

# Fact Sheet

## 1.2 Are you a good bushland neighbour?

Natural bushland is valued habitat for wildlife and provides green space for people to enjoy.

In urban locations many small pockets of natural bushland are protected in reserves for conservation purposes or provide a buffer and pleasant view between houses.

Illegal dumping, vegetation clearing and encroachments decrease the scenic and recreational values of these reserves.

### What is habitat?

Habitat is the natural home of a plant or animal and consists of all vegetation, logs, leaf litter and other groundcover. Native wildlife, both plants and animals, need a healthy habitat for food, shelter and breeding.

Anything that impacts on natural habitat in an urban park or large bushland reserve may in turn affect the plants and animals living in the reserve.

Native vegetation also plays an important role in creating shade and protecting adjoining property from the full impacts of severe storms, floods and erosion along waterways and coastal areas.

### How can native bushland be destroyed?

We may not realise the consequences of our actions if the outcome is not immediate but occurs over the longer term. Activities that can affect both the long term sustainability of existing habitat and value of this for both wildlife and human well being are:

#### 1. Garden waste

Rubbish! Garden waste includes plant shoots, cuttings and roots, lawn clippings as well as excess soil and mulch.

This form of litter can introduce garden plants into the natural bushland and these plants decrease the habitat and wildlife diversity in the long term. Dumped lawn clippings and plant waste can also increase the fire hazard within the reserve and for adjoining property.

#### 2. Encroachments

An encroachment is any personal object that is placed, stored or disposed of, or works done by a person, on council's parks and natural areas without council approval. Some types of commonly found encroachments on council land are:

- removing or pruning vegetation in parks, bushland reserves or on coastal dunes
- building and garden extensions including sheds, paving, irrigation, tables and seats, garden beds, fencing, irrigation systems and barbecues
- storing materials including soil, mulch, oils, fuel & chemicals, building materials
- dumping rubbish such as garden waste, building material, household rubbish and derelict vehicles and parts
- excess nutrients and water runoff from your garden may kill nutrient sensitive wallum species



Did you know that under council local laws you could be given an on the spot fine for carrying out these activities on council land.

If protected vegetation or plants are removed or protected animals are harmed then additional substantial fines can be applied by the Queensland government.



Vegetation remnant

### 3. Responsible pet care

Caring for your cat or dog means providing shelter and food as well as understanding they may sometimes need to be kept under control. This is particularly critical in areas adjoining bushland where they may need to share the environment with native wildlife.

#### How to be a good neighbour

Good neighbours are aware of, and respect, boundaries and are considerate of all their neighbours and adjoining properties.

Good neighbours, by working with council to protect and preserve bushland assist in preserving the scenic values, plants and animals which originally attracted them to purchase their home in the area.

### How can I help?

You can make a difference. The way in which we maintain our gardens and live can assist in protecting the bushland in your area. Do the right thing by:

- placing green waste and rubbish in bins
- learning more about the adjoining bushland by contacting council
- not doing any work in council reserves or parks without approval
- where permitted restraining your dog when walking in bushland
- locking your cat up at night
- reporting vandalism and illegal clearing incidents to council
- joining your local Community Nature Conservation volunteer group

### Require more information or assistance?

Additional information and advice regarding the maintenance of bushland can be obtained from council.

### Bushland management and protection fact sheet series

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Construction rubbish dumped on remnant bushland edge