

Marine

In the Wake of Captain Stirling

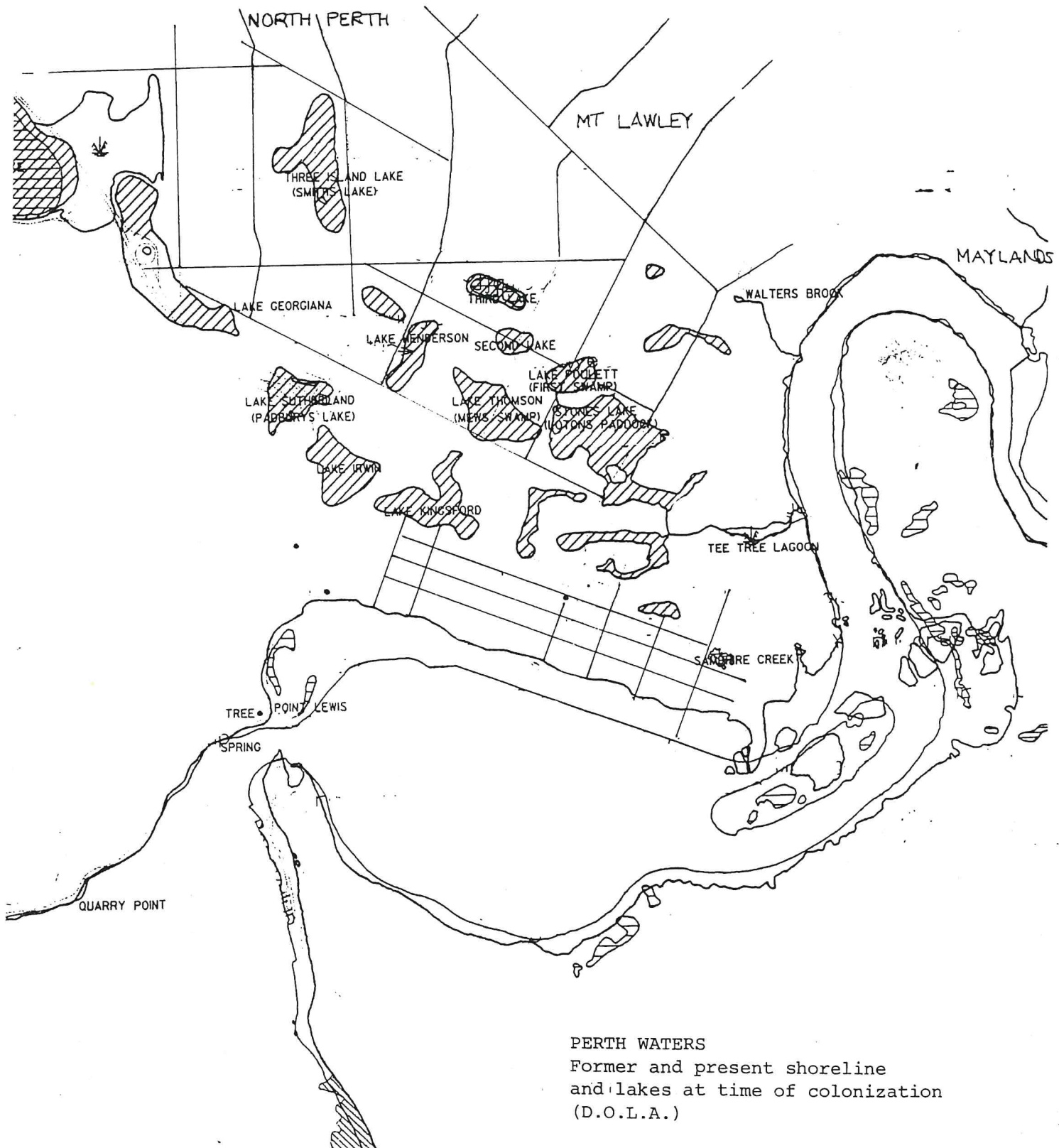
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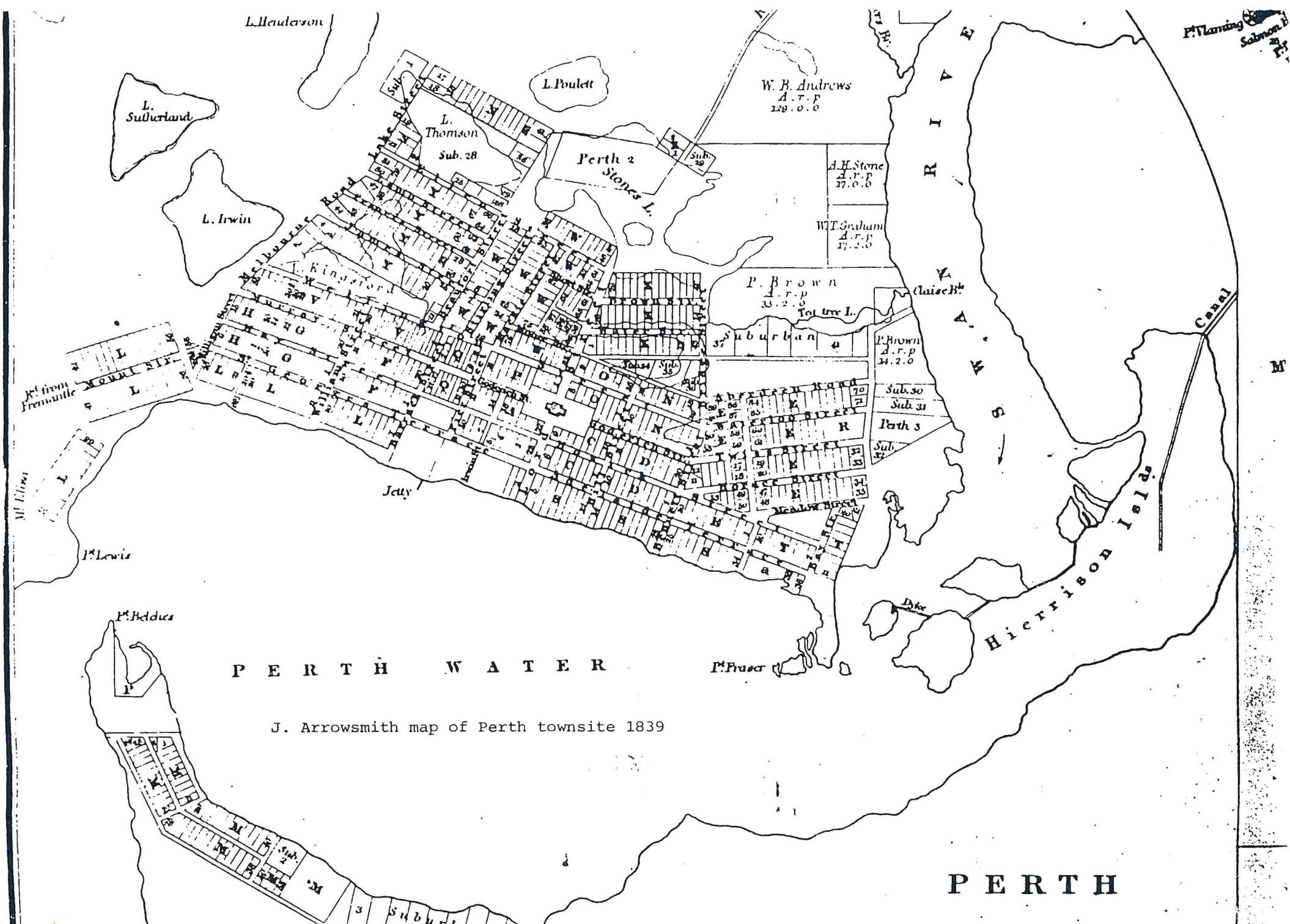
Stop 1—King's Park

