

(ix) **Little Desert Unit** – This unit is very large, comprising approximately 350 square miles in the Shire of Kowree alone, and it is of sufficient internal variation to warrant the separation of further units. This would require a separate survey along the lined adopted for similar country in South Australia.

The name “desert” is a misnomer, as the vegetation is not that of a desert but is a complex of dry sclerophyll forest, dry scrub and dry heath.

Briefly, however, the unit is a vast sandy tract broken up by many wind-piled sand dunes usually with an east-west trend, and with larger or smaller areas of inter-dune flats. In the north-central portion of the unit there is known to be at least one outcrop of sandstone, possibly a part of the Lawloit Range, which is prominent between Kaniva and Nhill.

This Little Desert unit is very sharply defined from the adjacent Neuarpur and Goroke units to the south, the boundary running practically due east-west. It extends further north into the Shires of Dimboola, Lowan, and Kaniva, the existing Shire boundary being quite arbitrary, without natural significance.

On the extreme southern fringe, quite high dunes are encountered for the first half-mile or so, with yellow-gum flats and broom-bush flats in the inter-dune corridors elsewhere the deep sands with stringybark, and flats with dry heaths, predominate, the heaths being found especially toward the east. Significant proportions of yellow-gum flats in the “desert” proper occur only in the extreme west on the South Australian border.

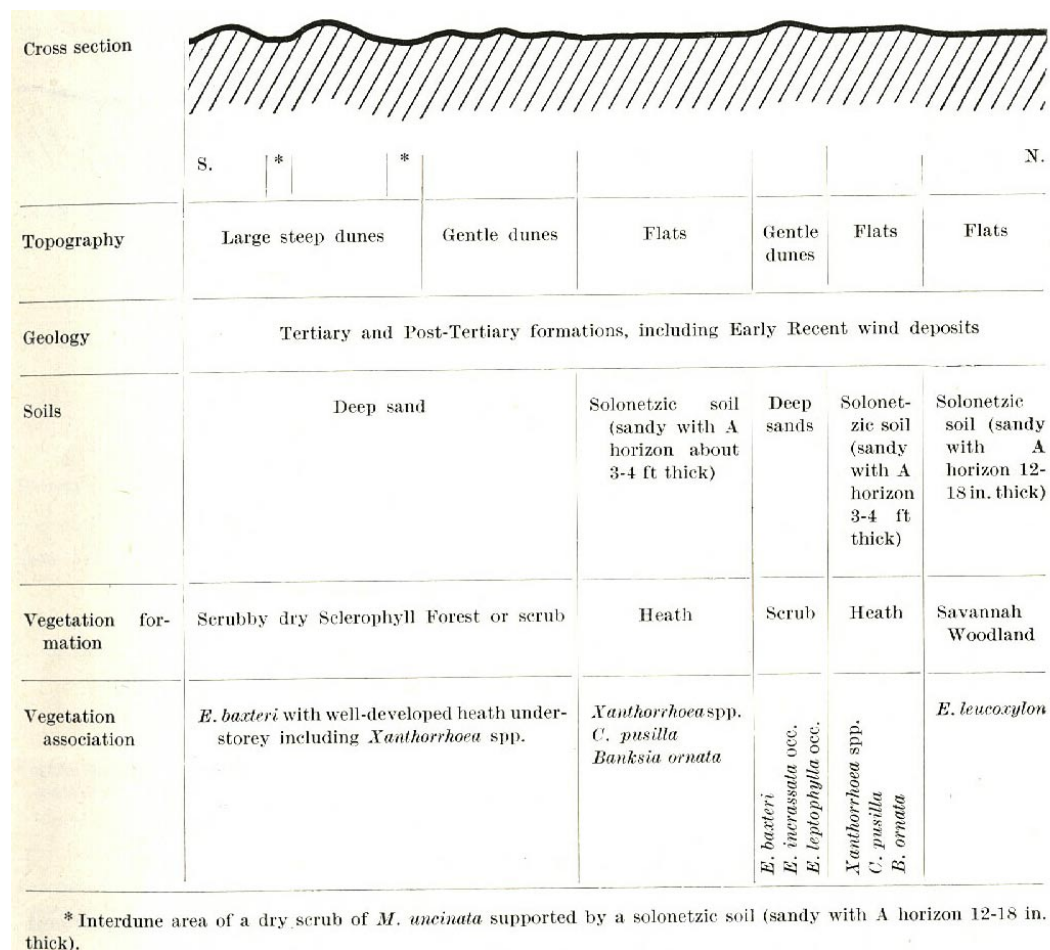


Fig 25 – Little Desert Unit