Merimbula saltmarsh checklist

Common nameScientific nameFamilyInterest and shrubsSuaada australisChenopodiaceaeBracelet Honey-myrtleMalcaleuca armillarisMyrtaceaeGrey MangroveAvicennia marinaAcanthaceaeSigo australiscaPrimulaceaeGrey MangroveAegiceras corniculatumPrimulaceaeCoastal SaltbushRhagodia candolleanaChenopodiaceaeShrubby GlasswortTecticornia arbusculaChenopodiaceaeForbNamela ancepsCampanulaceaeCoastal SaltbushAtriplex australasicaChenopodiaceaeCoastal SaltbushAtriplex australasicaChenopodiaceaeCoastal SaltbushAtriplex australasicaChenopodiaceaeCoasta ButtonsLaptinella longipesAsteraceaeCreping BrookwedSmolus repensTheophrastaceaeGrass DaisyBrachyscome gramineaAsteraceaeNew Zealand SpinachTetragonia tetragonoidesAizoaceaeSag CavellatumSacceaeSacceaePigfaceCarpobrotus glaucescersAizoaceaeSamphire, GlasswortSpergularia tasmanicaCanopoliaceaeSag LavenderLimonium australePlumbaginaceaeSwamp WeedSelliera radicansGoodeniaceaeCoast SpeargrassAustratifisPoaceaeCoast SpeargrassAustratifisPoaceaeCoasta SpeargrassAustratifisPoaceaeCoasta SpeargrassAustratifisPoaceaeCoasta ButtonsCyneraceaeCoperaceaeCoasta Speargrass </th <th></th> <th></th> <th></th>			
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Toad Rush Juncus bufonius Juncaceae	Sea Rush	Juncus kraussii	Juncaceae
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Streaked Arrowgrass	Triglochin striatum	Juncaginaceae
Printed on environmentally friendly paper	Toad Rush	Juncus bufonius	Juncaceae
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The ecological values of saltmarsh

Coastal saltmarshes provide a buffer between marine and terrestrial environments. They stabilise and filter shore sediments, cycle nutrients and support estuarine food chains. Many invertebrates live in the community, including worms, crabs, molluscs, spiders and insects, Saltmarsh provides feeding habitat for fish during high tides and for insectivorous bats at night. Shorebirds like the threatened Pied Oystercatcher and Sanderling use saltmarshes for feeding and high tide roosting.

About the Merimbula Lake Boardwalk

The Merimbula Lake Boardwalk is 1.7 kilometres long, running west from the bridge on Market Street. The Boardwalk was built by the Bega Valley Shire Council and State Government with Commonwealth assistance. There are toilets and a shop at the western end. It is the most southerly mangrove boardwalk in Australia and the highest latitude mangrove boardwalk in the world.

Other accessible saltmarshes in the region are at Pambula Wetland ('Panboola') and Bermagui (which is dominated by the threatened herb Narrow-leafed Wilsonia in some parts).



More information

National Parks Visitor Centre cnr Merimbula Drive and Sapphire Coast Drive, Merimbula ph 6495 5000 Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, Suite 2 Bega Centre, 106 Auckland Street, Bega ph 6491 8203 NSW Fisheries. Far South Coast Fisheries Office 13 Cocora Street, Eden ph 6496 1377, www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/habitat/aquatic-habitats Panboola - Pambula Wetlands Heritage Project http://thebegavalley.org.au/panboola.html Coastal saltmarsh endangered ecological community profile www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au Saintilan, N. ed. (2009) Australian Saltmarsh Ecology, CSIRO





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plants of the Merimbula Lake saltmarsh





There are fine examples of saltmarsh around Merimbula Lake, and the Merimbula Boardwalk is a great way to see them. This brochure introduces the main plant species in this saltmarsh community.

About saltmarsh

Coastal saltmarsh is a wetland community of the upper intertidal zone of estuaries and bays. At Merimbula, it occurs in a belt between Grey Mangroves and Bracelet Honey Myrtle scrub. Saltmarsh is a mosaic of rushbeds, sedgelands, grasslands, Samphire and Brookweed herbfields, chenopod shrublands and bare salt pans.

Samphire, sometimes with shrubs and mangrove seedlings, occupies the lowest and most saline parts of the community. Salt-tolerant rushes, sedges and grasses grow in the upper saltmarsh.

Saltmarsh plants must cope with inundation by sea water during high tides as well as occasional drying out. These plants are 'halophytes'; they can survive in extremely saline soil conditions. They do this by loading their tissues with



Unlike other communities, species diversity in saltmarsh increases with distance from the equator. Some species have a global distribution. Others like Sea Rush and Samphire originated in Gondwana and are also found in New Zealand, South Africa and South America.

Coastal Saltmarsh is an Endangered Ecological Community in New South Wales and is also protected under the Fisheries Management Act 1994. Threats to the community include infilling, weeds, vehicle and stock damage, pollution and the encroachment of mangroves. Climate change and rising sea levels also continue to take their toll on saltmarsh.

