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Colourful Snakebush

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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
CALM Moora District on (08) 9651 1424**

Blooming from October to January, colourful snakebush (*Hemiandra* sp. *Watheroo*) is an attractive plant whose common name is derived from its variably coloured flowers that can be red, pink, mauve or yellow.

It is a small shrub to 30 cm high, with narrow dark green, sharply pointed leaves that have raised veins on their lower surface.

Colourful snakebush is very similar to, and was at first confused with, Sargent's Snakebush (*Hemiandra rutilans*) but may be distinguished essentially by its more northern occurrence.

It grows in disturbed soils such as are found in graded firebreaks, in grey-white and yellow sand in open low woodland over heath with occasional emergent *Eucalyptus*.

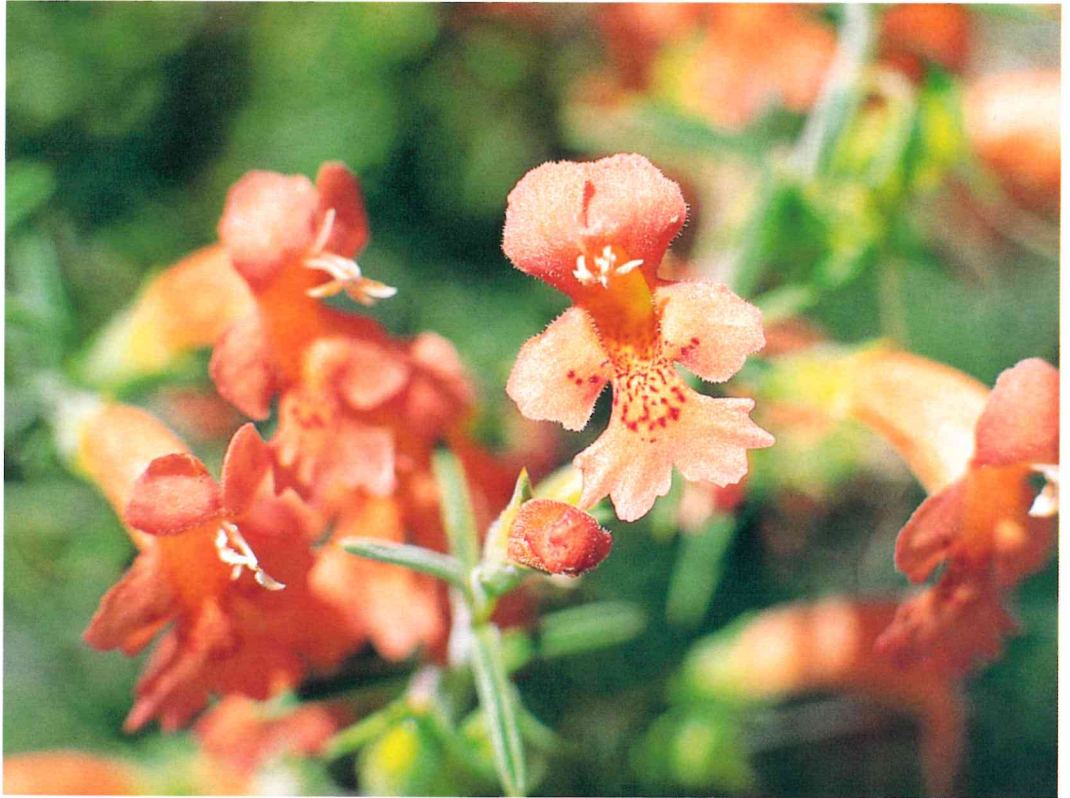
The species was declared as Rare Flora in 1994 and ranked as Critically Endangered in 1995.

CALM has set up the Moora Threatened Flora Recovery Team to co-ordinate recovery actions addressing the most threatening processes affecting the species' survival in the wild. (See overleaf.)

Threats include grading of tracks, damage from 4WD vehicles, inappropriate fire regimes and weed invasion.

The species is currently known from very few populations and we are eager to learn of any others.

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



A brick red flowered form of colourful snakebush. Photo – Leonie Monks



Typical upright habit of colourful snakebush. Photo – Leonie Monks

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.

Colourful Snakebush

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

Protection from current threats: The erection of signs that mark the site of each population; the development of a fire protection plan to protect the species from inappropriate fire regimes; protection from grading and recreational 4WD use; the collection of seed; and the regular monitoring of the health of each population.

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

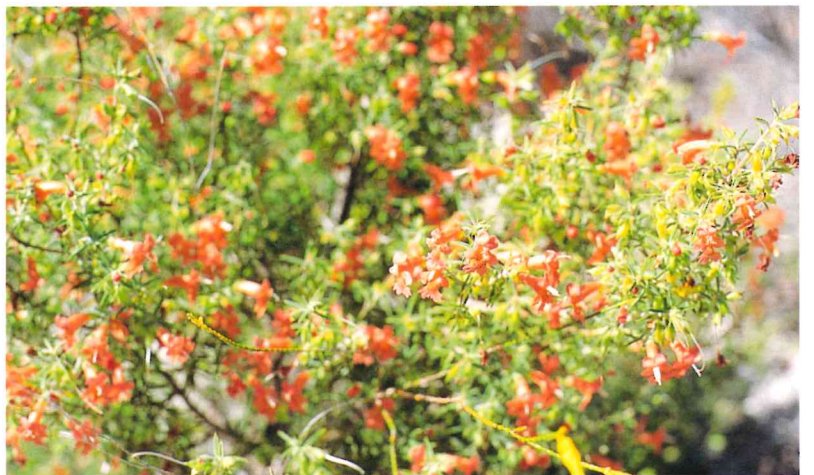
Desirable recovery actions, which are progressively being implemented, include:

Conducting further surveys; the control of introduced weeds; the maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); researching the biology and ecology of the colourful snakebush; 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.



Flowers range from pale yellow, through pink to red. Photo – S Hopper



A typical plant of colourful Snakebush. Photo – Leonie Monks



Colourful snakebush is often found in disturbed areas such as along old firebreaks. Photo – Leonie Monks