In 1830 Charles Fraser, in a letter to his friend and fellow botanist, Dr William Hooker, wrote of this site:

“The cliffs—of very considerable elevation—on the northern shore, are formed of fossil limestone and sandstone. The view from this point of the meanderings of the river and the Moreau (mouth of the Canning River) with the surrounding country and distant mountains is particularly grand.”



PERTH WATERS
Former and present shoreline
and lakes at time of colonization
(D.O.L.A.)



J. Arrowsmith map of Perth townsite 1839

PERTH

Stop 2—Claise Brook

“One mile up the river from the last point (Pt Fraser) is a small creek of fresh water, issuing from an extensive lagoon clothed with arborescent species of *Metrosideros* of great beauty. The banks are covered with the most interesting plants, amongst which I observed two species of *Calytris*, a species of *Acacia* with scolopendrous stems, and several Papilionaceous plants. The *Angophoras* on the flats are gigantic. These flats are formed of tolerable loam, of great depth, capable of producing fair crops”

wrote Charles Fraser to Dr William Hooker in 1830.

Stop 3—Ascot Waters

“Here are extensive salt-marshes admirably adapted to the growth of cotton. This has already been produced at Sydney, and pronounced by the ablest judges in Britain to be of superior quality. There can be no question but that, both as to soil and climate, the banks of the Swan River would prove better adapted to the cultivation of this plant than Port Jackson, and the seed that be tried is that of the Sea Island Cotton.”

This was Charles Fraser's assessment of the low-lying shores around the Heirisson Isles.

Samphire Community

Samphire is an English word which is a corruption of the French herbe de Saint Pierre (St Peter's herb).

Use the drawings to identify the native plants. Make a bird's eye sketch to show the distribution of these plants back from the water's edge, give approximate distances from water's edge.

Note any animal life and the zone in which they occur.

Look for evidence of high tide mark, flood levels.

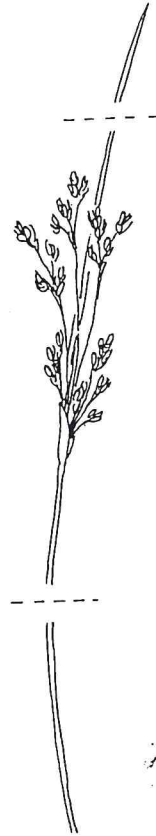
List the physical environmental factors you consider may be important in this community.

Where have you seen this community on the Swan River?
Mark on your map.

