

## Prescribed burning in Perth's bushlands: where, when and how much?

By *Katinka Ruthrof*

One of the most widely used and visible tools to reduce bushfire risk is prescribed burning.

DBCA's Kings Park Science team, Murdoch University and local councils have partnered up to undertake long-term research on banksia woodland fire ecology to answer an important question: how often should we use prescribed burning, and what other tools, such as weed management, can help?

To answer this question, we identified various locations that will be subject to a prescribed burn. Native and weed species diversity and abundance are recorded in plots prior to burning. Vegetation structure, coarse woody debris (e.g. logs and larger dead branches), and fine fuels (e.g. leaf litter) are also documented along transects. After the burn plots and transects are resurveyed to determine the intensity of fire and the responses of native plants, weeds and fuels.

The outcomes of this research will inform bushland management across the Swan Coastal Plain about best approaches to reduce bushfire risk, and to protect and enhance our native biodiversity.

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*Banksia woodland north of Perth. Photo – Katinka Ruthrof.*