

3. Executive summary

Tuart occurs in a coastal strip from near Jurien Bay to near Busselton in Western Australia. Before European arrival there were estimated to be more than 111,600 hectares of tuart woodlands. Most have been cleared for agriculture and urban development. Since the mid-1990s there has also been a marked decline in the health and vitality of tuart trees at Yalgorup. A *Tuart conservation and management strategy* is now being developed to address tuart's remnant status, its decline in health, and to establish protection and management partnerships with community groups. The *Tuart Atlas* is an essential first stage in this 'strategy' development.

The production of the *Tuart Atlas* involved the digital capture of data on tuart occurrence, overstorey density and understorey condition, from high-resolution digital aerial colour photography. The mapping presented in the 'atlas' represents the most up-to-date and accurate assessment of tuart woodlands over its natural range. It estimates the total area of tuart woodlands remaining to be 30,311 hectares. Earlier mapping of tuart's dominant structural ecosystems estimated the current extent of tuart to be 38,829 hectares. Both estimates of tuart extent are valid. The variation occurs due to differences in mapping purpose, the level of detail of vegetation mapping, and the interpretation of remnant vegetation.



Large, majestic tuart on private land near Tuart Forest National Park.
Photo – Robert Powell