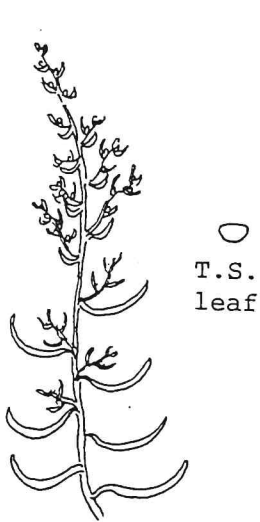
Where else on the Swan River might Stirling and Fraser have seen this community? Mark on your map.

What has been the fate of the Samphire community since European settlement?

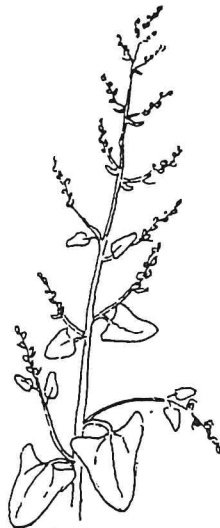
What important roles might this assemblage of plants and animals play in the river ecosystem?



Juncus kraussii
(half size)



Suaeda australis
(half size)



Atriplex prostrata
(half size)



Sarcocornia quinqueflora
(half size)

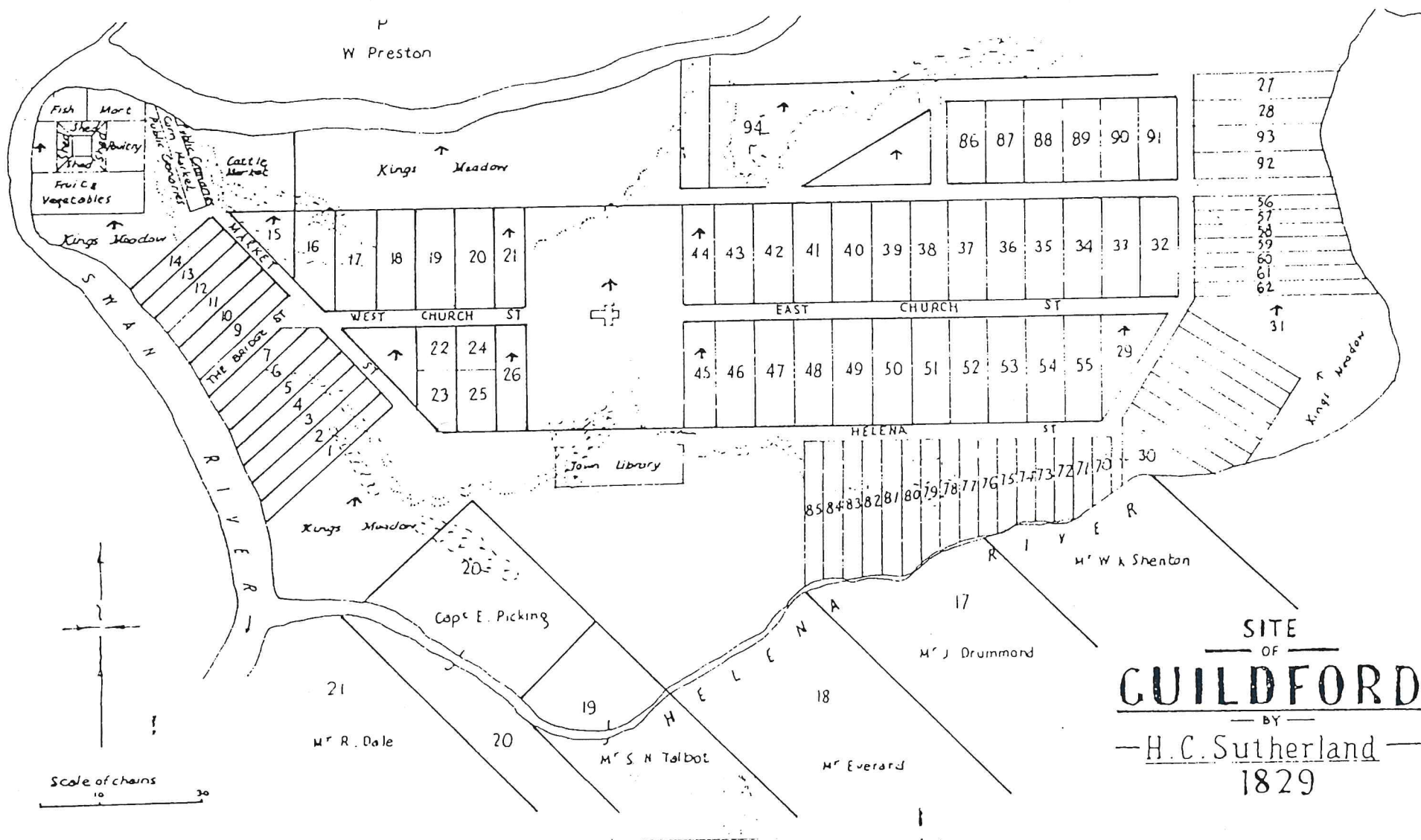
Stop 4—Olive Farm

Michael Bourke, author of "On the Swan" published in 1987, describes Olive Farm as "the birthplace of the Swan Valley Wine Industry." The original Olive Farm was bought by Mr Thomas Waters in 1829 and was on Swan Locations 24 and 25 which together covered 150 acres. Mr Thomas was a botanist from the Cape Colony and in Guildford a neighbour of James Drummond, another botanist, and together they experimented with grape growing and wine making.

