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Norseman Pea

**If you think you've seen this plant, please call
CALM Esperance District on (08) 9071 3733**

Commonly known as the Norseman Pea, *Daviesia microcarpa* produces attractive orange, pink and red, pea flowers in August and September. These flowers are tiny (4–4.5 mm long), and distinguish the species from all others in the genus.

Norseman Pea is a sprawling low shrub to 40 cm tall and 1 m wide, with a tangle of outward-spreading stems. It has long (8–20 mm), sharply pointed phyllodes (modified leaves), arranged spirally around each stem.

The species is found growing in red-brown, loamy clay and, up until now, has been seen only in habitat that had been highly disturbed during road construction and telephone line installation. No plants have been found in adjoining undisturbed vegetation.

Norseman Pea was discovered in 1974, and three collections were made from the same location in 1979. There was an unconfirmed sighting of it in 1985, but the species was not seen again until 1992, when a survey by Matiske Consulting located a population near the original discovery site.

Norseman Pea was ranked as Critically Endangered in 1995 and CALM, with the help of Main Roads Western Australia, has been co-ordinating recovery actions addressing the most threatening factors affecting its survival in the wild. (See overleaf).

Threats include accidental damage from road maintenance, poor survival of offspring, the deaths of some adult plants, existing plants reaching the end of their life span, and limited available habitat.

Norseman Pea is known from a single population, and we are eager to know of any others.

If unable to contact the District office on the above number, please phone CALM's Wildlife Branch on (08) 9334 0422.



The tiny orange, pink and red flowers of Norseman pea are the smallest in the genus. Photo – A. Brown



A typical plant in full flower in mid-September. Photo – A. Brown

Recovery of a Species



CALM is committed to ensuring that Critically Endangered taxa do not become extinct in the wild. This is done through the preparation of a Recovery Plan (RP) or Interim Recovery Plan (IRP), which outlines the recovery actions that are required to urgently address those threatening processes most affecting the ongoing survival of threatened taxa in the wild and begin the recovery process.

IRPs are prepared by CALM and implemented by Regional or District Recovery teams consisting of representatives from CALM, Kings Park and Botanic Garden, community groups, private landowners, local Shires and various government organisations.

Norseman Pea

Essential recovery actions that have been implemented to protect the species include:

Protection from current threats: The erection of signs to mark the site of the population; fencing to prevent accidental damage from road maintenance; the development of a fire protection plan; regular monitoring of the health of the population; and the maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens).

Protection from future threats: The collection of seed; ensuring that relevant authorities, land owners and CALM personnel are aware of the species and the need to protect it; and that all are familiar with the threatening processes identified in the Interim Recovery Plan.

Desirable recovery actions, which are progressively being implemented, include:

Conducting further surveys; researching the biology and ecology of the species; and enhancing plant numbers by removal of weeds, amelioration of some other limiting factor, or by direct propagation and translocation techniques.

IRPs will be deemed a success if essential recovery actions have been implemented, and identified threatening processes have been removed within three years of their approval.



Following flowering, Norseman pea produces masses of distinctive triangular seed pods.
Photo – E. Holland



Norseman pea is currently known from a single area of disturbed bushland along the edge of the Eyre Highway, east of Norseman. Photo – E. Holland

