

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 It may be superseded by a more current version or just be out-of-date and have no relevance to current situations.

Hook-point Poison

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 Moora District office of the Department of Conservation and Land Management on (08) 9652 1911.

Commonly known as hook-point poison, *Gastrolobium hamulosum* is a small, erect, somewhat straggly shrub, to 45 cm tall. The numerous slender branchlets are covered with conspicuous short, white hairs. Bluish-green leaves have conspicuous net veins and the midrib is raised beneath. The oval shaped leaves have a wide, blunt tip that has a characteristic hooked point. The leaves are arranged in whorls of 3 up the stems. Golden yellow flowers, streaked with red, are arranged in short clusters at the ends of the branches. The calyx has long silky hairs and deeply divided lobes which taper to long points. Hook-point poison flowers between August and October.

James Drummond first collected hook point poison in 1864 from an unknown location in Western Australia. The first collection of hook-point poison from a known location was made in 1923 by H.L Wade from near Calingiri. Several additional collections have since been made from near Watheroo, Carani, Calingiri, east of New Norcia, near Bindi Bindi and at Wongan Hills. The New Norcia and Carani populations have not been relocated recently and are now only known from herbarium specimens.

Habitat is pale yellowish clay loam with some sand and gravel on clay flats, or white and grey sand or sandy clay, sometimes in disturbed ground with other colonising shrubs such as *Baeckea crispifolia*, *Gastrolobium calycinum* (York Road poison) and *Mirbelia spinosa*, or in low heath with *Allocasuarina campestris*, melaleucas, eucalypts and tall sedges. It has also been recorded from quartzite ridges.

Hook-point poison is only known from five populations that contain a total of around 120 adult plants and less than 100 seedlings. With continuing decline in the condition of the habitat, it was declared to be Rare Flora in June 1990 and ranked in December 1997 as Critically Endangered. The main threats are road, rail and drain maintenance activities, weed invasion, inappropriate fire regimes and possibly dieback disease caused by the plant pathogen *Phytophthora* spp.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (the Department) has set up the Moora 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).



Yellow and red pea flowers of hook-point poison. Photo – Andrew Brown

Hook-point poison is currently known from five 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 taxa do 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, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.

Hook-point Poison

Recovery actions that are being implemented are:

Protection from current threats: installing rare flora markers to mark populations on road and rail reserves; weed control; conducting further surveys; and regular monitoring of the health of the populations.

Protection from future threats: the development of both a translocation proposal and a fire management strategy; collection and storage of seed at the Department's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanic gardens); stimulating germination of seedlings in the wild using smoke water, burning or other methods; monitoring the impact of dieback disease; providing information about the importance of the species to the community; and researching the biology and ecology of the species. Other actions include ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and personnel from the Department 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.

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

This poster is sponsored by the Endangered Species Program of the Natural Heritage Trust.



Hook-point poison flowers from August to October. Photo – Andrew Brown



Low heath habitat of hook-point poison. Photo – Val English



Hook-point poison on a road reserve north of Watheroo. Photo – Val English