Coastal saltmarsh is a rare vegetation community with specialised and fascinating plant life.

ions to maintain cell pressure, while excluding salt from their sap flow.

Some species use succulent leaves and stems to reduce their uptake of salty water.

Plants like Grey and River Mangrove, Brookweed and Sea Lavender have glands which excrete salt.





River Mangrove Aegiceras corniculatus FAMILY: PRIMULACEAE A shrub with *alternate* leaves dotted with salt glands. It flowers from spring to early summer. Pores on the trunk ('lenticels') are used to obtain oxygen. It prefers less saline conditions, and is at its southern limit right here.

Grey Mangrove Avicennia marina FAMILY: ACANTHACEAE A small tree with opposite leaves and aerial roots ('pneumatophores'). It flowers mainly in autumn. Like the unrelated River Mangrove, the seed germinates on the parent plant before falling.



Creeping Brookweed Samolus repens FAMILY: THEOPHRASTACEAE An erect or creeping herb with narrow leaves and white or pale pink flowers in Sept-April. It is the dominant herb in some areas, often growing with Samphire. It is also found in New Zealand and South America (Chile).

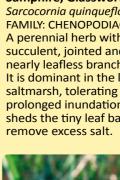
Water Buttons Cotula coronopifolia FAMILY: ASTERACEAE An erect or spreading annual with toothed or entire, slightly fleshy leaves. It was thought to be introduced but is now considered native and one of the species originating in Gondwana. The showy flowers appear mainly in spring.



Sea Lavender Limonium australe FAMILY: PLUMBAGINACEAE A tall perennial herb with a rosette of large basal leaves (see inset). It flowers in summer and is a rare species in NSW, restricted to the south coast. Other Limonium species are used for dyeing and cut flowers ("Statice").

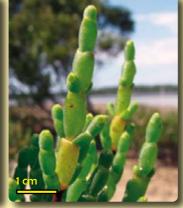


New Zealand Spinach Tetragonia tetragonoides FAMILY: AIZOACEAE A spreading annual or shortlived perennial with large slightly fleshy triangular leaves, flowering spring-summer. It is widespread in Australia and New Zealand and was widely used as a green vegetable by early settlers.





Bracelet Honey-myrtle Melaleuca armillaris FAMILY: MYRTACEAE A tall shrub to 5 metres high with linear curved leaves and dense white flower spikes. It dominates the estuarine wetland scrub which intergrades with saltmarsh along the Boardwalk. It flowers in summer.



Shrubby Glasswort Tecticornia arbuscula FAMILY: CHENOPODIACEAE A medium shrub with succulent, jointed branches and reduced leaves. The tiny terminal flowers appear in autumn in groups of three. In NSW, the species is restricted to saltmarshes south from Jervis Bay.



Angled Lobelia Lobelia anceps FAMILY: CAMPANULACEAE A sprawling herb with linear leaves and angled branches with wings formed from the leaf bases. The solitary flowers appear Nov-July, and have the corolla tube split to the base. It is abundant at the eastern end of the Boardwalk.



Shiny Swamp-mat Selliera radicans FAMILY: GOODENIACEAE A prostrate herb with glossy linear or spoon-shaped leaves. It copes with prolonged inundation and dominates the groundcover in some areas. The fan-type flowers appear spring-summer, particularly after inundation.



Pigface Carpobrotus glaucescens FAMILY: AIZOACEAE A prostrate perennial with opposite succulent leaves triangular in cross-section and with visible glands. It favours beach strand vegetation but occurs in transitional areas of the Merimbula saltmarsh. The pulp of the ripe fruit is edible.



Round-leaved Pigface Disphyma crassifolium ssp clavellatum FAMILY: AIZOACEAE A mat-forming herb with opposite succulent leaves rounded in cross-section, and dry fruit. It is uncommon in the region. This is the only *Disphyma* species and it is endemic to Australia.

Grass Daisy FAMILY: ASTERACEAE the underside of the

areas.





Samphire, Glasswort Sarcocornia quinqueflora FAMILY: CHENOPODIACEAE A perennial herb with succulent, jointed and nearly leafless branches. It is dominant in the lower prolonged inundation. It sheds the tiny leaf bases to

Austral Seablite Suaeda australis FAMILY: CHENOPODIACEAE A shrub to one metre high with succulent green to purple leaves, flowers in short axillary or terminal inflorescences and a small, succulent fruit perianth. It is a dominant shrub over large areas in some saltmarshes.





Brachyscome graminea A perennial herb with narrow stem leaves. The flowers are white, pale blue or pink, sometimes coloured only on 'petals'. It flowers most of the year, and grows in wet grassy

Tasmanian Sandspurry Spergularia tasmanica FAMILY: CARYOPHYLLACEAE An erect pink-flowered herb with glandular hairs on the sepals and opposite narrow fleshy leaves. It flowers spring-autumn. Similar to introduced Sandspurry species, it differs by having wings around the seeds.