

Esperance District Threatened Flora Recovery Team

Annual Report

2003

by

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for Esperance District Threatened Flora Recovery Team

Summary

There have now been three meetings of the Recovery Team since 2002 and members have continued to contribute to survey work, recovery actions and management issues.

This report covers progress made during 2003 through to January 2004 with monitoring, surveys and other works for the DRF (Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable species) and Priority species in the Esperance District, other works associated with external funding and general duties associated with the Conservation Officer (Flora) position.

Actions from Interim Recovery Plans (IRPs) or draft IRPs for the following are being implemented, *Lambertia echinata* subsp. *echinata* 2001-2004, *Daviesia microcarpa* 1996-1999, *Eremophila lactea* 1999-2002, *Myoporum turbinatum* 2002-2007 and *Rhizanthella gardneri* 2002-2007.

Recovery Team

There have been three Threatened Flora Recovery Team (EDTFRT) meetings in the Esperance District in 2002-03. These meetings were held on the 24th of October 2002, the 7th of March 2003 and the 28th of November 2003. The next meeting has been planned for the 30th of April 2004.

The following are the official members of the EDTFRT:

	No. of meetings attended
• Klaus Tiedemann (CALM Esperance) – Chair	2
• Mike Fitzgerald (CALM Esperance) - Chair (when necessary)	3
• Andrew Brown (WATSCU)	3
• Ryan Butler (CALM Esperance)	3
• Dave Coates (Herbarium)	1
• Catherine Field (Shire of Esperance)	2
• Andrew Batty (KPBG)	0
• Coral Turley (Wildflower Society)	2
• Barbara Archer (Volunteer and possible Shire of Dundas Rep.)	0
• Alan Danks (CALM Albany)	2
• Sarah Barrett (CALM Albany)	0
• Anne Cochrane (Herbarium)	0
• Leonie Monks (Herbarium)	1
• Kymberley Russell (MRWA)	2
• Geoff Cockerton (Mining Consultant)	1
• Bethea Loudon (CALM Katanning)	0
• Brad Barton (CALM Goldfields)	0

Surveys, monitoring, recovery actions and general items during 2003

DRF Species

1. *Lambertia echinata* subsp. *echinata* (Critically Endangered)

Monitoring:

- Monitoring during 2003 was carried out at two of the three population sites. A total of 10 of the 17 recorded sub-populations have been found and plant numbers recorded. Monitoring was restricted due to poor weather conditions and the risk of further spreading dieback disease. Checks on sub-populations of population 3 are planned for February 2004.
- Monitoring was carried out with the assistance of several volunteers on different occasions.
- Dieback samples were taken from population 2b on Mississippi Hill in Cape Le Grand National Park (CLGNP). Due to the age of the deaths the results came back negative for dieback. There were no 'fresh' deaths at this population and there are only two live plants left out of the original twelve.

Translocation:

- With the assistance of the Esperance High School Bushrangers, conducted a clean-up of the original *Lambertia echinata* subsp. *echinata* translocation site in CLGNP.
- Plans for the next translocation of *Lambertia echinata* subsp. *echinata* has been scheduled for winter 2004. Options are being assessed and a trial translocation to an island (disease free) is being considered.

2. *Daviesia microcarpa* (Critically Endangered)

Surveys:

- In October 2003 a survey was carried out searching the area surrounding Norseman and the known populations. There was similar habitat in the area but no new plants were found.

Monitoring:

- The known populations near Norseman were surveyed twice in 2003 and it was found that populations 1b and 3 were in decline.
- Population 3 is now an extinct population as the 2 plants at the site are dead.
- It appears most populations have been affected by drought conditions in 2002/03 and it is possible that some plants will be permanently lost.
- With the assistance of the Norseman High School Bushrangers, a recount of the number of plants in population 1c was done. During the same trip a meeting was held in Norseman to determine other activities that the Bushrangers may assist with in the future.
- A check of the translocation site has shown there is some new growth around the seeded area but it is too early to determine if any of the plants are *D.microcarpa*.

