



YAHOO Over 55's bushwalking Club Inc.

PHYTOPHTHORA Dieback Disease

This is a fungal disease of plants that affects many species of both native and exotic plants including many of our forest species such as eucalypts, banksias, hakeas, grasstrees, snotty gobblers and others. There are various strains of *Phytophthora*, the most serious of which is *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, believed to have been introduced on plant material from SE Asia in the 1900's.

Dieback disease is spread by the fungal spores of *Phytophthora* carried on moist soil or plant material. There are many forest areas infected with dieback disease in WA and a number of declared Disease Risk Areas in which vehicles, mountain bikes and horses are banned to control the spread of dieback.

Bushwalking is regarded as relatively low risk compared to vehicle access, but designated walk trails may have boot cleaning stations that are designed to reduce the risk of dieback transmission to new areas. As a bushwalking club that uses designated trails, forestry tracks and occasional off-track areas, measures to reduce the risk of dieback spread should be taken.

Recommended Dieback Control Measures

1. Thoroughly clean footwear and walking poles to remove all soil material after every walk. This is particularly important in winter, after muddy trail walks. Remember that dieback can affect both native and exotic species in your garden, so clean on plastic and dispose of soil in the rubbish, or clean in the laundry tub.
2. Disinfect footwear and walking poles after cleaning. A spray bottle with 70% methylated spirits, 30% water mix is suitable.
3. Use boot cleaning stations when encountered. (Though many of the stations in the Peel area are not maintained.)