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Information Sheet

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Trees and Tall Shrubs of Perth by Robert Powell

Introduction

Locally native trees and shrubs are able to withstand the harsh natural conditions of Perth, provide food and shelter for native birds and insects, and have a striking variety of forms and textures.

More and more people, and often local authorities, are recognising the role these local plant species play in nature conservation. Local species are those that grow or used to grow naturally on the site concerned. Because they have evolved with native fauna, such as birds and insects, they provide valuable habitat for these.

This Information Sheet is a guide to the trees and tall shrubs that occurred naturally on the various soils and landforms in the Perth metropolitan area before European settlement. It should not be confused with the more common guides to planting Western Australian and Australian natives in your garden.

To re-establish local plants on your block or in your park, you need to know what species grew there before European settlement. The main table of this Information Sheet lists the 75 species of trees and tall shrubs of the metropolitan area that commonly grow to 3m or more, and indicates for each its natural soil or landform. They are just a few of the nearly 1500 plant species that grew here originally.

How to Find the Local Species

Examine the soil. To determine its colour, dig a small hole or look at the soil brought up around ants' nests. The surface soil is often discoloured by humus.

Classify the soil or landform according to the table. Some examples of localities are given as a guide.

Then read off from the main table the names of the trees and tall shrubs that are listed for that soil-type or landform. Both the common and the scientific names of the plants are given.

Source of Plants

Seedlings or seeds of some local plant species can be bought from native-plant nurseries or seed suppliers. Note, however, that some of these may be cultivars or non-local forms of the species, which may be less suited to withstanding natural conditions, and of less value to conservation. A good way of obtaining many local species is to collect your own seed (see Information Sheet 5-87, Native Seed Collection and Storage) and seed directly, or germinate seedlings for transplanting. You may need a licence (on public lands) or the owner's permission (on private land) for seed collection. Some nurseries will grow seedlings from the seeds you collect, especially for large orders.

Further Information

The Local Plants Group exists specifically for the person committed to the biological and aesthetic value of local plant species. Other groups can also assist. Try your local branch of the Wildflower Society, Greening Australia (W.A.), or the Tree Society.

The book *Perth's Trees and Tall Shrubs*, a guide to the identification of local species, is in preparation and is expected to be available soon.

Advisory publications on planting, natural regeneration, direct seeding, and creating a seed orchard are available from CALM.

Soils & Landforms of Perth Metropolitan Area

Classification	Soil or Landform Description	Example Suburbs/Places
Quindalup	White sand of the coastal dunes	Rockingham, Mullaloo
Cottesloe	Brown or rich yellow sand with limestone near the surface	Cottesloe, Wembley Downs, Spearwood
Cottesloe ridges	Limestone cropping out at the surface	One Tree Hill (Nowergup), Reabold Hill, Mt Brown (Henderson)
Herdsmen	Dark peaty sand round lakes and swamps	Lake Joondalup, Herdsmen Lake, Bibra Lake
Karrakatta	Yellow sand, no limestone near surface	Girrawheen, Subiaco, Melville
Bassendean	Pale grey or grey sand	Morley, Victoria Park
Bassendean swamps	Dark peaty sand round swamps or in depressions within the Bassendean belt	Gnangara Lake
Vasse	Estuarine soils: low-lying areas beside the Swan Estuary	Matilda Bay, Point Waylen
Swan	Alluvial soils along the upper reaches (on the coastal plain) of the Swan and Canning Rivers	Swan River upstream of the Causeway, Canning River upstream of Shelley Bridge
Beernullah	Clayey salty soils in flat plain	East of Warbrook, south-east of Forrestdale
Guildford	Clayey soils in flat plain	Cannington, Midland to Millendon
Forrestfield	Gravelly and sandy soils alongside the Darling Scarp	Maida Vale
Darling Scarp	The steep slopes of the Scarp	Gooseberry Hill
Darling Plateau (laterite)	The gravelly (lateritic) uplands of the Darling Plateau	Kalamunda, Mundaring
Darling Plateau (valleys)	The valleys of the Darling Plateau, including both major and minor valleys	The Avon Valley, the Helena Valley
Darling Plateau (granite)	Shallow soils over granite hills on the Darling Plateau	Mt Dale, Sullivan Rock

Trees & Tall Shrubs of Perth

Common Name	Botanical Name	Quindalup	Cottesloe	Cottesloe ridges	Herdsmen	Karrakatta	Bassendean	Bassendean swamps	Vasse	Swan	Beernullah	Guildford	Forrestfield	Darling Scarp	Darling Plateau (laterite)	Darling Plateau (valleys)	Darling Plateau (granite)	Size
red-eyed wattle	<i>Acacia cyclops</i>	x	x	x				x										shrub 2-7m
summer-scented wattle	<i>A. rostellifera</i>	x	x	x							x							tree to 10m
coojong	<i>A. saligna</i>	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		tree 2-6m
white-stemmed wattle	<i>A. xanthina</i>	x	x															shrub 2-4m
swamp cypress	<i>Actinostrobus pyramidalis</i>									x	x	x						shrub to 4m
woollybush	<i>Adenanthos cygnorum</i>					x	x						x	x	x			shrub to 3.5m
peppermint	<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	x	x						x									tree to 12m
swamp peppermint	<i>A. linearifolia</i>									x	x	x		x				shrub to 4m
slender banksia, candle banksia	<i>Banksia attenuata</i>	x	x			x	x											tree to 10m
bull banksia, mangite	<i>B. grandis</i>		x			x	x								x			tree to 10m
holly-leaf banksia	<i>B. ilicifolia</i>				x	x	x									x		tree to 10m
swamp banksia	<i>B. littoralis</i>				x			x		x	x							tree to 12m
menzies banksia, firewood banksia	<i>B. menziesii</i>		x			x	x							x				tree to 8m
acorn banksia, saw-tooth banksia	<i>B. prionotes</i>					x												tree to 10m
native willow, wonnich	<i>Callistachys lanceolata</i>									x								tree to 6m
lesser bottlebrush, toobada	<i>Callistemon phoeniceus</i>															x		shrub to 4m
Rottneest cypress	<i>Callitris preissii</i>	x	x															shrub/tree 5-12m
common sheoak	<i>Casuarina fraseriana</i>		x			x	x									x		tree to 12m
rock sheoak	<i>C. huegeliana</i>																x	tree to 9m
dune sheoak	<i>C. lehmanniana</i>	x	x															shrub 3-5m
swamp sheoak, salt sheoak	<i>C. obesa</i>							x	x	x								tree to 10m
tree-smokebush	<i>Conospermum triplinervium</i>	x	x		x	x					x	x	x					shrub 1.5-4.5m

