Department of Environment and Conservation
Our environment, our future

SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT
THREATENED SPECIES AND/OR COMMUNITIES RECOVERY TEAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Recovery Team name	Geraldton District Threatened Flora and Communities Recovery Team
Reporting Period (Calendar Year)	Calendar year 2008

Current membership

	Member	Representing
CHAIR	**Anthony Desmond, Regional Leader of Nature Conservation, Midwest Region**	DEC
EXEC OFFICER	**Josie Dean Conservation Officer (Flora) Geraldton**	DEC
	Ann Carr	Mingenew-Dongara Herbarium Group
	Rotating Representative (was Nigel Rowe 2007)	Main Roads
	Josephine Docherty	Mullewa Wildflower Society
	Species and Communities Branch representatives (was Andrew Brown, Jill Pryde and Gillian Stack in 2007)	DEC
	Jon Stevens	Westnet Rail (not an official member but attends regularly)
	Jenna Brooker (previous representive Irene Shepard)	Geraldton Regional Herbarium

Dates meetings were held in 2008	No meetings were held as there was no one working in Flora Conservation Officer position until September 2008.
One to two paragraph summary of achievements suitable for *WATSNU*	In 2008 after two years of drought conditions and poor plant growth the District had increased rainfall. Subsequent vigorous flowering activity in Spring enabled the first thorough survey of rare orchids in many years, leading to the identification of 20 new populations. The Department (DEC) also joined the WA Orchid Society in August for a field trip to Eurardy

	Station. The Back from the Brink Project will end in June 2009. This project is run by DEC, administered by the Northern Agricultural Catchment Council (NACC) and funded by the Federal and State Government. Some of its outcomes in 2008 were: • Development and printing of a variety of educational material - Drink holders and Calico bags - Species specific A4 posters – rare flora found in the Geraldton District - Shire specific A2 posters – rare flora species found in 8 Midwest Shires (also available on internet) - Teacher Resource Pack • Research - Increased survey of *E. blaxellii* and *E. cuprea* - Priority Species Project - Genetic analysis on *Grevillea phanerophlebia* - Genetic analysis on *Eucalyptus cuprea* - Disturbance trial on *Stylidium amabile*
List of actions undertaken by Recovery Team (from actions in Recovery Plan / Management Plan)	
Action 1	**Rare Flora survey summary:** 26 different species and 129 populations were surveyed, this includes 21 new populations – 20 (orchids) and one of *Eremophila brevifolia* (P2) • 1 x *Eremophila brevifolia* (P2) • 3 x *Caladenia barbarella* • 3 x *Caladenia hoffmanii* • 3 x *Caladenia elegans* • 1 x *Caladenia bryceana* subsp*. cracens* (1 historic record found) • 2 x *Drakaea concolor* (1 historic record found + 1 range extension) • 8 x *Caladenia wanosa* (1 historic record found + 2 range extensions)
Action 2	**Priority Species Project:** Designed to review the Priority Flora in the Northern Agricultural Region and begin the process of ensuring the rankings of the Region's rare and priority flora more accurately reflect their true conservation status. Focused on list of approximately 30-40 priority flora species. Those

	studied are currently listed Priority 1 or are known from one or a few locations. Over 100 populations were surveyed and over 200 specimens collected for identification and possible lodging with the WA Herbarium. From this DRF nominations for the following 6 taxa are in preparation for assessment by the for Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC) - *Grevillea fililoba, Commersonia adenothalia, Banksia catoglypta, Petrophile nivea, Leucopogon* sp*. Kojarena, and Grevillea* sp*. Gillingara.*
Action 3	**Education material**: All material was created and printed/produced using Back from the Brink Project funds. • Drink holders • Calico bags • A Teacher Resource Pack • A4 Posters: Species specific posters for rare flora found in the Geraldton District. These include: *Pityrodia axillaris*, *Tecticornia bulbosa, Caladenia wanosa, Caladenia hoffmanii*, *Eremophila nivea, Verticordia squamosa* subsp*. spicata* and *Ptilotus fasciculatus* and • A2 posters: Eight different posters featuring rare plants found in the shires of Northampton, Chapman Valley, Geraldton-Greenough, Mingenew, Morowa, Mullewa, Perenjori and Kalbarri. The A2 shire posters can be viewed on the Departments website (http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/management-and-protection/threatened-species/declared-rare-flora-posters.html)
Action 4	**Attended:** Displays at • Geraldton Regional Herbarium open day – June • Mullewa Wildflower Show - August • Mingenew Lions Midwest Expo – September • NACC Forum - October
Action 5	**Media:** • Newspaper articles - Midwest Times – May - Farm Weekly – May - Midwest Coastal Advocate – May - *Caladenia hoffmanii* –Oct

