

TUART TREES

Tuart Response Group update

The Tuart Response Group was set up late last year to investigate the decline of Tuart trees in the Peel Region and to develop a strategy to conserve and protect the Tuart in WA from Jurien to Busselton in the south of the state.

Up to October 2002, the Response Group has:

- ⇒ prepared for public release the Status Report on Tuart Conservation and Protection;
- ⇒ completed the Tuart Communications and Public Involvement Plan;
- ⇒ evaluated future research needs with key stakeholders at the July Tuart Science Workshop;
- ⇒ commenced the development of a Tuart Atlas that will map and describe the extent and condition of tuart trees and understorey; and
- ⇒ supported Murdoch University's tuart research funding application to the Australian Research Council;
- ⇒ published a Status Report on the Conservation and Protection of Tuart; and

⇒ held seven Tuart Stakeholder and Community Workshops from Lancelin to Busselton. (Report in the next edition)

The Status Report summarises the current information about the conservation and protection of tuart trees, ecosystems and associated vegetation. It includes the findings of a Hydrology Workshop held in May, and the Tuart Science Workshop held in July this year.

Future possible directions for tuart management and conservation are outlined in the report, which is now available on the CALM web site www.calm.wa.gov.au or go straight to www.naturebase.net in the Quick Search Box under the heading Tuart Conservation Workshops.

Copies can be obtained by phoning Tuart Response Group community representatives Fiona O'Connor on 9739 1727 and Graeme Nestor on 9739 1204 or Executive Officer Drew Haswell, Tuart Response Group Coordinator, Tuart Conservation and Protection Strategy, on 9334 0337.

Item from The Preservation Times last edition for 2002

Why Tuarts need help

Some of the main stressors causing the severe decline and deaths of Tuarts include changes in land use, local hydrology and geology (including groundwater extraction), changes in fire regimes, the availability of nutrients, climate, change, and drought. These factors have weakened the trees to the point where tuart borer activity becomes life threatening and not just a part of the natural cycle, where the trees cannot use their own defences to curb borer activity.

There is no doubt that human activities are threatening the survival of the Tuart as a plant species unique to WA's coastal strip from Jurien to Busselton. Now is the time for humans to help the Tuart.

Tuart Summit on November 18 helped to pool ideas and brainstorm issues to help save the Tuart.

These included:

- creating immediate response tactics in cases of threatened clearing of Tuarts
- identifying, researching and monitoring, threats to Tuarts and developing actions to ameliorate the threats developing an atlas of the condition of Tuarts in different places throughout its range
- creating guidelines for private landowners and developers
- implementing a levy on bulldozing of Tuart trees on public and private land
- promoting Tuarts - holding a Tuart Week- and ensuring that information on them is included in Education Department curricula
- involving local government in saving and promoting Tuarts
- supporting research projects in universities
- identifying heritage value or significant Tuart trees
- preserving adequate amounts of plant communities in which the Tuart occurs
- liaising effectively with the State Governments Tuart Response Group and making sure the TRG project officer oversees regeneration of Tuarts, regular water testing and coordinating experimental trials by individuals and groups

Anyone wanting to be involved in the Tuart Coalition can contact the SW Environment Centre on 9754 2049.