

Holocene environmental change for the Surrey Hills Region, Northern Tasmania

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The Surrey Hills region has been a key location behind the development of the fire-stick farming hypothesis in the 1960s and 1970s, with the theory being developed from ethnographic accounts of the region. This study will discuss a 10,000 year palynological record that has been developed from Yellow Marsh - a sphagnum heath/buttongrass wetland located within Surrey Hills. Four distinct vegetation patterns have been observed in the record, with a subalpine heath dominating the region during the mid-to-late Holocene, which then transitions to a moorland/heath environment between 6000 to 3000 years ago that is replaced by a eucalypt forest until European arrival ~180 years ago, which sees the development of a more open landscape that characterises the region today. Alterations in fire regimes, as well as increased soil erosion are linked to each vegetation transition and may reflect both climatic and human influences.