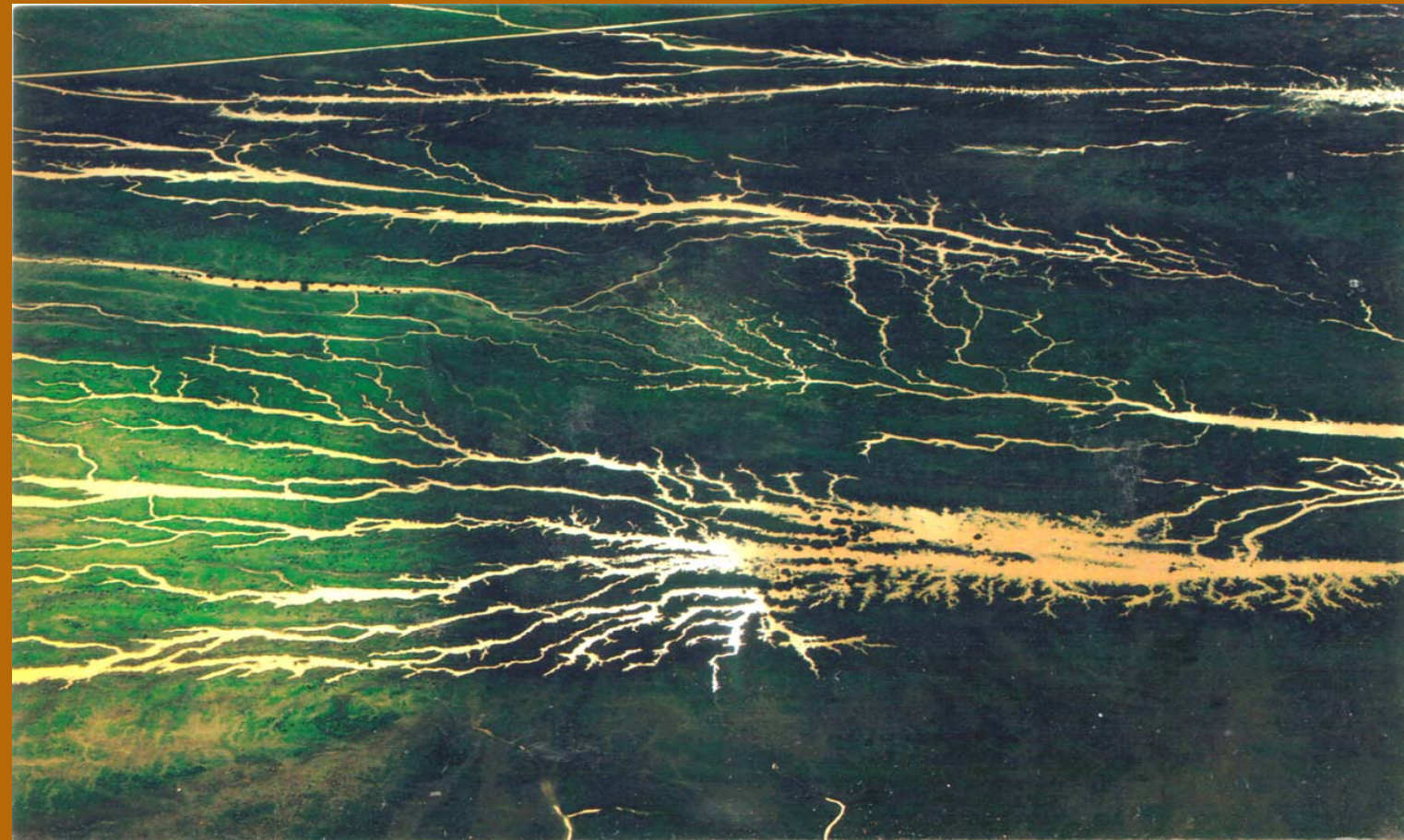
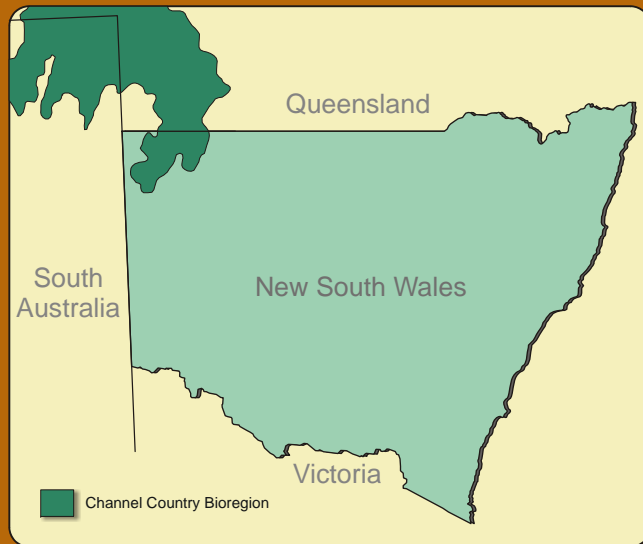


