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Banksia woodlands are a beautiful feature of the Perth and Peel regions extending north and south across the Swan Coastal Plain from Jurien Bay to Dunsborough. Banksias, the feature plant of this community, are in an ancient family of plants that began appearing around the same time as the extinction of dinosaurs, about 70 million years ago.

To prevent them from going the same way as the dinosaurs, 'Banksia woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain' were listed as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) under the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) in 2016.

These banksia woodlands are characterised by four dominant tree species: firewood banksia (*Banksia menziesii*), candlestick banksia (*B. attenuata*), acorn banksia (*B. prionotes*) and/or holly-leaved banksia (*B. ilicifolia*). Current knowledge indicates that banksia woodlands play a key role in supporting over 600 native plants, 74 reptiles, 16 mammal, 38 bird and seven frog species.

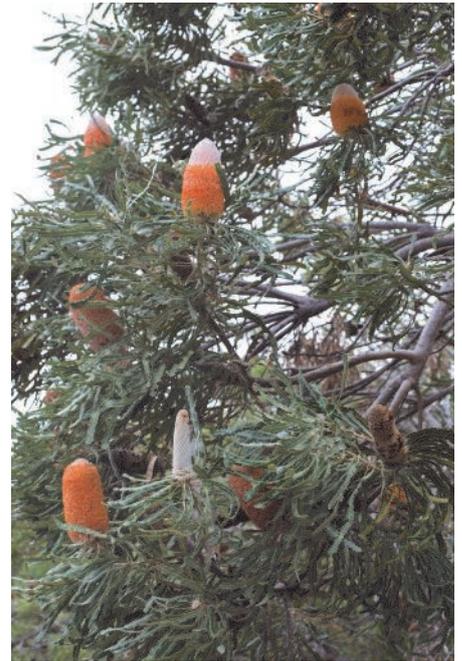
Banksia woodlands have evolved over thousands of years to support numerous important connections between plants and animals. For example, the extended flowering period of the dominant banksia species helps to support many nectarivorous birds and other fauna that rely on flowering species for food all year round, including the honey possum (*Tarsipes rostratus*).

Rare and threatened species that call the woodlands home include the endangered Carnaby's cockatoo

(*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*), western quoll or chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) and the brush-tailed phascogale or wambenger (*Phascogale tapoatafa* subsp. *wambenger*).

The woodlands have been listed as a Threatened Ecological Community as they have been extensively cleared since European settlement, and those areas remaining are under increasing threat. Today remaining areas are cleared and being degraded by urban development and mining, unauthorised vehicle access, rubbish dumping, feral animals and the spread of *Phytophthora* dieback disease. Together with these threats, climate change is contributing to decline through groundwater depletion, altered fire regimes and other ecosystem changes.

Active management of remaining banksia woodland remnants is essential to combat these threats and restore and maintain healthy woodlands. The Peel-Harvey Catchment



Acorn banksia (*B. prionotes*). Photo: Mark Brundrett

Council is keen to work with landholders and land managers to restore and protect banksia woodlands. If you are interested in hearing about possible future funding opportunities to help protect banksia woodlands please contact us at admin@peel-harvey.org.au.

Banksia woodland on the Swan Coastal Plain, with firewood banksia (*B. menziesii*, left), candlestick banksia (*B. attenuata*, centre), grasstrees and red and green kangaroo paw. Photo: Mark Brundrett

Scattered eucalypts and other tree species may occur within or above the banksia canopy, and the understorey is species-rich with many wildflowers, including shrubs, sedges and herbs.

