

FIRE INFORMATION NOTE | BANKSIA WOODLANDS



Description and conservation status

Banksia woodlands on the Swan Coastal Plain are highly diverse communities that typically have an overstorey of banksia and other tree species, and an understorey dominated by shrubs and sedge-like plants.

Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain is listed as a threatened ecological community (TEC) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Some subsets of this ecosystem are listed as TECs in Western Australia under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act), including *Banksia attenuata* and/or *Eucalyptus marginata* woodlands of the eastern side of the Swan Coastal Plain (critically endangered) and *Banksia attenuata* woodlands over species rich dense shrublands (critically endangered).

Where are Banksia woodlands found?

Banksia woodlands are found on the Swan Coastal Plain from north of Jurien Bay to Dunsborough on deep, nutrient poor sands of the Spearwood and Bassendean dune systems, and occasionally on other landforms. Isolated occurrences of the ecosystem can also be found on deep sands within other forested landscapes.

Ecology and biology

- Banksia woodlands provide important habitat for flora and fauna in this region, including threatened species such as the Carnaby's cockatoo, forest red-tailed black cockatoo and chuditch, as well as many wildflowers unique to the south-west.
- Banksia woodlands are a fire-prone ecosystem: many plant species resprout from protected buds after fire, and fire stimulates regeneration from seedbanks. However, they may degrade if regularly burnt at short intervals or too hot.
- There are many components to banksia woodlands, many of which have different responses to fire. To maximise conservation outcomes, patches of burnt and unburnt habitat should be maintained within your property.

What should I consider when undertaking fire mitigation activities?

- Plan for low intensity burns during early autumn that create a mosaic of fuels and will not scorch canopy or kill trees, so they can regenerate.
- Implement good hygiene measures to minimise risk of dieback spread during activities.
- Fire can spread weeds, or help you manage them: plan for pre- and post-fire weed control to assist native regeneration.
- A planned burn for bushfire mitigation purposes can be undertaken at intervals greater than six years without an authorisation under the BC Act. However, where possible and without compromising bushfire mitigation requirements, it is better to extend the period between burns to 15 years to assist in maintaining vegetation health.
- There is guidance on how the EPBC Act applies to bushfire management activities for both emergency firefighting and fire prevention (bushfire mitigation). The policy guidelines can be found at: dceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/publications/factsheet-bushfire-management-and-national-environment-law

More information

Threatened ecological communities management contact:

DBCA's Species and Communities Program: communities.recovery@dbca.wa.gov.au
or your local DBCA Regional or District office: dbca.wa.gov.au/contact-us/office-locations

Fuel management on your land: dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning