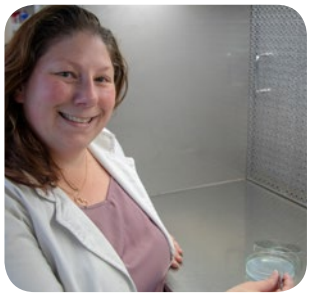
across the Painted Desert and Mound Springs region of South Australia's north, when station tracks were hidden among the fields of annuals and were exceptionally difficult to follow. A number of rare and endemic plant species were recorded during that period, including a number of cryptic and undescribed species that will lay hidden until another such rainfall event.

I've dedicated many days to field work with the SASCC. One very memorable trip involved stopping to assist with field work in Witjira National Park while en route to the Northern Territory for a honeymoon holiday with my wife Linh. Although it was a very successful field trip collection wise, unfortunately the Land Rover didn't survive Witjira National Park and was towed back to Coober Pedy and the honeymoon holiday was postponed.

I have been lucky enough to be involved in all aspects of the seed conservation program from field and lab work through to education programs and nursery propagation. At the moment the focus has been the propagation of threatened flora for recovery programs, including in-vitro propagation of threatened orchids in the lab. Our team is currently surveying for threatened orchids, including setting up baseline monitoring for populations. I have a keen eye for orchids, so try to accompany the team on as many of the orchid survey trips as possible. There is always plenty to do at the SASCC and I enjoy sharing what we discover. So I encourage you to take a look at the Seeds of South Australia website to learn more about the seeds that we conserve in our collections: https://spapps.environment.sa.gov.au/seedsofsa/

Kelly Lilburn, Volunteer, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

My interest in all thing's botanical stems from an early age, starting with growing herbs and indoor plants as a child. My inquisitiveness about the conservation and propagation of native species started during my undergraduate studies in Environmental Biology at Curtin University. During this time, I was able to delve into the fields of botany, soil science, ecology and restoration. These subjects served only to increase my curiosity about the intriguing organisms that we so often overlook.



Kelly Lilburn has been assisting with cleaning seeds and running germination trials of threatened species at the Western Australian Seed Centre, Kensington. (Photo: DBCA)

Towards the end of my bachelor's degree, I was fortunate to participate in the Kings Park Science's Summer Scholarship Program. As part of this program, I worked on a project investigating the link between metabolism and the longevity of seed held in *ex situ* storage. This work stimulated my interest in seed storage, leading to an honours project on the same topic. I learnt many things during my time in the Kings Park lab, including: using an x-ray machine to differentiate filled seed from empty or damaged seed; the role of humidity and temperature on seed longevity; differing types of seed dormancy; and how temperature stresses can be used to mimic the ageing process in seeds and seedlings.

During this time, I also started volunteering at the Western Australian Herbarium as part of their mounting team. Knowing my interest and background working with seed, the herbarium's volunteer coordinator suggested I might be interested in volunteering at the Western Australian Seed Centre which is co-located with the herbarium. In 2018 I started volunteering at the seed centre, helping to process and test the conservation-significant seed collections housed in their purpose-built facility. I've been involved in tasks such as seed cleaning and running germination trials of collections to estimate their viability.

My volunteer work at the Herbarium helped me to secure a place in a team travelling to Cape Range National Park, WA, as part of the Bush Blitz species discovery program in 2019. The team gathered data on species in the region, including the collection of type material for a new *Hibbertia* species. My aim is to continue along the theme of botanical research in both my professional and home life, and I will continue to promote the importance of the role that flora plays in our collective survival.