

LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

This PDF has been created for digital preservation. It may be used for research but is not suitable for other purposes. It may be superseded by a more current version or just be out-of-date and have no relevance to current situations.

003988

30.14.2011 11:41:13
FOR LOAN

Dunsborough Spider Orchid

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 South West Capes District on (08) 9752 1677**

Commonly known as Dunsborough spider orchid, *Caladenia viridescens* ms is a small, single-leaved plant that grows between 25 and 40 cm high.

In September and October, up to three attractive, spider-like flowers are produced. These have a pale green colouration, hence the scientific name "viridescens".

Dunsborough spider orchid differs from the closely related Bussell's spider orchid (*Caladenia busselliana* ms) and swamp spider orchid (*C. paludosa*), in having slightly smaller flowers, stiffly held petals and sepals (which are usually green), and a narrow labellum. The labellum has a distinctive, dark maroon fringe.

The species is found growing in well-drained, lateritic and sandy soils in marri, jarrah and peppermint woodlands in the Yallingup area.

Dunsborough spider orchid was discovered in 1985, and ranked as Critically Endangered in 1995. CALM has set up the Central Forest Region Threatened Flora Recovery Team to co-ordinate recovery actions addressing the most threatening processes affecting its survival in the wild. (See overleaf.)

Threats include weed invasion, accidental destruction from road maintenance and fires, during the plants active growing period or when it is in flower.

Dunsborough spider orchid is recorded from just four places and we are eager to know 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 typical flower. Note the dark maroon fringe and red tip to the labellum. Photo – A. Brown

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.

Dunsborough Spider Orchid

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

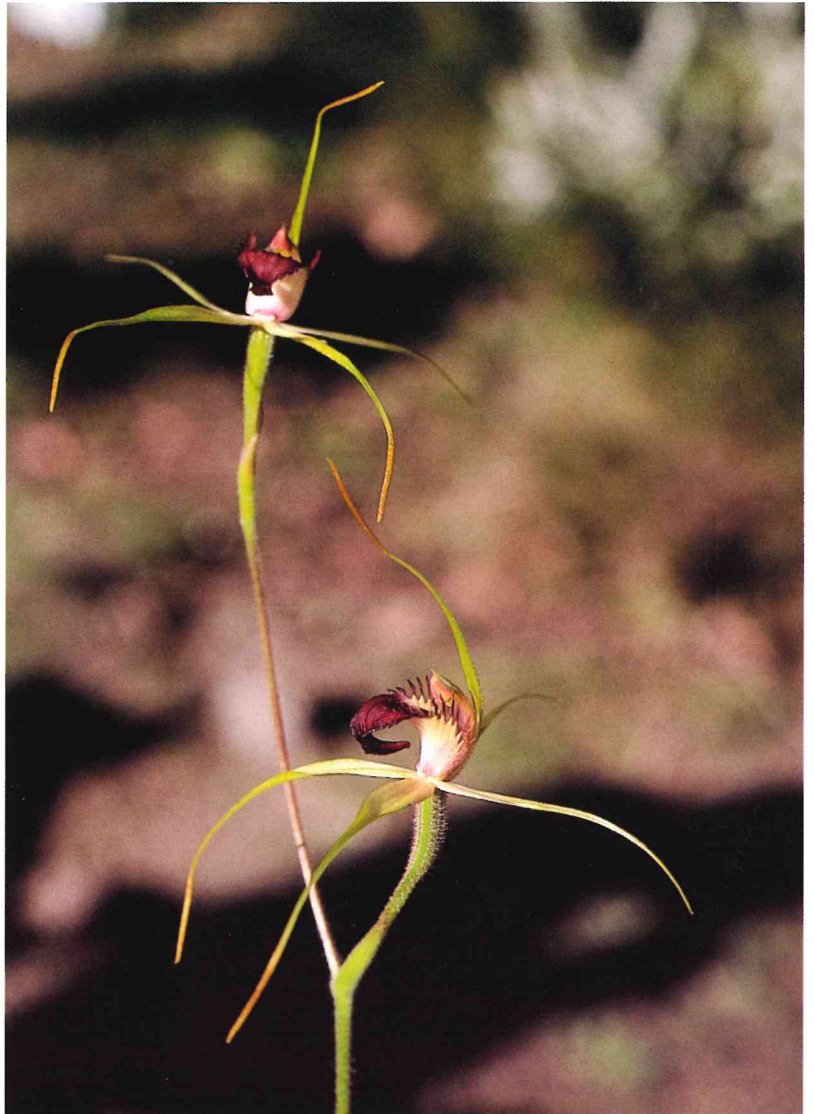
Protection from current threats: The erection of signs that mark the site of each population; the control of introduced weeds; and the regular monitoring of the health of each population.

Protection from future threats: The development of a fire protection plan; ensuring that relevant authorities, land owners and CALM personnel are aware of the species 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:

The collection of seed; the maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); the maintenance of buffers of natural vegetation around populations of the species; ensuring that land containing the largest population is set aside as a nature reserve; conducting further surveys; researching the biology and ecology of the Dunsborough spider orchid; 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.



Plants often have two and occasionally up to three flowers. Photo – Steve Hopper



Dunsborough spider orchid grows in the woodland beyond the weedy open areas. Introduced weeds are a threat to this species and are subject to a control program. Photo – F. Bunny

