

Documenting the Kimberley flora: a never-ending story?

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Despite an increase in exploration of the Kimberley region in recent decades, the plant diversity is still considered to be poorly known. In 1992, the *Flora of the Kimberley Region* recorded just over 2,000 plant species in the region. Since then, that number has climbed to 3,000 species and continues to grow. Even in regions considered well known and close to towns such as Broome and Kununurra, new species continue to come to light. The largest number of new species are being found on the sandstone plateaux of the north-west Kimberley, in the high rainfall zone (1,000–1,400 mm p/a). Many of these species are wet season ephemerals, and are completely missed by dry season visitors. We have utilised helicopters, remote bush camps and station homesteads to survey many remote parts of the Kimberley in search of unknown plants. Not all of the new discoveries are small or annuals, with new acacias and the occasional new eucalypt still coming to light. We suggest that there are still hundreds of new species awaiting discovery in the region, most of which are likely to be endemic and deserve protection through conservation measures. We will take you well beyond the Gibb River Road to present highlights of our discoveries and the incredible landscapes of the region. From the world's only non-carnivorous carnivorous plant, to dead-horse lilies, and a mock orange that was 'lost' for 180 years, the Kimberley flora is very unique. We will show how this flora compares to the remainder of Australia and discuss the threats currently facing the region.



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