

How can we look after our Parks and Reserves?

Many of us have Parks and Nature Reserves in our local area where we might visit to play games, ride bikes, go for a walk or just enjoy the surroundings. Many of our Parks and Reserves provide important habitat for wildlife as well.

Draw a line between the Actions and their possible Impacts. There may be more than one impact for each action. In the left hand column tick whether the action will have a Positive or Negative impact on reserves.



P or N		Actions	Impacts
✓		Bushwalking on pathways	Very little impact
✓		Dumping garden rubbish such as weeds and branches	Rips up the soil, causes erosion and prevents native plants from naturally regenerating
✓		Building bike jumps by moving soil	Makes the reserve ugly and sets a bad example to other visitors
✓		Riding bikes or motor bikes off the track	Scares native wildlife away from their food and water sources
✓		Dumping rubbish and littering	Causes environmental weeds to be introduced to areas of native vegetation
✓		Riding bikes and horses on trails where these activities are permitted	Stops the risk of pollution and bacterial disease spreading to waterways, native animals and humans
✓		Letting dogs run off the leash in nature conservation areas	Protects degraded areas and section of good vegetation from invasion of environmental weeds
✓		Picking up dog poo	Protects native vegetation and prevents the spread of weeds
✓		Removing environmental weeds	
✓		Planting indigenous plants in degraded areas	

How can we look after our parks and reserves?

If it was your job to manage your local reserve, what are some of the things you would do to make sure that the potential impacts are minimised? For each negative impact on the previous page, write down a solution.

Dumping garden rubbish such as weeds and branches - Put pressure on the local council to provide a green waste service so that they are not tempted to dump garden rubbish, install signs which tell people about the risk of environmental weeds coming from garden waste, encourage other park users to write down the number plates of people who dump rubbish illegally and fine the offenders or make them do community service by pulling out weeds in Reserves

Building bike jumps by moving soil - Provide areas for BMX activities nearby, fine people for building jumps.

Riding bikes or motor bikes off the track - provide tracks approximately 1.5 m wide with a good surface which makes the track very obvious, fence tracks to prevent people for leaving the track.

Dumping rubbish and littering - encourage other park users to write down the number plates of people who dump rubbish illegally and fine the offenders or make them do community service by picking up rubbish from reserves.

Letting dogs run off the leash in nature conservation areas - Provide public areas for people to run their dogs off the leash in non-conservation areas. Fine people for letting their dogs off the leash, ban dogs from these areas.

The damage that occurs in reserves is generally caused by the combined impacts of many people who visit. If 24 people visit a reserve per day and each person causes one tiny plant seedling to die by treading on it, how many plants would be killed in a week, month, year?

1week = 168; 1 month = 720; 1 year = 8760

Why do we need to look after our local reserves?

Reserves are visited by the public and therefore are impacted upon more so than native vegetation on private land. Managers of reserves need to impose management strategies such as those outlined above to minimise impacts. Some damage is inevitable even when people do the right thing, therefore we must actively remove environmental weeds and revegetate degraded areas to make sure reserves stay in good condition and are able to support wildlife.