Stop 5—Guildford Wharf

Charles Fraser wrote:

"In proportion, as we ascend the river, the flats increase in breadth and luxuriance, each being backed by a terrace of forest land of the finest description extending for miles from the river, and resembling in character those seen on the banks of the Maquarie River, west of Wellington Valley."



SITE
 OF
GUILDFORD
 BY
 — H. C. Sutherland —
 1829

Stop 6—Whiteman Park

Robert Brown, on studying Fraser's plant collection in 1830, stated in an essay titled 'General View of the Botany of the Vicinity of Swan River':

"If an opinion were to be formed of the nature of the country merely from the inspections of these collections it certainly would be extremely unfavourable as to the quality of the soil; for not only do the prevailing families (Proteaceae, Myrtaceae, Leguminosae) but the whole of the genera of those families, and even many of the species, agree with those found on the shores of King George's Sound which, with the exception of a few patches of very small extent, seem absolutely incapable of cultivation."

Stop 7—Ellen Brook

James Stirling wrote in his diary on the 13th of March 1827:

"At length, after several halts we reached, about 11 o'clock, a spot where the river takes an eastern direction, just above a considerable creek on the left hand. We then found insurmountable obstructions to our further progress, in fact we had reached the termination. Far beyond this there was the bed of a torrent, but no longer a river, not even a continuation of water except in a succession of distant parts. Here on a high bank we pitched our tent."

Stop 8—Lamont's Winery

James Stirling entered in his diary:

"On the following morning, the 14th, Mr Fraser, with a party, set out for the hills to the eastward,"

after which Charles Fraser reported:

"...the plains were seen to extend to the base of the mountains interspersed with stripes of good forest land on which I observed a considerable portion of stringy bark. The variety of plants seen on this tract was great; amongst the new ones I observed I may enumerate several species of *Hakea*, a species of *Lambertia*, 4 species of *Isopogon*, 3 species of *Leptospermum*, a species of *Petrophila*, and a liliaceous plant not seen in flower. *Banksia grandis* was remarked in a stunted state."

Stop 9—Woodbridge

It was round about this part of the river that Stirling and his men encountered a number of Aborigines and here that he later built a modest cottage called 'Woodbridge'.

“Here, peeping at us from behind trees, we discovered two boys; presently others appeared and at last we saw a whole tribe of about thirty natives...At first they displayed great reserve, but as we made no attempt to approach them, the warriors followed us along the bank, the women and children retired out of sight. The wood now resounded with their shouts to which replied our bugle with equal loudness and with more than equal melody. At this point appearances wore a threatening aspect, for the natives seemed much enraged, and I judged from their violent gestures and the great noise they made that we should shortly have a shower of spears.

