

Busselton-Augusta Biodiversity Hotspot Recovery

Aim/Purpose:

To conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Busselton-Augusta Hotspot area through:

- The protection of threatened flora, fauna and/or ecological communities,
- The protection of priority vegetation complexes, these are complexes with less than 30% of the original extent remaining, or less than 30% in a protected status, or is habitat for a threatened species,
- The protection of the Vasse-Wonnerup RAMSAR wetland system and other significant wetlands,
- The support of community groups such as the Western Ringtail Action Group, and
- The creation of strategic wildlife corridors to enhance the protection of threatened species and maintain the viability of priority vegetation complexes

Start Date:

1/12/2006

Finish Date:

30/06/2009

Project Partners:

Cape to Cape Catchment Group, Department of Environment and Conservation

Project Stakeholders:

Landholders, community groups, local and state government agencies in the Busselton-Augusta area.

Background:

The South West of Western Australia is recognised as one of only 34 biodiversity hotspots in the world – the only one in Australia. At a more local scale, the Busselton-Augusta area was recognised in 2003 as one of 15 National biodiversity hotspots.

What is a hotspot? It is a region that has exceptionally high levels of plant diversity and significant habitat loss. Two criteria must be met before a region is classified as an international biodiversity hotspot:

- 1) The region must contain over 1500 endemic plant species (plants found nowhere else in the world); and
- 2) Over 30% of vegetation from the region must be lost.

The south west region has over 7000 plant species with approximately half being endemic to the region, and over 30% of the vegetation has been cleared, with just over 10% contained within secure reserves.

Some of the vegetation complexes found in the region have less than 10% of their pre-European extent remaining and other complexes have less than 10% of the pre-European extent contained within secure reserves.

Achievements:

During 2006 - 2008, the following was achieved:

- Over 240 ha of priority vegetation protected by fencing. Highlights include 63 ha entirely funded by landholders and 30 ha Scott Coastal Plain and 22 ha Critically Endangered Abba complex
- Over 20 ha of revegetation projects to enhance and create threatened fauna habitat. Peppies for possums plantings a highlight with very strong community interest and engagement and strong in-kind and cash support from Shire, DEC and organisations. This has also lead to a proposed habitat planting project initiated and fully funded by local businesses.
- Over 200 ha weed control and 550 ha of feral animal control in priority vegetation including in TEC's and providing habitat for threatened flora and fauna.
- Workshops and engagement sessions with on topics including tree decline, Phytophthora dieback management, seed collection, remnant vegetation management, night stalks, wild walks, community planting days and an art exhibition.
- Peppermint and Marri Tree Decline trials initiated in a partnership with the Centre for Excellence in Climate Change, Tree and Woodland Health.

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Photos: (see photo gallery – Biodiversity hotspot)