Round-leaf honeysuckle

Endangered Flora of Western Australia

If you think you have seen this plant, please call the Department of Conservation and Land Management's Albany District on (08) 9842-4500.

C.A. Gardner described *Lambertia orbifolia* in 1964 from a collection made from the Narrikup area by K.R. Newbey in the same year. The species was subsequently found in the Scott River area some 200km south-west of Narrikup. In 1999 research was conducted and, based on differences found in the genetic structure between plants in the two areas, *L. orbifolia* was split into two subspecies. These being *L. orbifolia* subsp. *orbifolia* ms (round-leaf honeysuckle) and *L. orbifolia* subsp. Scott River Plains (L.W. Sage 684).

Round-leaf honeysuckle is an erect shrub or small tree up to four metres high with distinctive leaves that are held in opposite pairs or in whorls of three. The leaves, which are more or less circular or broadly elliptic, are 1.2-5cm long and wide. Heads of four red flowers, each about 5-6cm long, are surrounded by a whorl of overlapping bracts. Flowering occurs throughout the year, but is mainly between November and May.

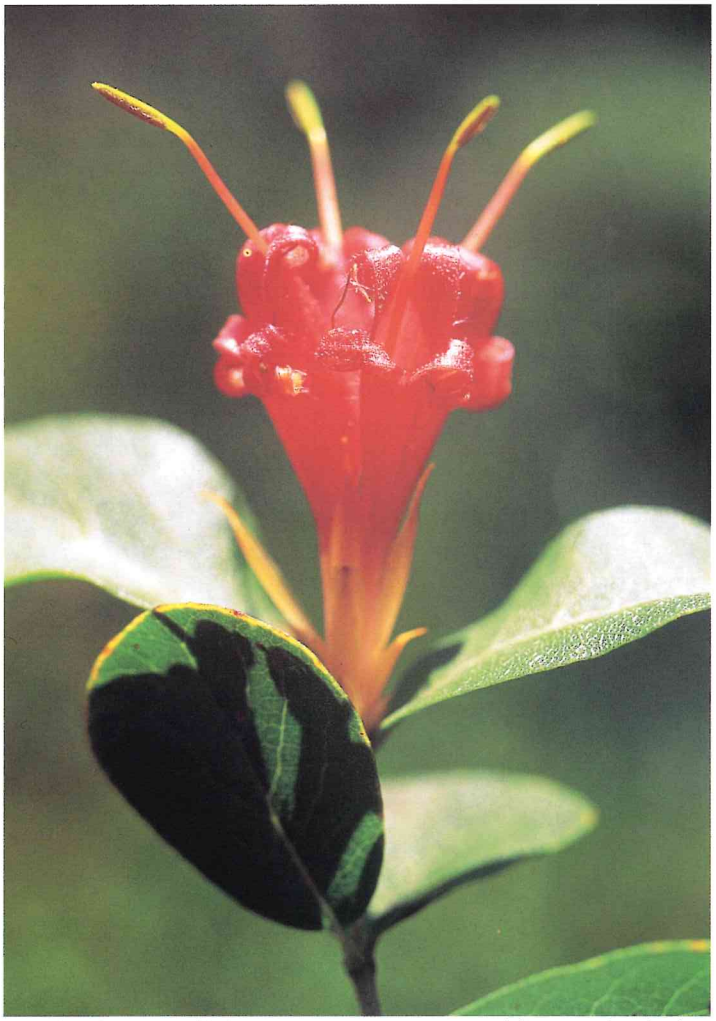
Round-leaf honeysuckle can be distinguished from *Lambertia orbifolia* subsp. Scott River Plains by its inflorescence, which has a shorter, thinner bract. Round-leaf honeysuckle is closely related to *L. inermis* but differs in its larger, hairier perianth, narrower, truncate bracts and much broader sessile leaves.

The subspecies is found only in the Narrikup area, growing in jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*), marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) and *Banksia* woodland on grey/brown/white gravelly, sandy, loam over ironstone.

