

Mount Liebig and surrounds

Location and Description

Mount Liebig, Mount Palmer and Mount Crawford are outliers of Heavitree quartzite on the western edge of the Greater MacDonnell Ranges, about 250 km west of Alice Springs. The mountains rise up to 500 m above the surrounding plains and shelter a number of gorges, including Talipata Gorge and Mangeraka Gorge, and springs. Talipata Spring is a permanent spring in Talipata Gorge on the north side of Mount Palmer, which supports a mesic environment. The dominant vegetation communities within the Site include low-open eucalypt woodland and acacia shrubland with an understorey of hummock grassland.

Tenure and Land Use

The Site is entirely Aboriginal freehold land within the Haasts Bluff Aboriginal Land Trust. The major land use within the Site is Indigenous and part of the Site is used for cattle grazing. Mount Liebig community is located on Kintore Road in the north-west of the Site.

Significance Rating

National Significance

Ecological Values

Talipata Gorge and the permanent water associated with Talipata Spring support a significant wetland area that harbours a number of restricted range and relictual plant species. Two plant species are known only from the Site and a further four species are endemic to the Northern Territory. Four threatened species have been recorded from within the Site - Black-footed Rock-wallaby, Brush-tailed Mulgara, Southern Marsupial Mole and Great Desert Skink.

Management Issues

Fires are a management issue in the area, with frequent and extensive wildfires likely to have a negative impact on fire-sensitive vegetation communities. Buffel grass is widespread on the plains and run-on areas. Feral horses are relatively common and are degrading vegetation communities and significant waterholes.

Condition

Some vegetation communities and springs within the Site are degraded from grazing and trampling by cattle and feral horse.



Current Conservation Initiatives

Limited surveys of threatened species within the Site were conducted by the Central Land Council and Traditional Owners in 2003. The Central Land Council has plans to monitor grazing impacts within the Site and to establish an Indigenous ranger group in the area.