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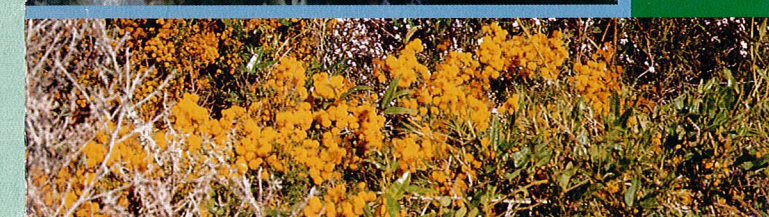
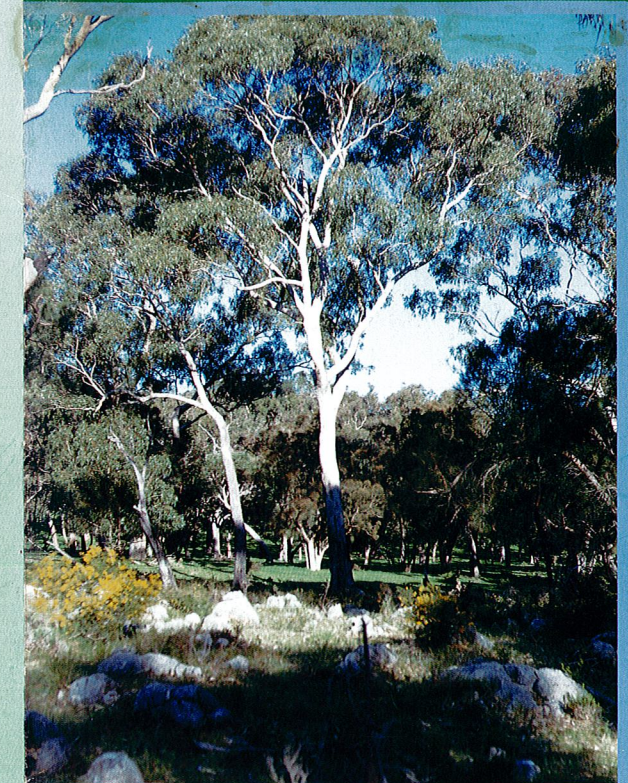
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## Members of the Tuart Response Group

Name	Organisation	Contacts	For advice on
Alan Walker (Chair)	Department of Conservation and Land Management	☎ 9442 0328 Fax: 9386 6399 alanw@calm.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government policies</li> <li>• Strategic decisions on tuart conservation and protection</li> <li>• Liaison with the Minister for the Environment and Heritage</li> </ul>
Charles Roche (Community Representative)	Tuart Coalition	☎ 9754 2410 Fax: 9754 3423 charles@envirowa.asn.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation movement representation and liaison</li> <li>• Conservation and care of tuart on private lands</li> <li>• Tuart conservation in the Ludlow/Busselton area</li> </ul>
Fiona O'Connor (Community Representative)	Lake Clifton LandCare Group	☎ and fax 9739 1727 fioconnor@westnet.com.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation and care of tuart on private lands</li> <li>• Tuart conservation in the Lake Clifton/Yalgorup area</li> <li>• Community consultation</li> </ul>
Robert Griffiths	Department for Planning and Infrastructure	☎ 9264 7805 Fax: 9264 7566 robert.griffiths@planning.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated environmental, urban and rural land use planning</li> <li>• Land development information and liaison</li> </ul>
Ross George	Department of Agriculture	☎ 9368 3863 Fax: 9474 5974 prgeorge@agric.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural planning and clearing regulations under the Soil and Land Conservation Act</li> <li>• Agricultural use and management practices threatening tuart ecosystems</li> </ul>
Tim Sparks	Department of Environment; Water and Catchment Protection	☎ 9278 0446 Fax: 9278 0586 tim.sparks@wrc.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swan Coastal Plain hydrology</li> <li>• Water use policies, strategies and programs</li> <li>• River, stream and wetland management</li> </ul>
Jon Birch	South West Development Commission	☎ 9792 2000 Fax: 9791 3223 jbirch@swdc.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and development in the South West Region</li> <li>• Coordination between south west agencies</li> <li>• Information and advice on issues and policies in the south west</li> </ul>
Christine Steer	Peel Development Commission	☎ 9535 0000 Fax: 9535 2119 ces@peel.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and advice on sustainable economic, social and environmental development in the Peel Region</li> <li>• Promotion of the attractions, assets and development opportunities in the Peel Region</li> </ul>
Drew Haswell (Executive Officer)	Department of Conservation and Land Management	☎ 9334 0337 Fax: 9334 0458 drewh@calm.wa.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuart Response Group coordination</li> <li>• Tuart conservation and implementation planning</li> <li>• Tuart communications and community involvement planning</li> <li>• Community, industry and research liaison</li> <li>• Data collection and analysis</li> <li>• Public information and other resource materials</li> </ul>