CORNER COUNTRY LANDSCAPES

The Channel Country Bioregion is an area of extensive stream systems with very wide flood plains. It extends across the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia and western New South Wales.

The Channel Country drains water from the Bulloo River, Cooper Creek, Lake Frome and Lake Bancannia. In New South Wales the land area is less than 5% of the total and includes significant ephemeral wetlands, including the Bulloo Overflow, Carypundy Swamp and Salisbury Lake.



Previous panel: Myriad streams of channel country
 Below: Channel country
 Right to left: channel country, sand dunes
 adjacent channel country, Bulloo Overflow
 (image: Tony Sevil)



The most visible feature of the Channel Country are the many river channels which criss-cross the landscape, surrounded by gibber plains, stony rises and dunes.

Generally the climate is arid, and the flood plains that extend beyond the rivers and channels support little vegetation.

But, after heavy rains in the catchment of the Bulloo River, Cooper Creek, and others, flood waters work their way through the

channels, spreading out across an enormous plain and trigger major growth events. In no time the area changes to vivid green interspersed by the stripes of red sand and gibbers.

Water which does not soak into the flood plain drains into ephemeral lakes where it supports a range of plant and animal life.

Lignum, canegrass and black box grow on the perimeters of the lakes, with mulga and saltbushes on the surrounding sand dunes

and plains.

River red gum, gidgee and black box all grow along the margins of creeks and across flood-outs.

For the Corner Country the Bulloo River supplies water to a region known as the Bulloo River Overflow, a terminal basin of an entire-land system of wetlands.

Salisbury Lake adjacent to the Wanaaring Cutline is regularly flooded and supports a diversity of water-birds and ducks.



Images: Native waterbirds, bore adjacent to Wanaaring Cutline (image Tony Sevil), Mitchell grass flood out, channel country.



Design and images: Ruth Sandow
Mapping: Bob Brown and Nancy Vickery

The Channel Country Bioregion supports a surprising number of other native mammals, fish and reptiles, with one tortoise species only found on Cooper Creek.

Regrettably some animals have become extinct in the region. These include the desert rat-kangaroo, western quoll, golden bandicoot, pig-footed bandicoot and the burrowing bettong

Birds of the area are typical of those found elsewhere in the semi-arid zone.

In the early days the Karenggapa people were the traditional people of the far northwest corner of NSW, including the Channel Country.

Soon after Sturt's 1845 expedition had explored the Channel Country, pastoralists began venturing in the region, taking up huge runs to support their sheep and cattle.

By the time Burke and Wills passed through in 1861 pastoral settlements were scattered throughout the

area. Mitchell and other native grasses, as well as forbs such as copper burr, cover the gibber plains and flood country after rains and become the staple diet for cattle.

Bores and earth dams constructed throughout the area provide stable water supplies for domestic and native animals.

Landholders of the area look for flooding rains to provide fattening grass for their livestock.