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Department of Biodiversity,
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Declared Rare Flora and road maintenance

Some of Western Australia's most threatened plant species occur along road verges, especially in shires where extensive clearing has occurred for agriculture, housing and industry.

Road maintenance can pose a risk of disturbing or damaging these important species and we need your help to protect them.

What is threatened flora?

Threatened flora, also known as Declared Rare Flora (DRF), are native plant species that are at risk of extinction. Many species of threatened flora are only known from a small number of mature plants and some only occur in one or two locations.

Threatened flora and the law

Threatened flora is given special protection under State and Federal biodiversity conservation legislation to prevent extinction and to maintain Western Australia's and Australia's biodiversity. Under State

legislation, threatened flora cannot be taken unless with the written authorisation of the Environment Minister.

For this purpose, the word 'take' means 'to gather, pluck, cut, pull up, destroy, dig up, remove or injure the flora or to cause or permit the same to be done by any means'. For example, damage by grading or weed spraying constitutes 'taking', as does collecting seed or specimens.

You must apply to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to take threatened flora. Applications are assessed on their effect on the conservation of the species at a local and regional scale, and require at least six to eight weeks to be processed. Significant financial penalties apply to threatened flora that is taken without authorisation.

Identifying new populations

When new populations of threatened flora are found, formal notifications are sent to the appropriate landowners and managers. Road managers should maintain a register of threatened flora occurrences on their roadsides to ensure works are planned to avoid impacting the specially protected species.

Look for the yellow hockey sticks

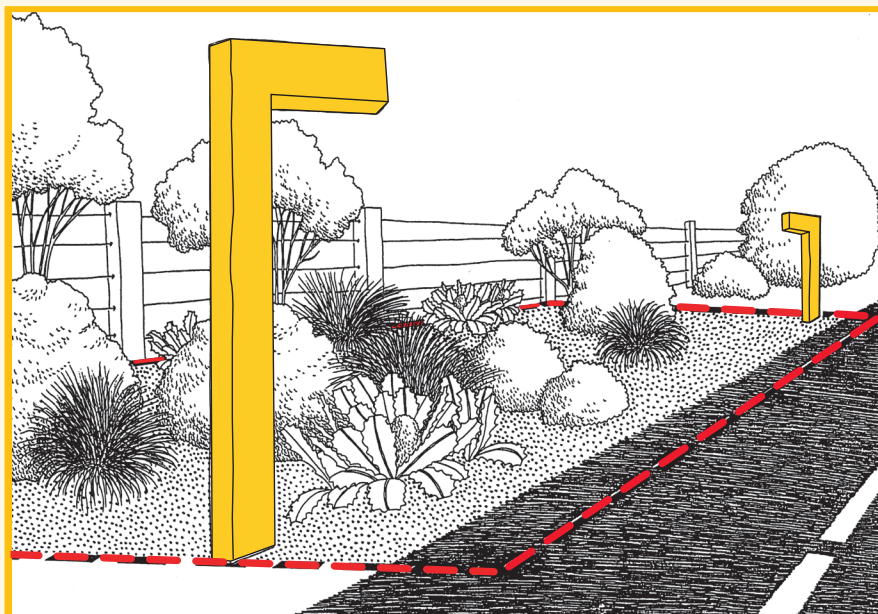
Threatened flora sites on roadsides are generally marked with two standardised yellow markers at either end of a site, which are bent to face each other.

These markers are commonly known as 'hockey sticks' or threatened flora markers. It is usually the road manager's (shire or Main Roads) responsibility to erect and maintain the markers in consultation with the local DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service conservation officer.

The markers indicate that threatened flora may occur anywhere between the markers, from the road's running surface to the fence.

If work is proposed in the vicinity of – but particularly between – these markers, road workers should check with their supervisor as to how the work may impact on any threatened flora, and change the work practice if necessary to avoid taking the threatened flora.

Continuing roadworks without obtaining an authorisation may break the law and jeopardise a threatened flora population. However, authorisation may be granted for appropriate roadside management to maintain the habitat condition of threatened flora populations.



More information

Contact your local DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service office or DBCA's Species and Communities Branch on (08) 9219 9513, or visit dbca.wa.gov.au

Information current at April 2018. This information is available in alternative formats on request.

