hickory Wattle**

Very frost sensitive, may only establish on the tops of hills.

Summary

– respect and nurture what is still there

Stop and reflect, watch and wait;

The less degraded the vegetation the greater the caution is needed – use low-impact methods of establishment and local species;

Native-dominated ground layers need great respect as they are irreplaceable;

Some sites need no planting;

Other sites may have elements missing - trees or shrubs;

Matching eucalypts to landscape position and locality is important;

Matching acacias to landscape position +/- important

Pay heed to aesthetics and local character of the bush in your district.