
The Stony Rises

Location

POMBORNEIT VIC 3260 - Property No L10273

Municipality

CORANGAMITE SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The Stony Rises are significant for scientific, historic and aesthetic reasons at a National level

The Stony Rises are an area of rocky ground formed on geologically recent lava flows around Mount Porndon, extending north to form the southern and southwestern shoreline of Lake Corangamite. The mount and associated smaller cones, which are located near the centre of the site, are believed to have been the major source of the lava.

The Stony Rises contain important remnant vegetation and fauna, as the difficulty of farming the rocky terrain has allowed the survival of vegetation communities which have been cleared from the more easily cultivated soils found elsewhere in the Western District.

The landscape of the Stony Rises, with open and varied woodland on an intricate network of high, narrow, rocky ridges enclosing tiny swamps and lakes, is visually appealing, with small scale diversity reflecting the biodiversity and rich cultural history of the area.

The Floating Islands are of particular significance, being the only floating peat islands known in Australia.

The Stony Rises are geologically and geomorphologically significant for the range and freshness of the volcanic features and its unique and varied topography related to different types of volcanic activity. The unusual and dramatic landforms have developed on young lava flows from a group of volcanic vents, some marked by simple cones, others with central craters; Mount Porndon (278m) is the most prominent. While rocky terrain on recent lava flows is found in other parts of the state, the landscape here is unique in the range of geological features and the scale and complexity of the surface relief and rock exposures.

The vegetation communities present on those parts of the Stony Rises that have not been cleared are classed as endangered and include most of the original native vegetation which survives in the Western District. The Floating Islands Reserve protects a small lake where, when water levels are high, several thick mats of vegetation, including small trees, can occasionally be set in motion by wind to move across the surface of the lake. These are the only peat-based floating islands in Australia and among few known in the world.

The Stony Rises contain a number of cultural features which reflect their history from first settlement in the 1840s. Particularly distinctive are the dry stone walls, built by the early settlers from local volcanic boulders to delimit field and property boundaries: these have been described as "the most technically accomplished and aesthetically pleasing in Victoria". A few early stone buildings have survived, although in other cases only the foundations are visible.

The appearance of the Stony Rises landscape is striking and unusual in the scale of the topography, with the pyramidal peak of Mount Porndon at the centre offering a clear view across the surrounding terrain, where the rocky, wooded lava flows interdigitate to enclose tiny lakes and wetlands.

Classified 19/06/2004

Hermes Number 192070

Property Number

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>