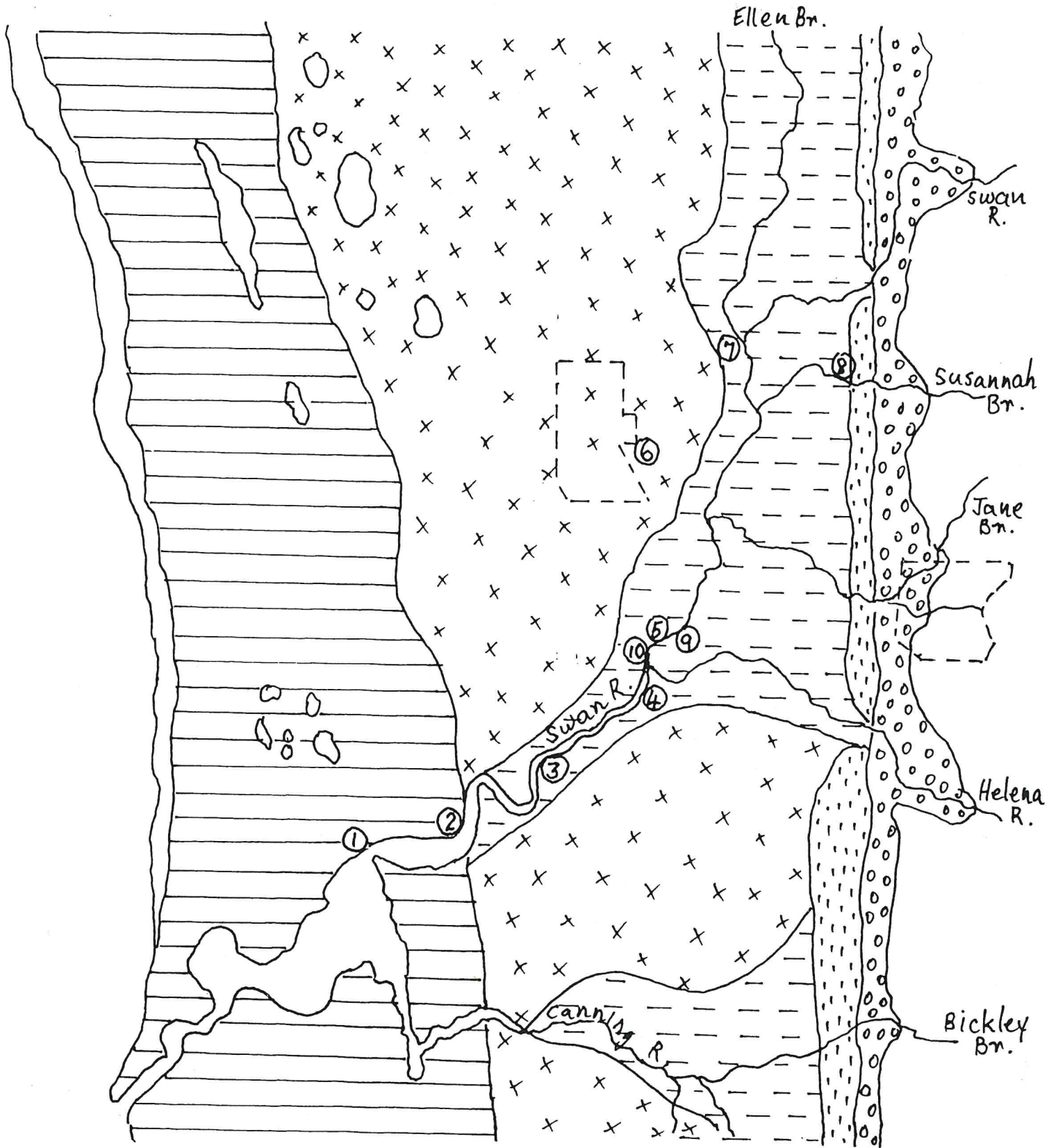
“The river was here only 60 yards across, and as they had the advantage of a bank 20 feet high, our situation put us much within reach of annoyance. We, however, pursued our course until the bank became nearly level with the water, by which time they had assumed more confidence, and began to mimic our various expressions of ‘How do you do’, and at last we held up a swan which seemed to amuse them, and having cast it to them, they testified the greatest delight at the present. This led to an interview which proceeded along amicable terms. We gave them various articles of dress, a corporal’s jacket, and three swans and received in return all their spears and womeras. At length we were forced to tear ourselves away, and they retired astonished at their acquisitions, intimating that they would willingly accompany the boats, but that a creek a short distance further up prevented their doing so.”


Stop 10—Success Hill

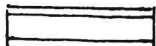
On 12th March 1995 representatives of the Swan Valley Nyoongar Community, the Bassendean Preservation Society and the Success Hill Action Group held a ceremony at a spring at Success Hill. This spring was rediscovered after a fire burnt away thick scrub that had hidden it for many years. Mr Bropho, the Nyoongar spokesman said:

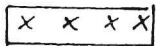
“The ceremony was conducted on behalf of all Nyoongars and all white people because this area has to be shared. We, the last of the river people, hope that for many generations to come, this will be remembered. Water is life—without water everybody perishes. A young baby can’t do without the milk coming from its mother’s breast and the land is our mother and the water is the milk from her breast. It is a life source.”

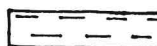
GEOMORPHOLOGY AND SOIL TYPES
 OF THE SWAN COASTAL PLAIN
 (modified from G. Seddon, 1972 - Sense of Place)

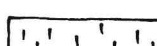


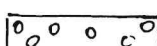
 Quindalup Dunes
(calcareous sands)

 Spearwood Dunes
(limestone)

