

# DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR NATURE RESERVES

The Western Australian Wildlife Authority has now acquired about 1 000 Nature Reserves throughout the State. These Nature Reserves are administered by the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

It is widely recognised that Nature Reserves cannot be acquired and then left to fend for themselves. They have to be managed according to the common Nature Conservation principles. Without management many Reserves, especially the small ones which are often subject to frequent fires, could lose their value as Reserves for Flora and Fauna. Weeds from surrounding farmland, or urban holdings will invade, nesting sites for birds and hiding places for marsupials will be destroyed.

Not all Nature Reserves can be managed in the same way. Some have been set aside for a particular purpose—a rare plant perhaps or an animal that may be close to extinction. Management of these Nature Reserves will put the requirements of the endangered plants and animals first, though these same management practices will usually ensure good management for the Nature Reserve as a whole as well.

It must be recognised when looking at Nature Reserve management that although the Reserves have been set aside for the conservation of our plants and animals they are also a part of the community. Local people *must* be involved in planning for the management for Nature Reserves.

Nature Reserves are an asset to any community but like most beneficial things they may also cause a few problems. They are an asset in that they are often the last remaining areas of bush "as it was" before it was cleared or modified. They therefore have considerable scientific and educational value. Nature Reserves are also vital habitats for wildlife. In many parts of the State they are the *only* places where our native animals can live and breed in safety and our rich flora exist undisturbed. These Nature Reserves will not only bring enjoyment to this generation but to future generations as well. Lastly, Nature Reserves are testimony to the men and women who first came to Australia and carved a living from the bush. They show the land as it was.



Much of the "Avon Valley" Nature Reserve consists of Jarrah/Marri forest but other trees are also represented. Among them are these Powderbark Wandooos (*Eucalyptus accedens*).

Photo Ian G. Crook

Nature Reserves can have side effects, especially in rural areas. They can cause problems when it comes to fire protection and they also harbour animals, such as kangaroos which may be a nuisance to farmers.

The Management of Nature Reserves is a three way process and involves:

1. Communication with the public,
2. ensuring the values of Nature Reserves are perpetuated, and,
3. co-operation with the local community and leaders of that community in such things as animal control and fire protection.

The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife has embarked upon a programme of management planning for Nature Reserves with the intention of ensuring that each of these facets of management are given equal weight. The first stage in the programme is the production of Draft Management Plans. These Draft

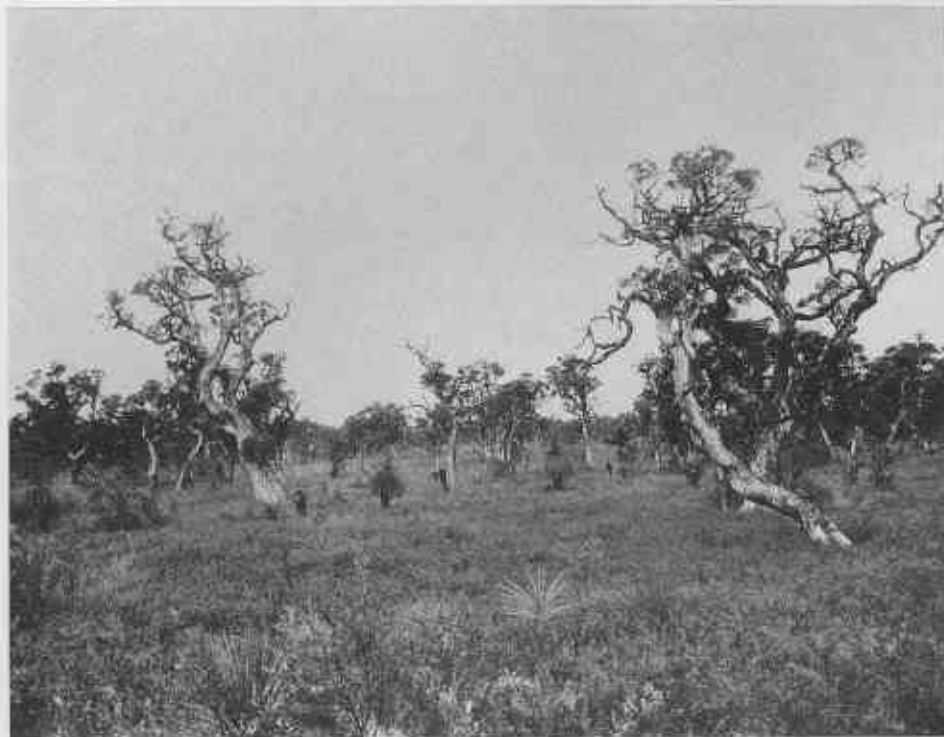
Management Plans will give the public the opportunity to comment on the Management proposals for Nature Reserves *before* they come into effect.

The following Draft Management Plans have been published:

“Avon Valley” Nature Reserve. No. 30191.

“Thompson Lake” Nature Reserve. No. 15556.  
Nature Reserves of the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale.

Draft Management Plans are in preparation for the Nature Reserves of the Albany Shire (excluding Two Peoples Bay, for which a separate Management Plan will be drafted); Nature Reserves of the Shire of Toodyay (excluding the “Avon Valley” Nature Reserve, for which a Draft Management Plan has already been prepared); and the Nature Reserves of the Dandaragan Shire.



This delightful stand of Swamp Paperbarks (*Melaleuca preissiana*) is a feature of “A” Class Reserve No. 25886, in the Peel Estate between Medina and Armadale south of Perth. Paperbark swamps such as this were once a common feature on low lying parts of the Swan Coastal Plain. Many have now been cleared and drained, but this one remains conserved in perpetuity in a Nature Reserve. The Aboriginal name for a “Paperbark growing in swampy ground” is “Modong”, and one proposal is to name this particular Reserve the “Modong” Nature Reserve.

Photo Ian G. Crook