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Spreading grevillea

E n d a n g e r e d F l o r a o f W e s t e r n A u s t r a l i a

If you think you've seen this plant, please call the Moora District office of the Department of Conservation and Land Management on (08) 9652 1911.

Grevillea humifusa, known as spreading grevillea because of its spreading habit, is a lignotuberous prostrate shrub with trailing stems to 3 m long and angular branchlets with long soft hairs. The grey-green leaves are 1.5-2 cm long and are ascending to spreading. The inflorescences are 2 cm long and occur at the end of the branches. The flowers are pink to red, and the style is pink to red with a yellow tip. Flowers appear from June to September.

Spreading grevillea was originally collected from the Eneabba area in May 1968 by H. Demarz, a collector for Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA). A number of botanists have conducted surveys in the general area but have not located any additional populations. The species occurs on an undulating plain of gravelly loam that supports very disturbed open low York gum (*Eucalyptus loxophleba*) and wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) woodland over species such as *Kennedia prostrata* (running postman), *Jacksonia* sp. and *Dianella revoluta* (blue flax lilly).

A major portion of the population of spreading grevillea is located on private property, in a pasture paddock. The area was burnt in 1995, prior to notification of the location of the population, which occurred in 1996. Many native species including spreading grevillea are regenerating well, particularly since all plants on private property were fenced from stock in 1997. The remainder of the population occurs on adjacent Shire road reserves.

Spreading grevillea has a lignotuber and appears to regenerate well after fire. The occurrence of juvenile plants within the population in 1998 after the fire in 1995 suggests that seed germination may also be stimulated by fire.

Grevilleas generally have a low seed set relative to the number of flowers in each inflorescence. However, with the large number of flowers on each plant, seed set is still substantial for most species. The seed is protected in a hard follicle that splits to release the seed when mature. Attempts to propagate spreading grevillea led to the observations that germination could be improved by nicking the seed coat before sowing, and that it



Distinctive yellow tips and pink to red flowers on spreading grevillea. Photo – Kate Brown

grows readily from firm, young-growth cuttings that can be taken during most seasons.

Spreading grevillea was ranked as Critically Endangered in 1998 and the Department of Conservation and Land Management (the Department), through the direction of the Moora District Threatened Flora Recovery Team, has been addressing the most threatening factors affecting its survival in the wild (see overleaf).

Split-leaved grevillea is currently known from one population consisting of around 609 plants. The Department is keen to hear of any other populations.

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

Recovery of a Species



The Department 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 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 the Department and implemented by Regional or District Recovery Teams consisting of representatives from the Department, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.

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Recovery actions that are being implemented are:

Protection from current threats: these include the development of a fire management strategy to protect the species from inappropriate fire regimes; the development of guidelines for the slashing of the habitat; and the regular monitoring of the health of the population.

Protection from future threats: these include the rehabilitation of the habitat; collection of seed; the maintenance of live plants away from the wild (ie. in botanic gardens); conducting further surveys; researching the biology and ecology of spreading grevillea; enhancing plant numbers by direct propagation and translocation techniques; ensuring that relevant authorities, land owners and Departmental personnel are aware of its presence and the need to protect it, and that all are familiar with the threatening processes identified in the Interim Recovery Plan.

IRPs will be deemed a success if the number of individuals within the population and/or the number of populations have increased.

This poster is sponsored by the Endangered Species Program of the Natural Heritage Trust.



Spreading grevillea in full flower from June to September. Photo – Emma Holland



Spreading habit of spreading grevillea on a road reserve near Eneabba. Photo – Emma Holland