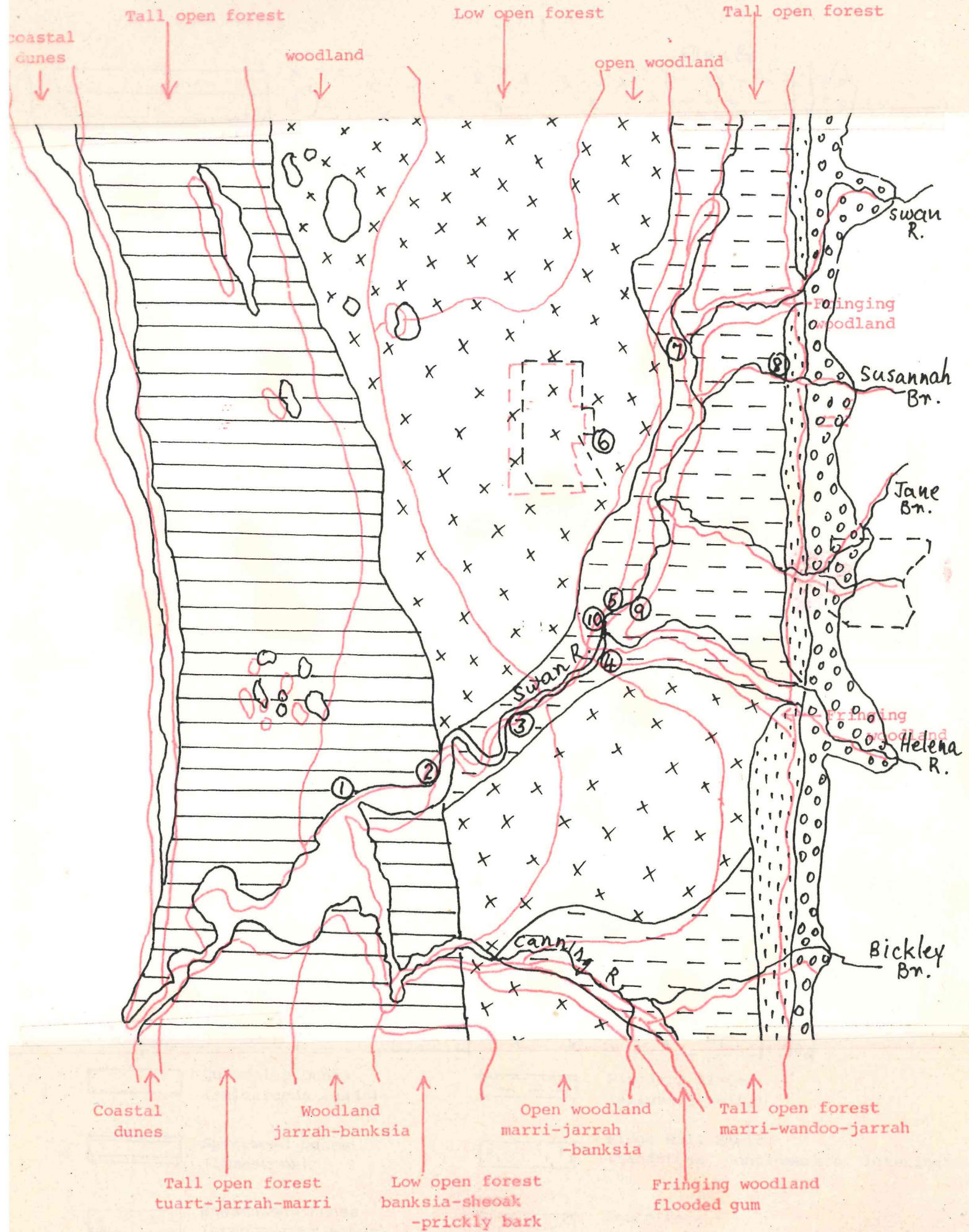
 Bassendean Dunes
(grey quartz sands)

 Pinjarra Plains
(alluvial soils)

 Ridge Hill Shelf
(sandstone, conglomerate, laterite)

 Scarp face
(granite)

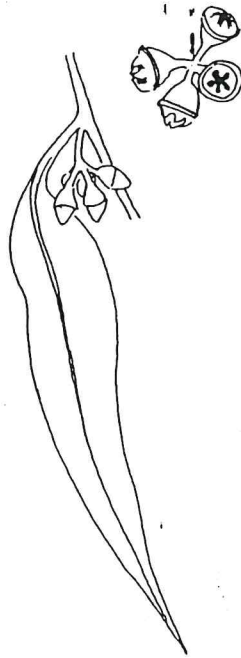
VEGETATION OF THE SWAN COASTAL PLAIN
 (modified from G.Seddon, 1972 - Sense of Place)



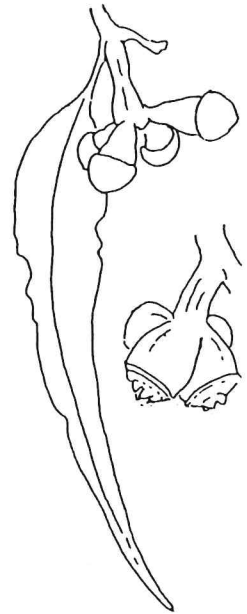
EUCALYPTUS SPECIES
(half size)



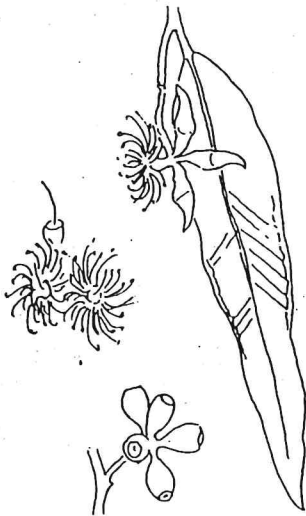
E. todtiana
(Prickly bark)



