

JAMIESON LAND SYSTEM



Plate 23 – The Jamieson land system is steeply sloping and covered with forests of broad-leaved peppermint and gum

The forested long slopes and major ridges in the Big River and upper Goulburn valleys, dominated by broad-leaved peppermint and candlebark, represent the Jamieson land system.

The climate is cooler and wetter than that of the lower ridges and plains, with annual rainfall ranging between 1000 millimetres and 1250 millimetres. There is a marked winter rainfall incidence. Most of the rocks are sedimentary or Ordovician or Silurian age.

The dominant vegetation is a sclerophyll forest of broad-leaved peppermint and candlebark. In the lower rainfall fringes, red stringybark persists on the ridges and blue gum is present in the gullies, with swamp gum in poorly drained places. In the higher rainfall fringes and in moist places, broad-leaved peppermint is replaced by narrow-leaved peppermint. Manna gum appears in the wetter parts. The effect of aspect is most marked in the lower, drier fringes where the long, steep slopes on the drier northern and western aspects support shorter, more open stands of broad-leaved peppermint and candlebark. Shrub layers are usually present under the dominant canopy. Larger species such as the silver wattle and curry bush are found on moister sites. A tea-tree scrub of *Leptospermum erocoides* has been formed in some sheltered aspects, particularly where the original forest has been cleared and the area allowed to revegetate. Bracken (*Pteridium esculentum*) is almost universally present but seldom develops dense stands, except on rare patches of sandy soils and on old clearings. Smaller shrubs on drier sites are typified by showy parrot pea (*Dillwynia sericea*) and erect Guinea flower (*Hibbertia stricta*).

The floor is usually with small herbs and tussock grasses (*Poa spp*), except on the seasonally drier long northern and western aspects, where the cover is variable. Inspection of these slopes indicated that the floor is fully covered, except where there have been recent fires. Here there are sheet eroded areas, with stick and leaf litter and leguminous shrubs.

The area is dominated by red leptopodsols and amphipodsols, the former tending to occur in drier positions. In gullies and on southerly slopes, the accumulation of organic material leads to the development of crytopodsols.

Only minor areas have been cleared for agricultural purposes. The Crown land, mainly in the Upper Goulburn catchment, is included in a number of grazing licences, which mostly have arbitrary boundaries. On the reserved forest area, cattle can be agisted but in fact there is little grazing.

The forests are generally poor in form, and most species are of low commercial value. The abundance of wood available in this type of forest is attracting interest as a source of fibre for reconstituted wood products. This type of utilisation would be most detrimental to use for water production, if intensive methods such as clear felling were carried out.

The Jamieson land system had a distinct value as a water catchment. It is the lowest and driest land system to contribute an appreciable volume of water to Lake Eildon. It is estimated that 35 per cent of

the rainfall (about 400 mm per annum on the average) reaches the reservoir, comprising one-tenth of the inflow.

For the production of both water and wood, wildlife must be prevented. Controlled burning to achieve this prevention is in conflict with water supply values on the long, steep north-western slopes.



Plate 24 – Valleys in the Jamieson and Howqua land systems carry forests of candle gum and narrow-leaved peppermint

