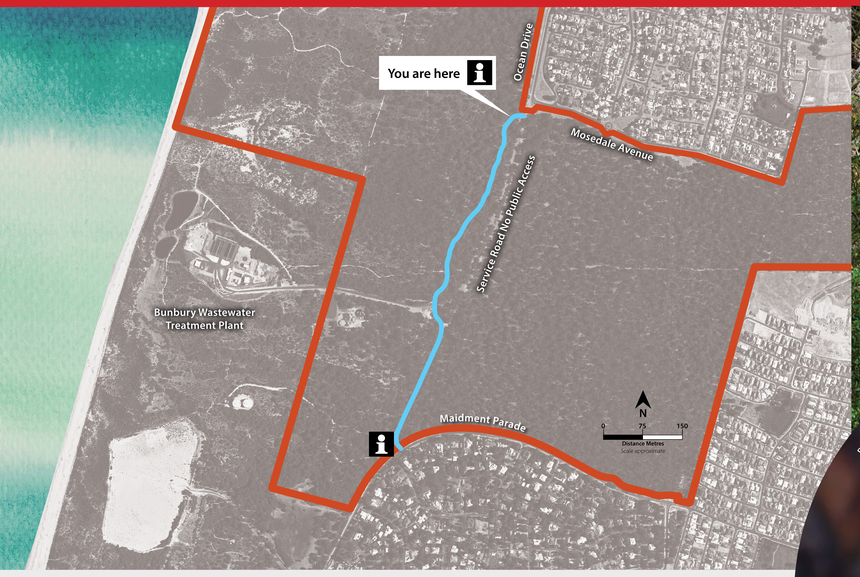
Shearwater Tuart Forest



Legend

Regional Park Boundary | Tuart Walk | Information

Shearwater Tuart Forest is a valuable natural refuge within an increasingly urbanised region and represents changing community priorities. Originally set aside for residential development the area is now preserved as public open space to be enjoyed by present and future generations.

Shearwater Tuart Forest links to Maidens Reserve in the north and other reserves to the east to create an important green belt that extends to the Preston River. This bushland corridor supports the essential movement of wildlife and helps to protect the region's biodiversity.

Class 1

Tuart Walk
Distance: 1.3km one way. Allow 45 minutes return.

The Tuart Walk follows a sealed pathway that links the southern end of Ocean Drive in Usher to Maidment Parade in Dalyellup. It winds through a leafy tuart and peppermint woodland that contains banksias, jarrah and a mix of understorey shrubs and wildflowers.

Walk safely, tread lightly

This is a shared path. Pedestrians, please keep left to let cyclists and scooters pass safely. Riders, please warn pedestrians as you approach and pass at a safe speed.

Be smart: Take plenty of water and wear comfortable, sturdy shoes and sun protection.

Stay on the path: Help prevent erosion, trampling plants and the spread of Phytophthora dieback, a disease that kills our native plants.

Protect wildlife: Please pick up after your dog and keep them on a leash at all times. Take your rubbish with you.


Boobook owl © Georgina Steytler

Look closely


Marbled gecko (*Christinus marmoratus*)

Wonderful woodlands

Woodland specialists

Tuart forests are home to diverse wildlife. The tall trees provide vantage points for birds of prey, scavengers and other birds that catch insects on the wing. They are also roosting and nesting habitat for many bird species that utilise nearby banksia woodlands and coastal heath. Tree hollows in large, old tuarts are a vital daytime refuge for nocturnal species such as possums, bats and owls, and provide critical nest sites for hollow-dependent parrots and cockatoos.


Brown goshawk © Georgina Steytler

Can you spot the woodland wildlife that are quietly watching you?

Weebill
© Georgina Steytler

Lesser long-eared bat
(*Nyctophilus geoffroyi*) © Matt Clancy

Nawayir, Western ringtail possum
(*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) © David Bettini

Koomal, Brushtail possum
(*Trichosurus vulpecula*) © David Bettini

Vital connections

Since European settlement, over 80% of tuart forests in the south-west have been lost. Some of the native animals that were once part of this ecological community are now no longer there or are themselves threatened. Those that remain, continue to play important roles in helping this forest ecosystem to function, by pollinating plants, managing pest species, or digging to conserve healthy soil function.


Quenda (Southern brown bandicoot)

What a quenda can doo-doo

Many species of plants, including the tuart, rely on 'ectomycorrhizal' fungi. The thread-like filaments of these fungi attach to the root tips of plants, providing them with increased access to water and nutrients.

Researchers have found that the humble quenda is a critical link between the fungi and the tuart. As the quenda digs in search of edible roots, tubers, insects and truffle-like fungi it mixes the soil layers. This helps with water infiltration and nutrient cycling. Quenda also help disperse fungal spores throughout the landscape in their poo. These spores can successfully germinate and colonise the roots of tuart seedlings, helping them to grow.

One of the native truffle-like fungi that quenda eat courtesy Trish Fleming, Murdoch University.

The fungi, the quenda and the tuart all rely on each other to survive and create healthy forests. This is just one example of the many relationships that exist in nature and a great reminder that we still have so much more to learn about the plants, animals and fungi in these complex ecosystems.