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Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

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# Spiral fruited wattle

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 the spiral fruited wattle, *Acacia cochlocarpa* subsp. *cochlocarpa* ms is a sprawling, glossy shrub to 70 cm tall and up to 3 m wide. It has slightly zig-zagging branchlets and narrow incurved phyllodes (flattened leaf stalks that function as leaves) up to 7.5 cm long, with 7 nerves per face. Spiral-fruited wattle produces stalkless, elongated, pompom-shaped golden flower heads, 7 to 10 mm long, that appear from June to July.

Spiral-fruited wattle differs from a second subspecies *Acacia cochlocarpa* subsp. *velutinosa* ms, in its shorter phyllodes, velvety branchlets, phyllodes and legumes, and in its smaller, oblongoid flower heads. *Acacia cochlocarpa* subsp. *cochlocarpa* ms is also similar to coloured-leaf wattle (*Acacia alocophylla*), which has 8-nerved phyllodes, and to four-nerved wattle (*Acacia tetraneura*), which has 4-nerved phyllodes and protruding bracteoles on the buds.

Spiral-fruited wattle was first collected over 150 years ago. Since then it has been recorded over a range of almost 250 kilometres, from north of Watheroo to the Swan River near Perth. The majority of these collections were made over a range of about 20 km to the north of Watheroo, but most of these roadside populations appear to have been lost. During surveys undertaken in 1996 only one extant population was located from old collection sites, and this was found in a disturbed roadside on clayey sand with laterite in the Watheroo area.

The presently known population is threatened by road and track



The curved leaves and oblongoid flowers of spiral fruited wattle. Photo – Bruce Maslin

maintenance activities, inappropriate fire regimes and insect galling.

Due to the low number of extant plants and all individuals being in a single population, spiral-fruited wattle was declared as Rare Flora in November 1997 and ranked as Critically Endangered in 1998.

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 subspecies in the wild (see overleaf).

The subspecies is currently only known from a single population 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.



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## Recovery actions that are being implemented are:

**Protection from current threats:** conducting further surveys; and regular monitoring of the health of the population.

**Protection from future threats:** the implementation of a translocation proposal and development of 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); 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 is sponsored by the Endangered Species Program of the Natural Heritage Trust.



The habitat of spiral fruited wattle. Photo – Gillian Stack



Spiral fruited wattle is a dense sprawling shrub. Photo – Gillian Stack