

Urban Bushland & Tree Canopy

Urban bushland is remnant bush remaining in the built up areas of our towns and cities and in areas influenced by, or likely to be influenced by, urbanisation. These precious areas of bush are irreplaceable, and have many environmental and social functions. The flora and fauna of our region are recognised as some of the most diverse in the world, with many endemic species. To keep this biodiversity we must protect our remaining bushland and wetlands and ensure they are properly managed for conservation.

Western Australia's population is heavily concentrated in the South-West, an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot. We have pockets of significant native bushland occurring throughout our urban areas that provide valuable habitat and protection to our many endemic and localised species.

Western Australia's unique urban bushland should be protected from inappropriate development and managed for the conservation of its natural heritage. Nationally significant, regionally significant and locally significant areas of urban bushland should be connected via ecological linkages. Tree canopy cover in urban areas has significant environmental, social and economic benefits and is at risk of loss due to poor planning

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- significant urban bushland to be identified and protected
- urban bushland containing First Nations cultural sites to be given greater protection (see also The Greens (WA) [First Nations Peoples](#) policy)
- education and information about urban bushland to be accessible to the community
- strong and effective clearing controls which endemic flora and fauna (see also The Greens (WA) [Biodiversity](#) policy)
- effective management of significant urban bushland areas to protect the habitat of Western Australian native flora and fauna and control invasive weeds
- Western Australia's ecological linkages and green corridors to be identified and maintained or restored
- significantly increased tree canopy cover in urban spaces utilising endemic species, to cool our urban spaces and provide cleaner air (see also The Greens (WA) [Climate Change](#) policy)

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions that:

- recognise and protect all areas of regionally significant bushland

- give legislative protection to all Bush Forever¹ sites and significant urban bushland and fund further acquisitions and ongoing management of all significant urban bushland
- legislate so that the Conservation and Land Management Act ensures that regional parks are managed coherently and consistently for conservation and passive recreation purposes
- support state legislation that protects the Banksia and Turat woodlands of the Swan coastal plain in accordance with their Commonwealth listing as threatened and critically endangered ecological communities
- create financial and other incentives to protect bushland, wetlands and groundwater catchments in private ownership (see also The Greens (WA) [Wetlands](#) policy)
- recognise the environmental and social importance of urban bushland when developing land (see also The Greens (WA) [Planning](#) policy)
- put strong controls on sites with acid sulphate soils including a prohibition on dewatering such sites
- put strong controls on clearing new areas of bushland in urban areas
- strongly promote the outstanding natural heritage values of our unique bushland and especially our ancient Banksia woodlands
- raise public awareness of the biodiversity and human health values of urban bushland
- provide increased, consistent support for community participation in management of bushland and wetland areas
- ensure that bushland is managed for its natural attributes and social benefits
- recognise and address the specific risks to bushland which is located in close proximity to urban areas
- ensure that the weed control provisions of the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act are adequately funded by the state government
- map, regulate and monitor regional-level ecological corridors² and develop staged and funded programs to restore/enhance these corridors
- support local governments in developing and protecting local ecological corridors
- facilitate statutory processes for the protection and enhancement of these linkages
- establish a State-wide Urban Bushland Strategy and funding program
- support local governments in developing local Urban Bushland Strategies with detailed tree and vegetation canopy targets
- stop all further development at Perth Airport, including the proposed third runway, to protect remaining urban bush and First Nations heritage
- ensure effective management of urban bushland to reduce the risk of fires without compromising the integrity of ecologies

Glossary

1. **Bush Forever** - an interdepartmental government and community program involving a network of identified sites in which high value remnant ecological communities are supposed to be protected in perpetuity.
2. **Ecological corridor** - a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. Corridors are

critical for the maintenance of ecological processes including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable population.

Urban Bushland & Tree Canopy policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2021

The Greens (WA) spokesperson on urban bushland is [Tim Clifford MLC](#)

Picture of urban bushland near Tomato Lake in Kenwick courtesy of Gary Beilby