

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 It may be superseded by a more current version or just be out-of-date and have no relevance to current situations.

Dwarf 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 Albany District on (08) 9842 4500 or Mornington District on (08) 9734 1988

Commonly known as the dwarf spider orchid, *Caladenia bryceana* subsp. *bryceana* flowers between August and mid-September.

It is one of the smallest of the WA spider orchids. The leaf blade rarely exceeds 6 cm in length, and the flowering stem is only 5 cm. The flowers, which range in colour from green to apricot, are borne singly on erect stems and are about 1 cm across.

Miss Frances Bryce MacIntyre, after whom the species is named, discovered *C. bryceana* at Gnowangerup in 1914. It may once have been widespread but it is now confined to two widely separated areas. Northern dwarf spider orchid, *C. bryceana* subsp. *cracens*, is found in the Kalbarri region while dwarf spider orchid, *C. bryceana* subsp. *bryceana*, is found between Boxwood Hills and Boyup Brook.

Dwarf spider orchid differs from northern dwarf spider orchid in its more colourful flowers, flattened petals, prominently rounded labellum lobes and smaller leaf.

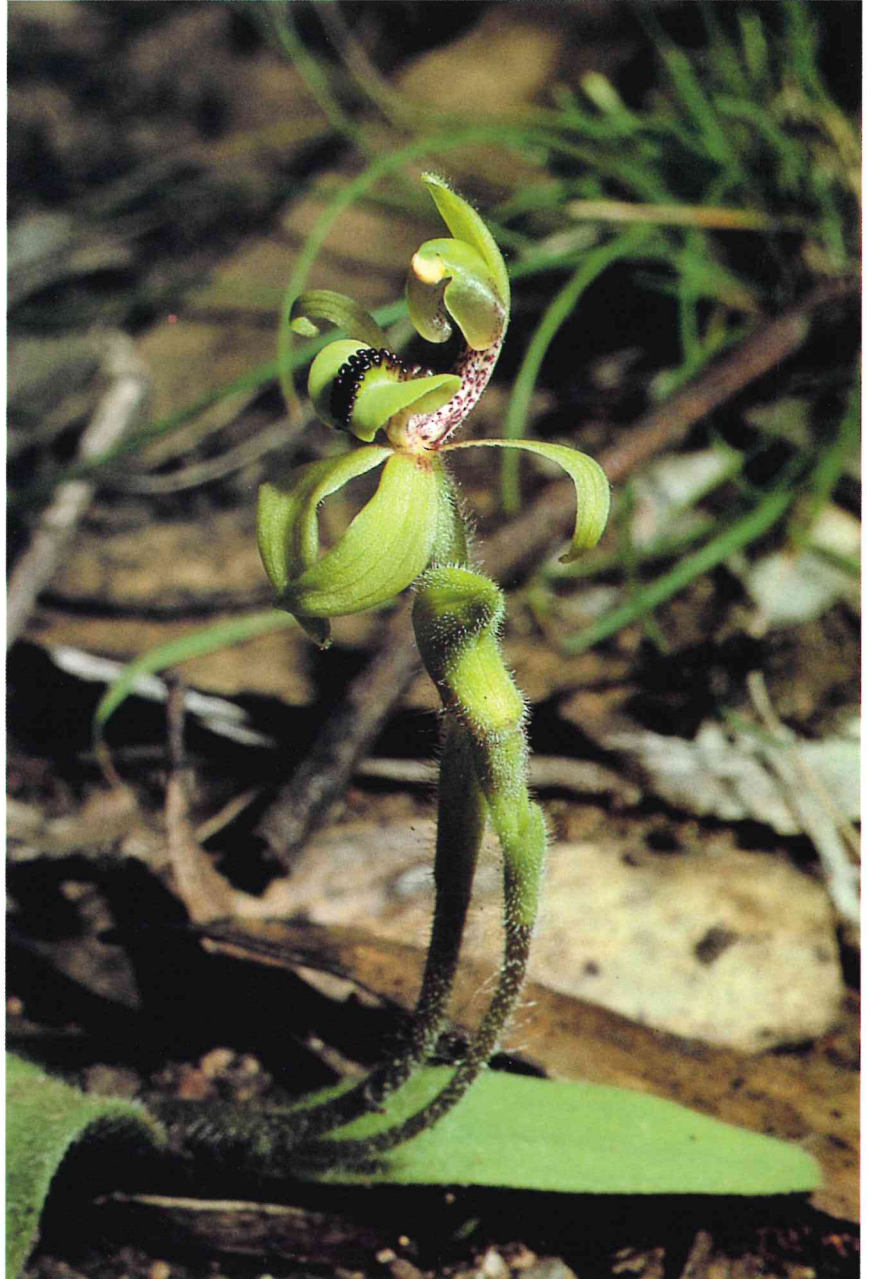
The habitat where this species is found is open eucalyptus woodland with soils consisting of sandy-clays or red loam.

Dwarf spider orchid was declared Rare in 1992 and ranked as Critically Endangered in 1995.

CALM has set up the Albany District and Central Forest Region Threatened Flora Recovery Teams to co-ordinate recovery actions addressing the most threatening processes affecting the species' survival in the wild (See overleaf).

There are only a few places where dwarf spider orchid has been found and CALM is keen to know of any others.

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



Dwarf spider orchid is one of the smallest of all spider orchids, rarely exceeding 5 cm in height. Photo – Andrew 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.

Dwarf spider orchid

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

Protection from current threats: The control of introduced weeds; fencing to prevent rabbit grazing; development of a fire protection plan; collection of seed; further surveys; 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 the species' presence 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:

Researching the biology and ecology of dwarf spider orchid; relocation of a car park; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); enhancing plant numbers by removal of weeds, amelioration of some other limiting factor, or by direct propagation and translocation techniques.



The tiny flowers of this subspecies rarely exceed 1 cm across. Photo – Stephen Hopper

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.



Dwarf spider orchid typically grows in areas of open eucalypt woodland. Photo – Emma Holland