E. rudis
(Flooded gum)



E. gomphocephala
(Tuart)



E. wandoo
(Wandoo)

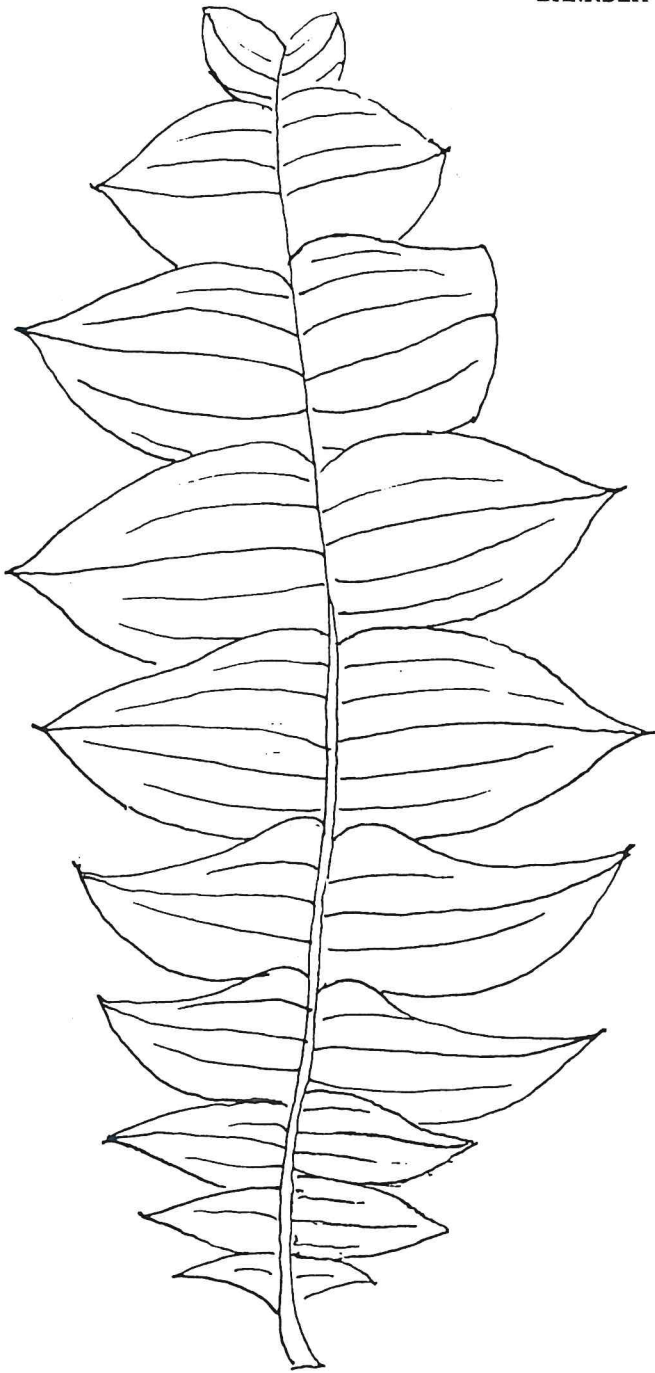


E. marginata
(Jarrah)

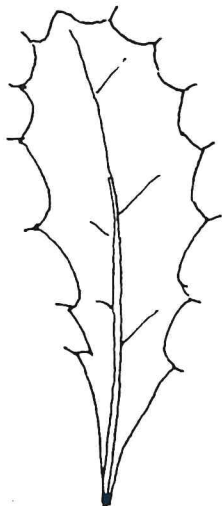


E. calophylla
(Marri)

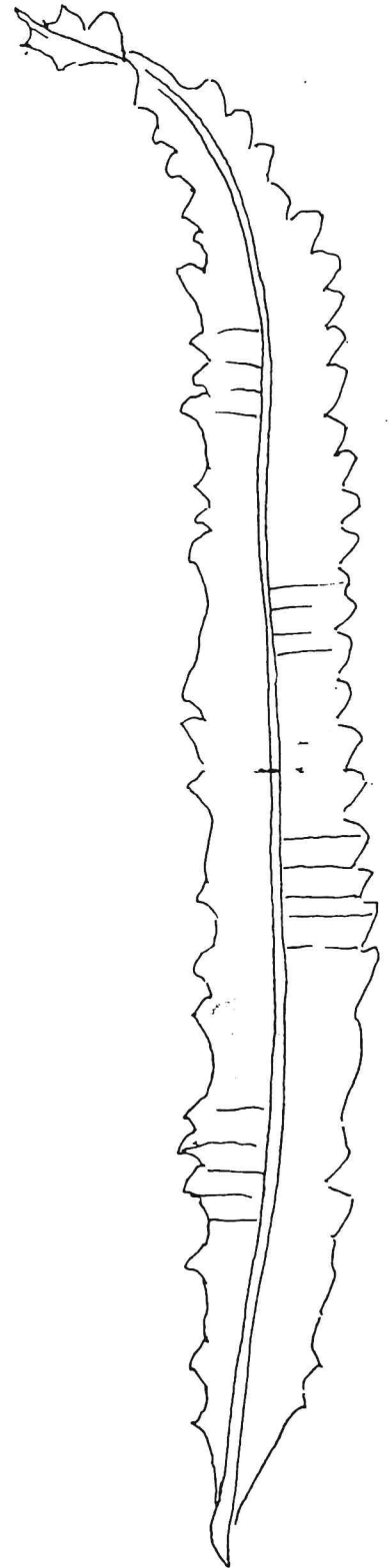
BANKSIA SPECIES



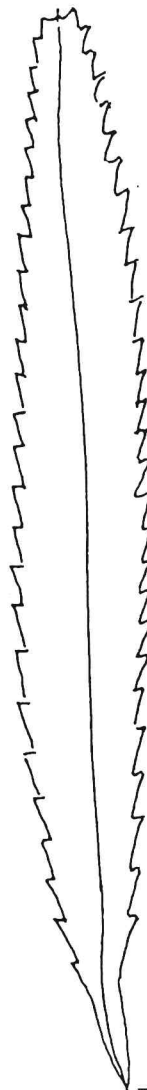
B. grandis
(half size)



