

HONOURS PROJECT

Project Title: Trapping success in relation to vegetation and habitat structure

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Project: Assess vegetation and habitat structure of long-term fauna monitoring transects and relate animal trapping data to site characteristics. The aim is to identify relationships between trap success, fauna species occurrence, and vegetation patterns and habitat structure surrounding those locations. The project would require developing a sampling methodology to characterize the dominate vegetation, and characterize the habitat structural characteristics, and then implement this methodology at animal sampling locations. The animal data for this project is already been processed for each location.

Background

The area of native vegetation at Dryandra is the largest remnant of original vegetation in the western Wheatbelt. As a consequence, the area is an important conservation reserve not only for flora but also fauna; there are 24 mammal, 98 bird and 41 reptile species recorded at Dryandra, including endangered species such as the numbat (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*), woylie (*Bettongia penicillata*) and red-tailed phascogale (*Phascogale calura*). The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) manages Dryandra Woodland, principally for conservation, with regular fauna surveys, feral predator control and fire management.

There are a number of long-term fauna monitoring transects as part of the Western Shield program. However, the vegetation and habitat structure at each trap site along the transect, has not been described in any detail and related to trap catch. DBCA are also in the process of establishing two new camera trap arrays in two of the 'satellite' blocks surrounding the main Dryandra block which also has not assessed floristically.

This project would be conducted in collaboration with Brett Beecham, DBCS Narrogin.