

# Rapid Bushland Assessment – General Guidelines

*Aim:* To assess bushland condition using at least three of the six survey methods below

*(You may choose only one of the methods but this does make it harder to assess your site).*

*Site:*

- This is the part of the reserve that is being assessed. Try to do as many *Survey Types* as possible in the same survey *Site*, E.g. you may want to do all six, or choose not to survey birds (method 2), or choose to only survey the weeds and complexity measures (method 4).
- Give each *Site* a name or code (*Site Name* e.g. Wireless Hill A).
- Record the UTM Easting and Northing (UTM format preferred) or latitude and longitude, for the centre of the *Site*. Set datum to either GDA 94 or WGS 84 and set the GPS to True north. Your GPS will give you an estimated error of the reading. Use these same GPS co-ordinates for all of the Surveys completed within this *Site*.

*How many survey Sites should I have?*

- *Sites* need to be at least 200m apart, so if your reserve is smaller than a few hectares, you will only be able to ‘fit in’ one *Site*.
- If your reserve is much larger, try to have at least three *Sites* (at least 200m apart). The idea is to be as representative as possible, so if the reserve has two different vegetation types (e.g. Banksia woodland and Melaleuca forest, or coastal heath, no need to be more specific than this), try to have at least one *Site* in each vegetation type.
- For each *Site* try to remain within the same broad *vegetation type*
- For each *Site*, try to remain within the same *vegetation condition* (for example, avoid including both degraded, sick vegetation and healthy vegetation in the same survey).
- Avoid sites affected by dieback. It is good practice to spray shoes with methylated spirits to minimise spreading dieback between reserves.
- Choose *Sites* that have not been burnt for at least 2 years.

*How often do I survey?*

Ideally try to repeat Surveys at least four times, once in spring, summer, autumn and winter, in each *Site*.

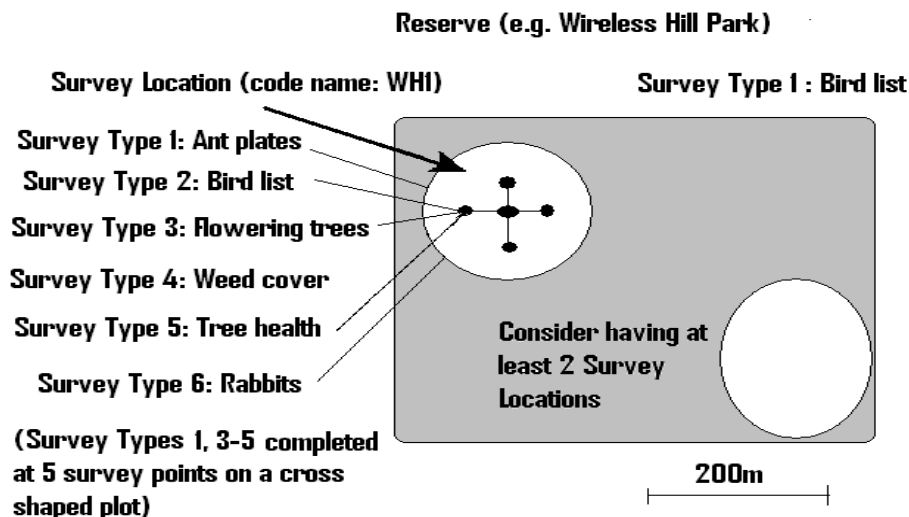
**If found, please return to Dr. Geoff Barrett, Department of Environment and Conservation, PO Box 1167, Bentley Delivery Centre, Bentley, WA 6983.**

## Survey type:

- **Survey Type 1: Ant plates**
  - o Five plates at least 20 to 30 paces apart, left for 20 minutes
- **Survey Type 2: Bird list**
  - o A 20 minute Area Search within 2ha area
- **Survey Type 3: Birds in flowering trees**
  - o Record bird activity in flowering (Banksias or Eucalypts) at least 20 to 30 paces apart
- **Survey Type 4: Weed cover**
  - o Five estimates of % weed cover, at least 20 to 30 paces apart
- **Survey Type 5: Tree health**
  - o Scoring of canopy condition for five trees (Banksias or Eucalypts) at least 20 to 30 paces apart
- **Survey Type 6: Rabbits, tree regeneration and native mammals**
  - o Scoring evidence of rabbits across site (pellets, diggings and regeneration of vegetation)

## Survey sequence:

If you are doing all six surveys, do them in sequence. Start by putting out the ant plates (Survey Type 1), then begin the bird survey (Survey Type 2) and after this 20 minute survey, check the ant plates. Leave the ant plates in position until all of the surveys have been done, which helps you to define the survey area for subsequent surveys. For example, when completing the weed cover survey (Survey Type 4), use each of the plates as the centre of the circular area being surveyed.



The cross-shaped plot (see above figure) is located near the centre of the *Site* and the same plot can be used for surveys of ants, weeds, tree health and birds in flowering trees. The purpose of the cross design is to spread out the survey points within each site (five points per plot). If you are not doing the ant survey, use flagging tape to mark the five survey points.

If found, please return to Dr. Geoff Barrett, Department of Environment and Conservation, PO Box 1167, Bentley Delivery Centre, Bentley, WA 6983.