

FIRE INFORMATION NOTE | QUOKKA

Species and conservation status

Quokka *Setonix brachyurus* – Vulnerable

Description

The quokka is a small, stout, heavily built wallaby with short tail and very short rounded ears, with an unfurred snout. Fur thick and coarse, grey-brown above with a tinge of rufous and with underparts lighter in colour. No definite body markings.



Where are quokkas found?

Quokkas are known to occur from Jarrahdale to Denmark but are more widely distributed in the southern forests, between Nannup and Denmark, than they are in the northern forests where they are now quite rare and highly fragmented. Quokkas are also known to still occur east and north-east of Albany.

Ecology and biology

- Vegetation utilised for cover in 'quokka swamps' is most often comprised of dense sword grass *Lepidosperma effusum* and square stemmed rush, *Lepidosperma tetraquetrum* or other impenetrable vegetation such as grasses and sedges with *Taxandria linearifolia* or paperbark.
- They shelter in dense vegetation during the day.
- In southern forest areas, quokkas spend only 40 percent of their time in riparian vegetation and occupy a diverse range of habitats where there is complex vertical vegetation structure, low density of woody debris on the forest floor and dense understorey.
- Breeding is continuous on the mainland and linked to resource availability and habitat condition.

What should I consider when undertaking fire mitigation activities?

- Plan for low intensity burns that create a mosaic of fuels.
- For large areas, plan a management regime that treats small sections over a number of years to reduce the likelihood of entire habitat areas such as swamps/creek systems burning.
- Aim to wait until the area has recovered before undertaking further bushfire risk management actions in nearby areas where quokkas are known to be present.
- Consider conducting fox and feral cat control (e.g. 1080 baiting, trapping or shooting) immediately after your fire management activities.

More information

Threatened species management contact: DBCA's Species and Communities Program:
speciesandcommunities@dbca.wa.gov.au or your local DBCA Regional or District office:
www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/locations

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