Round-leaf honeysuckle is killed by fire which appears to stimulate germination of soil stored seed. However, recruitment is also known to occur in low numbers in unburnt areas. The response of round-leaf honeysuckle to soil disturbance and weed invasion is unknown although field observations suggest that weed invasion probably affects recruitment.

Round-leaf honeysuckle was ranked as Critically Endangered (CR) in 1999 due to it being known from just four populations and a continuing decline in number of individuals, area and quality of habitat. The main threats are disease, grazing, road and track maintenance, weed invasion and inappropriate fire regimes.

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



Round-leaf honey suckle has leaves in opposite pairs and flowers in heads of four. Photo – A.Brown

The subspecies 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 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 of Conservation and Land Management, Botanic Garden and Parks Authority, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.

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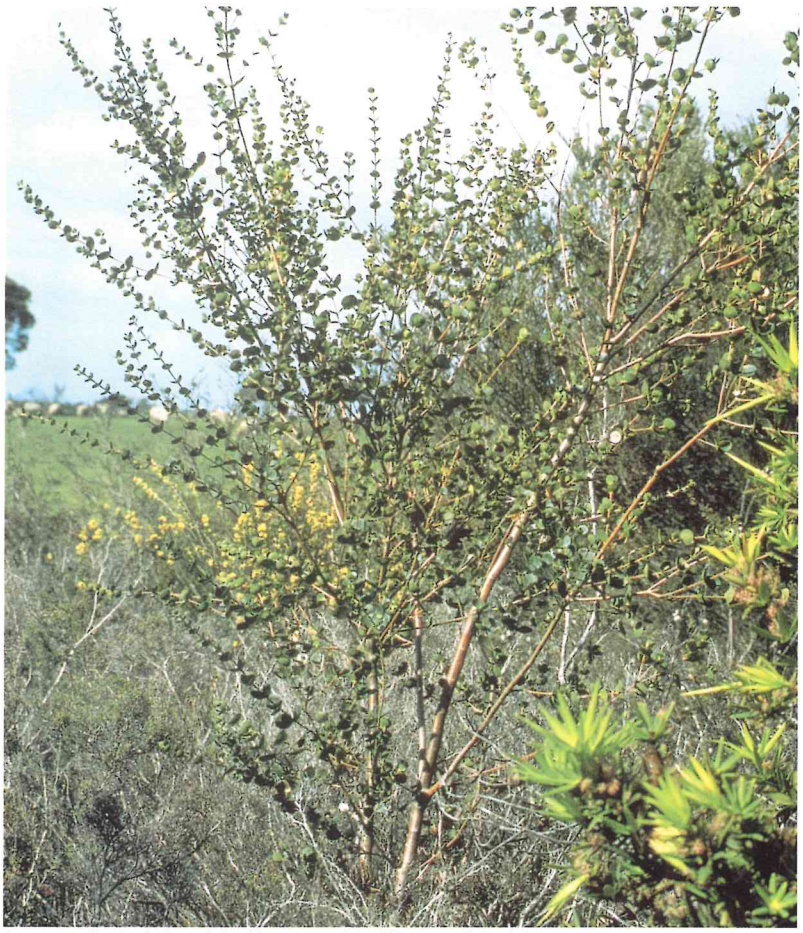
Recovery actions that have been, and will be, progressively implemented to protect the subspecies include:

Protection from current threats: These include the installation of Declared Rare Flora markers; translocating nursery grown plants into areas of protected habitat; control of pathogens such as dieback; conducting further surveys; and regular monitoring of the health of populations.

Protection from future threats: These include the development of a fire management strategy; 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 subspecies. Other actions include ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and Departmental personnel are aware of the subspecies' 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 was prepared by the Department of Conservation and Land Management.



A young plant of Round-leaf honey suckle. Photo – R.Smith

Round-leaf honey suckle has attractive tubular flowers. Photo – R.Smith

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
DEPARTMENT OF Conservation AND LAND MANAGEMENT
Conserving the nature of WA