

# Foreword

Western Australia is recognised internationally for the incredible diversity of its native plants, animals and ecosystems. The south-west of the State, for example, is one of the world's 25 biodiversity 'hotspots'. This is because of the large number of species, the fact that a high proportion of them are endemic, and that they face significant threats to their continued survival. But threats to biodiversity are not confined to the south-west – they exist across all the bioregions of the State.

In recognition of this, the State Government is preparing new legislation that will provide a framework for biodiversity conservation and protection for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is part of an integrated approach that also will involve the development of a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Western Australia.

In 2001-02, the Department of Conservation and Land Management undertook an extensive audit of the State's terrestrial biodiversity as part of the National Land and Water Resources Audit Biodiversity Assessment. This was undertaken to provide a basis from which to determine the priorities for conservation action and has been published by the National Land and Water Resources Audit in summary form.

This document – A Biodiversity Audit of WA's 53 Biogeographical Subregions 2002 – provides the far more detailed information gathered for each of these subregions during preparation of the national audit. A companion volume – Bioregional Summary of the 2002 Biodiversity Audit for Western Australia – provides a summary of the findings for each of the biogeographic regions. Both volumes are an important contribution to the development of the State's proposed Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and will be significant references for Government agencies, other research institutions, landowners, natural resource management groups, community organisations and people generally interested in conserving the State's natural biodiversity.

Although the 2002 Biodiversity Audit is a 'snapshot in time', over the next few years, gaps in the information will be addressed and the audit will be updated. It is therefore a dynamic process that will continue to add to our knowledge and, combined with sound science, will assist in conserving the State's biodiversity for its intrinsic value and for the benefit of present and future generations.

The State Government acknowledges the contribution of staff of the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the WA Museum to this audit. It also acknowledges the Commonwealth Government for its assistance with funding for the audit through the National Land and Water Resources Audit of the Natural Heritage Trust.



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