Projects:

- Plans have been developed for a disturbance regeneration trial during April/May 2004 for the original population (1a). This site has had no plants recorded there since the late 1990's. It is hoped that these trials will re-establish this population.

3. *Eremophila lactea* (Critically Endangered)

Monitoring:

- All known populations were monitored in July 2003.
- Monitoring was carried out with the assistance of volunteers from the Esperance community.

Communications:

- Two workshops were conducted with the Esperance Shire for the engineers/supervisors and the road maintenance crews. The general aim of the workshop was to promote awareness of

the flora in the road reserve. The main example used was *Eremophila lactea*. The workshops went very well with requests made to produce identification booklets for the road crews and supervisors.

Projects:

- Plans have been developed for a disturbance regeneration trial during April/May 2004 at population 1a. This site has already been disturbed in the past. It is hoped that these trials will increase the size of this population.

4. *Myoporum turbinatum* (Critically Endangered)

Monitoring:

- Monitoring was carried out in May 2003 with a new population found with the assistance of Coral Turley (volunteer). This population had 75 plants and doubled the number of plants known in the wild.
- Seed collecting took place in early 2004 with another 'unrecorded' population being officially surveyed. There were four new mature plants and over 100 seedlings found.

5. *Rhizanthella gardneri* (Critically Endangered)

Monitoring:

- Most survey work has been carried out by staff from CALM WATSCU and KPBG. A monitoring trip in July 2003 found 3 new plants. These were the only plants found during the 2003 monitoring program by CALM and KPBG (both South Coast and Wheatbelt areas).

6. General Items

- Surveys in March/April 2003 for Priority 1 species (*Eucalyptus foliosa*, *Eucalyptus varia* subsp. *salsuginosa*, *Conostephium marchantiorum* and *Eremophila compressa*) has resulted in several more populations being found for each of these species. The number of individuals and populations will be assessed to determine whether these species need a higher or lower ranking.
- A field trip to look for *Eremophila subteretifolia* (DRF-Critically Endangered) and *Anigozanthos bicolor* subsp. *minor* (DRF-Endangered) was conducted in October 2003. Despite covering over 800km of roads and tracks, and finding suitable habitat for both species no plants were found at known sites and no new populations were discovered.
- A trip out to Toolinna Cove to collect *Adenanthos eyrei* (DRF-End) for DNA analysis was carried out in August 2003. Another trip is planned for May 2004 to collect more material and determine whether *A.eyrei* is a 'true' species or of hybrid origin.
- While undertaking other work, opportunistic surveys were undertaken for *Acacia carnosula* (Priority 2). Populations were recorded from the Eyre escarpment, Twilight Cove and Caiguna areas. The substantial population sizes and lack of threats indicate that the species is unlikely to ever meet IUCN criteria. A proposal to delist this species will shortly be submitted.
- A survey in September 2003 to look for *Eremophila ciliata* (currently no status) was successful in finding the single known population. This species is now being put up for recommendation for DRF status, probably as Critically Endangered.
- Another survey in September 2003 to look at the known *Eremophila denticulata* subsp. *trisulcata* populations northeast of Esperance showed that most of the recorded sites for *E. denticulata* subsp. *trisulcata* were actually more likely to be a variant of *Eremophila decipiens*. The plants from the original collection site are quite different to those found further north. Another survey trip is planned for February 2004. It is possible that the subspecies may be nominated for upgrade back to DRF.

- The District reviewed four environmental reports for mineral exploration and assisted the mining companies with applications for permits to take DRF. There were also onsite inspections with the mining companies to assist with management of the DRF on their lease.
- Desktop and field assistance was provided to the Kambalda to Esperance Gas Pipeline project.
- Liaison and onsite inspections were undertaken with Dundas Shire over a new regional road alignment and associated recreational sites.
- Assistance was provided to CALM reserve 'neighbours' with boundary surveys for DRF and priority plants prior to firebreak or fence maintenance.