B. ilicifolia
(natural size)

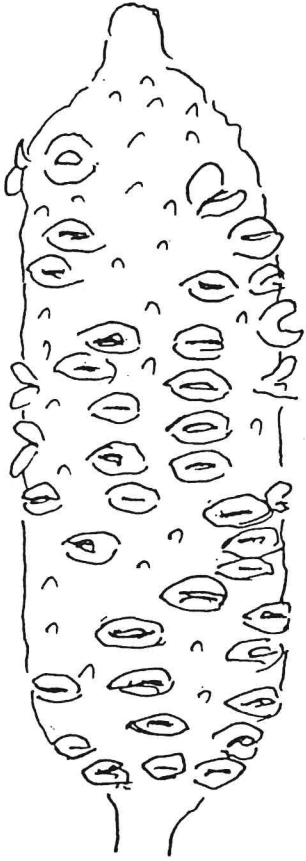


B. menziesii
(natural size)



B. attenuata
(natural size)

BANKSIA SPECIES
(half size)



B. grandis



B. attenuata

no fertilization
no fruit

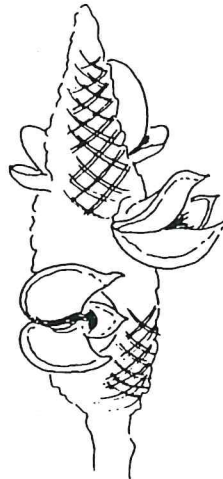


B. ilicifolia



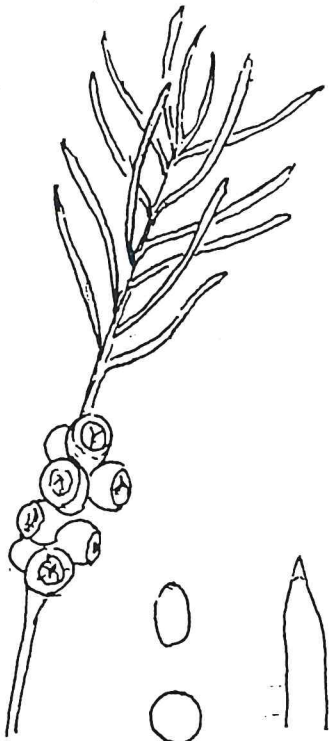
fertilization

1 open fruit
seed already
dispersed



B. menziesii

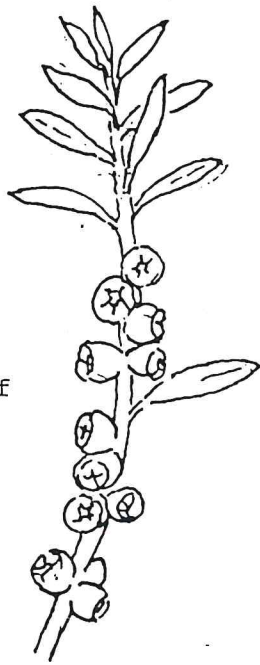
MELALEUCA SPECIES
(natural size)



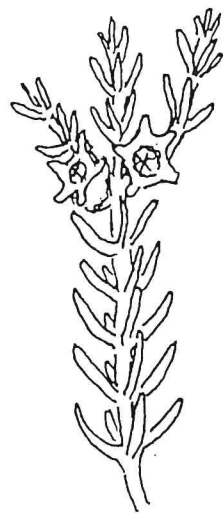
T.S. leaf (X5)

M. raphiophylla

T.S. leaf
(X5)



M. preissiana



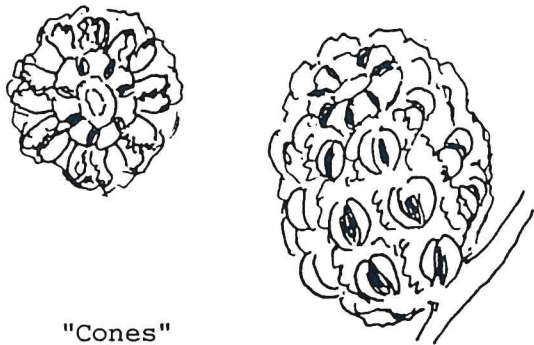
T.S. leaf
(X3)

M. cuticularis

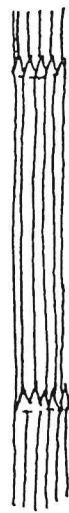
SHEOAK SPECIES



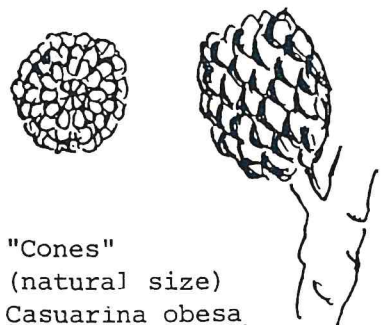
Stem with reduced leaves
10-12 / node (X5)



"Cones"
(natural size)
Allocasuarina fraseriana



Stem with reduced leaves
7± / node (X5)



"Cones"
(natural size)
Casuarina obesa

References

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Battye Library

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Department of Land Administration, Midland

Maps, Charts, Plans.