

B8. Fungi Management

The significance of fungal diversity and function in bushlands is beginning to unfold as our understanding of fungi grows. Fungi contribute to the ability of flora capable of growing in Perth's depleted soils. Many fungi form beneficial partnerships with local plants, and are often necessary for healthy plant growth. *Eucalyptus*, *Acacia*, *Allocasuarina* and Orchid species have been found to form beneficial relationships with fungi (Perth Urban Bushland Fungi website, 2009).

Healthy bushlands may have hundreds of fungi species present whereas degraded bushlands have significantly fewer species. Given the importance of these fungi related ecological relationships and the diversity of fungi present in many of Perth's, and the South-West's, bushland areas, it would be pertinent for local government officers to consider including fungi management into natural area management plans.

Possible actions to include in management plans for reserves or overall monitoring programs include:

- annual macro-fungi surveys; and
- identification of conspicuous keystone fungi species requiring management.

Advice on how to conduct fungi surveys and assistance with identification of fungi can be sought through the Perth Urban Bushland Fungi (PUBF) project, a community initiative that promotes an understanding of the roles of fungi in bushland. The PUBF project was established in 2004 by the WA Naturalists Club and the Urban Bushland Council with support from the WA Herbarium and Lotterywest. It provides access to scientifically accurate information about fungi of the Perth region.

To access the Perth Fungi Field Book and survey reports from various reserves in the Perth Metropolitan Region, visit the Perth Urban Bushland Fungi website:

<http://www.fungiperth.org.au/>

Fungi are protected 'Flora' under WA's Wildlife Conservation Act. Four fungi species are currently listed as 'Priority Flora' which covers "poorly known taxa and facilitates recognition by the Western Australian Government that special consideration should be given to the management of these taxa" (Neale Bougher, DEC).