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Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

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# Majestic 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 Pemberton District on (08) 9776 1207**

Commonly known as the majestic spider orchid, *Caladenia winfieldii* is an attractive spider orchid that grows between 30-60 cm high and produces dark pink flowers between late October and November.

The species is closely related to *C. harringtoniae*, with which it occasionally grows, but has larger, all-pink flowers, broader petals, broader, slightly clubbed sepals (the three outer parts of the flower) and a larger labellum (the lip or tongue of the flower) with a longer fringe.

Majestic spider orchid grows in forest areas where they adjoin winter-wet swamps and seasonal creeklines, and is usually found in grey, sandy-loam soil that is rich in organic matter. Often this species is found growing through the skirts of grasstrees, which are thought to offer some protection against grazing by kangaroos.

The species was discovered in the 1970s by the late Harry Winfield and, in recognition of his contribution to the conservation of this species, was named after him.

Majestic spider orchid was declared Rare in 1993 and ranked as Critically Endangered in 1995.

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

Majestic spider orchid is known from just two populations and CALM is keen 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.



The distinctive dark-pink flower typical of majestic spider orchid. 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.



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

**Protection from current threats:** Continuing feral pig control; development of a fire protection plan; fencing one population and regularly monitoring the health of both populations.

**Protection from future threats:** The maintenance of dieback hygiene; 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:

The collection and storage of seed at CALM's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); conducting further surveys, researching the biology and ecology of the majestic spider orchid; and enhancing plant numbers by removal of weeds, the amelioration of some other limiting factor, or by direct propagation and translocation techniques.



Majestic spider orchid often has two and occasionally three flowers. Photo – Andrew Brown

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.



Majestic spider orchid grows in areas of jarrah forest where they adjoin winter-wet swamps. Photo – Andrew Brown