	• Media Release - TAFE students - Midwest times – 24/07/08 - Geraldton Guardian – 23/07/08 • Presentations - ABC radio 25/07/08 • Provision of educational material - Tourist bureaus in Kalbarri, Morowa, Mullewa, Northampton, Mingenew and Perenjori
Action 6	**Seed / Plant Material Collected:** *E. cuprea, Verticordia squamosa* subsp*. spicata, Grevillea phanerophlebia, Stylidium amabile,* orchids*.* **Research**: Survey Project focused on status of two Eucalypt species (*E. blaxellii* and *E. cuprea*). Local botanist was hired to increase the survey effort for both species. The results of this led the District to make an application to the TSSC for the delisting of *E. blaxellii* in January 2009. Genetic analysis on *Grevillea phanerophlebia* and *Eucalyptus cuprea* by Science Division. • Findings from the *G. phanerophlebia* study showed the species could not be identified as a distinct entity and recommended that it be recognised as a hybrid. This indicates it does not warrant current DRF status and an application should be made to delist. • The final report for *E. cuprea* is currently being written. **Disturbance Trial**: Site preparation for a disturbance trial on *Stylidium amabile,* were made in December. The trial, involving the use of smoke water and fire is planned to commence in May 2009.
Action 7	**Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs):** Billeranga System TEC was visited in the first week of September 2008. 15 permanent monitoring quadrats were established in addition to 8 transects. Monitoring protocols are currently being written. Baseline information was collected from the quadrats, and both the transects and quadrats will be revisited in future monitoring trips. Identification of specimens has recently been completed by the Herbarium and a request was made for many of these to be lodged.

Action 8	**Applications:** Nomination to TSSC for the delisting of *E. blaxellii* (Jan 2009).
Action 9	**Interim Recovery Plans (IRP):** *Caladenia elegans* IRP review completed. New IRP for *Stylidium amabile* in progress, completion expected 2010.
Action 10	**Management of Weeds & Ferals:** Weed control to help protect *Caladenia elegans* and *Pterostylis* sp. *Northampton.* Rabbit proof fence installed around portion of one *Stylidium amabile* population.
Assessment of progress towards meeting criteria for success (from Recovery Plan)	Few of the IRPs written for the flora species found in the Geraldton District have a completion date of 2008. Those that do are the *Stylidium amabile* and *Eremophila rostrata.* As IRPs are designed to be implemented over multiple years (eg. 3-5 years) it is difficult to determine if they have been a success or failure mid term. Only the two species mentioned have been addressed below.
	Stylidium amabile <u>Criteria for success</u> – The number of individuals within populations and/or the number of populations have increased by 10% or more. <u>Recovery Actions achieved</u> – (Total 12 actions in IRP) Action 1. Coordinate recovery actions Action 4. Collect and store seed, Action 5. Liaise with land managers, Action 6. Care, control and management of habitat, Action 8. Install DRF markers Action 9. Monitor populations Action 10. Conduct surveys Action 11. Obtain biological and ecological information Action 2. Conduct recruitment trial (currently in progress) Action 12. Review this IRP and revise it or prepare a full Recovery Plan if necessary (currently in progress) <u>Comments</u> – The current IRP was written in 1993 for five populations of *Stylidium coroniforme*. After the renaming *S. amabile* was identified at two sites. The survey records in District files from 1993-2008 (the duration of the IRP), show both sites experienced

	significant population reductions. At one numbers decreased from 19 mature plants to one. The other site recorded a greater fall, from 116 to 25 mature plants. Though all recovery actions have been implemented, the survival of this species appears in serious risk.
	Eremophila rostrata Criteria for success – The number of individuals within populations and/or the number of populations have increased. Comments – Original IRP was for 2003-2008. This species has since been split into two subspecies, *E. rostrata* subsp*. trifida* and *E. rostrata* subsp*. rostrata*. No new IRP has been written for either subspecies, so there are currently no actions that can be assessed for success or failure.
Assessment against criteria for failure (from Recovery Plan)	Based on the criteria for failure the species above are considered - • *Stylidium amabile* criteria for failure have been met – due to the significant population decrease (greater than 10%), and • *Eremophila rostrata* is undetermined -in the absence of an IRP for each subspecies. No other species have been assessed for success or failure based on the reasoning provided above, ie that IRPs are designed to be implemented over multiple years (eg. 3-5 years), therefore it is difficult to determine if they have been a success or failure mid-term.
other	

attachments