# Conserving our tuarts







Above: Severe tuart decline, showing evidence of 'repeated deaths' on resprouted crowns. Photograph: D. Mitchell.

Front cover: Tuart trees on farmland between Lake Clifton and Harvey Estuary. Mature, healthy tuarts often have near-white bark. Photograph: R. Powell.

Front cover bottom panel: Prickly wattle in tuart understorey. Photographs: R. Powell.

## Conserving our tuarts

Since the mid 1990s there has been growing community concern about the noticeable decline in the health of tuart trees south of Mandurah. The State Government's recently formed Tuart Response Group seeks to establish a partnership with local communities to plan and manage the conservation and protection of tuart trees and ecosystems, and to investigate the causes of tuart's decline.

## History

Tuart trees grow along a 400-kilometre band from Jurien Bay, on the northern margin of the Swan Coastal Plain, to the Sabina River, just east of Busselton. They are generally confined to limy or limestone soils close to the coast. It is estimated that before Europeans arrived there were more

than 111,600 hectares of tuart woodland. Most of the woodlands were subsequently cleared for agriculture and urban development and it is estimated that only 35 per cent remains.

## Tuart conservation

Most tuart woodlands are now found at Ludlow, Yanchep and Yalgorup National Parks. Significant tuart woodlands are also conserved in Bold Park and Kings Park, in State forest at Myalup and McLarty, and in unallocated Crown land and Bush Forever sites at Yanchep, Woodman Point, Port Kennedy and the Harvey Estuary. Smaller remnants of tuart are scattered across its natural range from Jurien to south of Busselton. About half the existing tuarts are on private land. As a species, tuart is well represented in parks and reserves. However, its conservation adequacy is less clear for its six ecosystems, and the flora associated with tuart.

## Tuart decline

In recent years tuart woodlands between Mandurah and Preston Beach have suffered a severe decline, linked with heavy infestation by wood-boring insects. The underlying reasons are not yet clear but may include the ongoing decline in winter rainfall, soil and hydrological factors near wetlands, salinity encroachment, nutrient supply, altered fire regimes, competition with understorey species, changes in the ecological balance between insects and their predators, adjacent clearing and roadworks. In the face of the decline in tuart health, a comprehensive conservation strategy is needed.

## What's being done about it?

Government and community based action is now underway to investigate the causes behind the observed decline in tuart health, and to devise a Tuart Conservation Strategy and Implementation Plan. The Strategy will

- encourage the community to be more aware of tuart and more involved in its conservation and protection;
- ensure tuart ecosystems are identified and adequately represented and managed for conservation within and outside reserves;
- ensure that significant stands and specimens of tuart trees outside conservation reserves are retained and appropriately managed;
- promote partnerships with community groups with differing interests in tuart trees and ecosystems;
- introduce research based remedial support to minimise the impact of processes that threaten the health of tuart trees; and
- ensure that accumulated knowledge leads to improved tuart management.

As an initial step a Tuart Response Group has been established by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage to advise on and coordinate the development of this work. The Group will shortly commission a full vegetation classification update of the Swan Coastal Plain, has developed a Tuart Vegetation System Health Model to guide research, and is testing ways to use satellite images to monitor the spread and impact of past and future tuart decline.

Top right : Tuart woodland from White Hill in Yalgorup National Park. The trees are kept low by salt winds. Photograph: R. Powell.

Right: Tuart forest near Ludlow in 1896, showing mature tuarts with few peppermint trees. Photograph: Government Printing Office. A 4264.

