514122

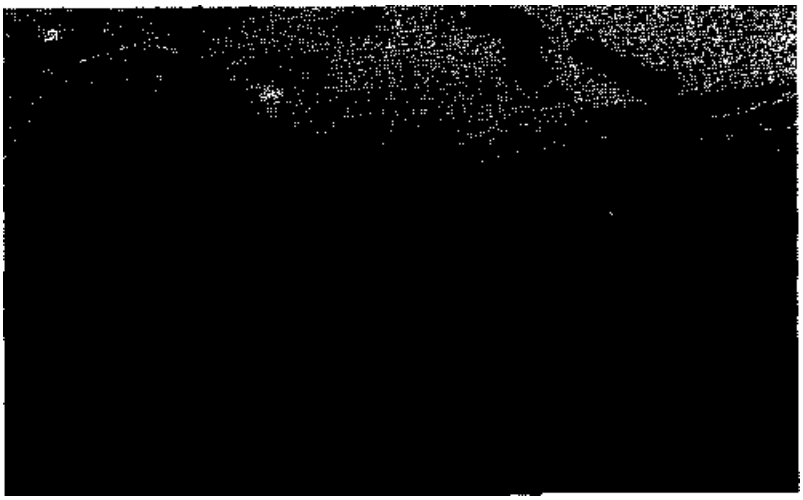
KING ISLAND

A low undulating plateau of Precambrian sediments occupies the south eastern quarter of King Island and smaller bodies of similar terrain are found to the north. The principal body is bounded by a scarp in the north-east, east and south but, elsewhere, there are no prominent topographical boundaries.

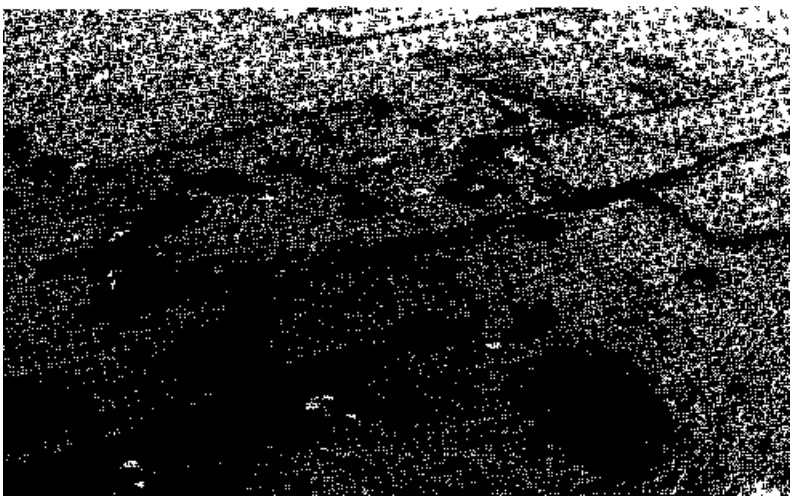
Two main soils were observed. The more extensive one fits the description of the Pegarah fine sandy loam by Stephens and Hosking (1932). The other appears to be the Poolta sandy loam of Hubble (1947). A mottled clayey B horizon was found where the pan could be penetrated. There is no noticeable correlation of either soil with any particular topographic or slope position. Hubble described a number of other soils of restricted occurrence including the Naracoopa sand (op. cit. 1932), and a variety of profiles was found throughout the system. Mottled olive grey, brownish-yellow gradational soils occur on volcanic parent materials near Grassy, grey gradational soils were found on altered sediments near Pearshape and gravelly, fine structured yellowish-brown soils of granitic origin were observed in the vicinity of the Currie air strip.

The vegetation confronting white settlers was probably a eucalypt forest with a fairly dense, tall shrub layer. Indications are that a rainforest of myrtle, blackwood and soft tree-fern occupied the deeper narrow drainage lines cut by the easterly flowing streams. The vegetation has since been severely disturbed by fire and clearing operations, and areas of regrowth comprise an extremely dense and tall scrub of mostly paperbark and tea-trees. King Island land system is extensively used for dairying and the Forestry Commission have established pine and eucalypt plantations near Naracoopa.

Low relief and poor internal drainage of many of the soils makes waterlogging an important hazard. Sheet erosion is also important due to the intrinsically erodible nature of the mostly fine sandy and silty surface horizons and to the presence of an often cemented A_2 horizon which greatly restricts water infiltration and therefore results in excessive runoff. The Forestry Commission has noticed a marked improvement in tree establishment near Naracoopa once this impeding layer has been destroyed by ripping.



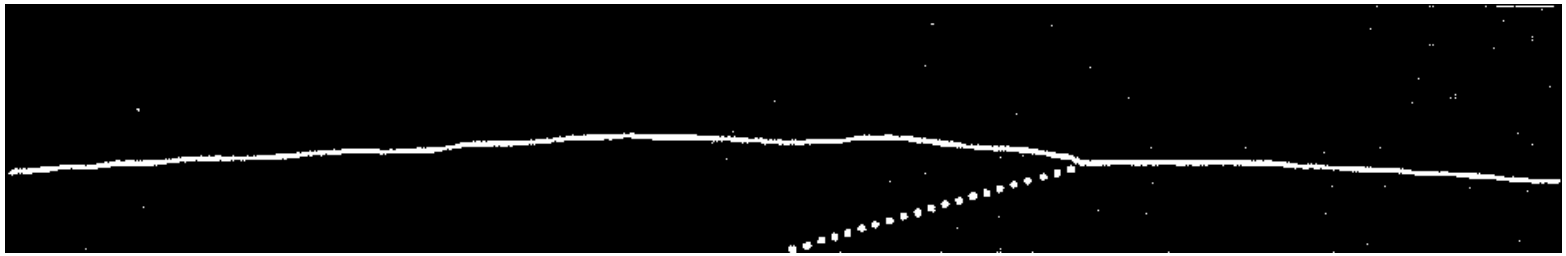
Note the dense native vegetation.



The plateau country.

LAND SYSTEM

514122 King Island



COMPONENT	1	2
PROPORTION %	70	30
CLIMATE	Average Annual Rainfall 1 000-1 250 mm	
GEOLOGY	Precambrian mudstone, quartzite, some metamorphic sequences	
TOPOGRAPHY Land form Position Average Sideslope[0]	Undulating plain Broad crests 1	Gentle sideslopes
NATIVE VEGETATION Structure Association	Tall open forest White gum, blue gum, swamp gum, blackwood, , paperbark, *Melaleuca* sp., tea-trees	
SOIL	Strong brown (7.5 YR 5/6) to yellowish brown (10 YR 5/8) duplex soil, ironstone gravel sometimes present	Greyish brown (10 YR 5/2) silty loam soil, uniform texture with hardpan, rounded quartz fragments sometimes present
Surface Texture	Loam	Silt loam
Permeability	Moderate	
Average Depth m	1.0	0.6
PRESENT LAND USE	Grazing	
HAZARDS	Moderate waterlogging, and sheet erosion	High waterlogging, moderate sheet erosion