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Dalwallinu poverty bush

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 have seen this plant, please call the Department of Conservation and Land Management's Merredin District on (08) 9401-2488.

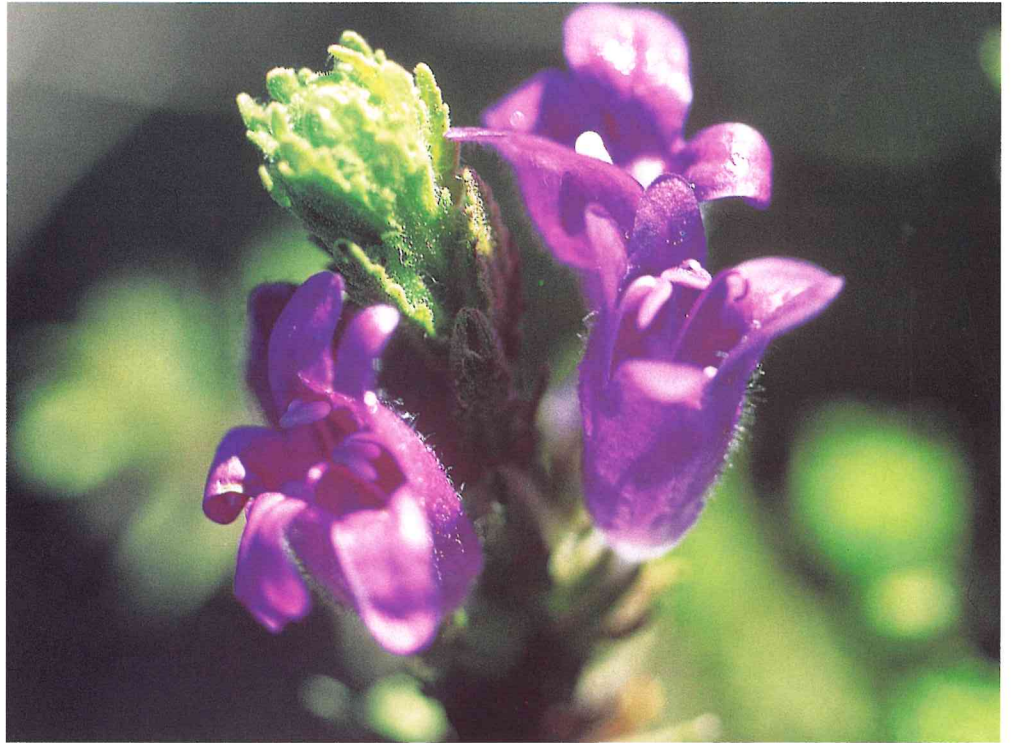
R. Chinnock discovered this Dalwallinu povertybush (*Eremophila pinnatifida*) near Dalwallinu in 1990 with further plants being found in 1996 when G. Richmond conducted a survey on behalf of Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) and found an additional population of two plants. Further populations were found in October 1998 and August 2001 respectively by staff of the Western Australian Threatened Species and Communities Unit (WATSCU). Both these populations are on narrow road reserves in very degraded habitat.

Dalwallinu poverty bush is an erect rounded shrub approximately one metre tall. Leaves are in whorls of three and are deeply lobed - the source of the specific name. The flower is pale to dark purple outside, and white with pale purple spots inside.

The species is allied to *Eremophila ternifolia* and like that species has leaves in whorls of three and a similarly structured fruit, but differs from it and other related species such as *E. sargentii* and *E. verticillata* in having lobed leaves and prominently pubescent branches and leaves.

Dalwallinu poverty bush appears to be endemic to the Dalwallinu area where it is known from four populations. The species occurs on brown clay loams in tall open *Eucalyptus salmonophloia* and *E. loxophleba* woodland over sparse mixed shrubland of *Santalum acuminatum*, *Eremophila drummondii* and *Acacia* species with mixed chenopods and perennial grass.

Very little is known about the biology and ecology of the species. However, it appears to be a disturbance opportunist and is likely to have a short life cycle (approximately 10 years). Recruitment is likely to occur when soil stored seed germinates following fire or earth movement.



Flowers are pale to dark purple in colour. Photo – A. Brown

Dalwallinu poverty bush was Declared as Rare Flora in 1997 and ranked as Critically Endangered (CR) in 1998 due to there being just four small highly fragmented populations, a decline in the quality of its habitat (mainly on highly disturbed road reserves) and a continuing decline in the number of individual mature plants. The main threats are road maintenance, weeds, lack of suitable disturbance, degraded habitat and inappropriate fire regimes.

The Department has set up the Merredin District Threatened Flora Recovery Team to coordinate recovery actions that address the greatest threats to the survival of the species in the wild (see overleaf).

The species is known from just four populations and the Department is keen to know of any others.

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

Recovery of a Species



The Department is committed to ensuring that Critically Endangered flora does 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 of Conservation and Land Management, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.

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Recovery actions that have been, and will be, progressively implemented to protect the species include:

Protection from current threats: These include control of weeds; rehabilitation of habitat; liaising with the Shire and Main Roads to ensure that populations are not damaged during road works; conducting further surveys; and regular monitoring of the health of populations.

Protection from future threats: These include the collection and storage of seed in the Department's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); and researching the biology and ecology of the species. Other actions include stimulating the germination of soil stored seed; development of a fire management strategy; ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and Departmental personnel are aware of the species' presence and the need to protect it, and that all are familiar with the threats identified in the Interim Recovery Plan.



A three year old seedling . Photo – A.Brown



Leaves of Dalwallinu poverty bush are deeply lobed. Photo – A.Brown

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

This poster was prepared by the Department of Conservation and Land Management.



Three of the four Dalwallinu poverty bush populations occur in narrow weedy road reserves. Photo – R.Phillimore