



FACTSHEET

Heath habitat



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Habitat type: Heath

Habitat description:

Over 60% of the Island is covered by limestone heath. As the woodland disappeared, the heathland became the dominant habitat type. Heath is now the main form of vegetation on Rottneest and provides the key habitat for Rottneest's reptiles. The main plants which form the heath are the Prickle Lily and the Feather Speargrass. Part of the reason for the Prickle Lily's success is that Quokkas rarely eat it.

There are also many annual and perennial plants. Annual plants like the Rottneest Island Daisy go through their whole life-cycle in one growing season. Perennial plants live for many growing seasons (each winter, the top portion of the plant dies back and then regrows from the same roots in the spring). An example of this type of plant is the Cockies' Tongue.

Grey Cottonhead, Cockies' Tongues and the Rottneest Island Daisy all grow on the Island's heathland along with the Summer Scented Wattle which forms a closed scrub.

Conservation Status:

None.

Local species:

Prickle Lily (*Acanthocarpus preissii*), Feather Speargrass (*Austrostipa flavescens*), Grey Cottonhead (*Conostylis candidans subspecies: calcicola*), Cockies' Tongues (*Templetonia retusa*), Rottneest Island Daisy (*Trachymene coerulea*), Summer Scented Wattle (*Acacia rostellifera*), Silver-leafed Wild Rosemary (*Olearia axillaris*), Rottneest Island Bobtail (*Tiliqua rugosa konowi*), Australian Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*), Nankeen Kestrel (*Flaco cenchroides*).

Threats:

- Uncontrolled fire
- Weed invasion
- Localised erosion
- Human trampling (walking or cycling)

DID YOU KNOW?

The heath's Wild Rosemary was also used for cooking by the early settlers. It is believed even the Dutch explorer Willem de Vlamingh ate the Silver-leafed Wild Rosemary.