

FIRES IN THE KWONGAN OF SOUTH-WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Kwongan, sclerophyllous shrub dominated plant communities not including mallee, is the most important vegetation type in the South-West Botanical Province and the Interzone. Kwongan covered some 27% of this landscape at settlement and contains about 70% of described plant species.

Long-term studies have been initiated at sites from the south coast through the wheatbelt to the northern sandplains with a view to developing operational computer based fire management systems. Fuels have been characterised and effects of fires on the biota are being examined. Species are being categorised according to key life history and fire response features in an attempt to develop simplified predictive models of fire response.