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Trigwell's rulingia

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 CALM Mornington District on (08) 9734 1988.

Commonly known as Trigwell's rulingia, *Rulingia* sp. Trigwell Bridge is a small shrub to 1.5 metres tall and one metre wide. It is densely covered in star-shaped hairs that are typical of the genus. The narrow stipules are deciduous and the upper stipules are divided into thin lobes. The leaves are entire. The terminal flowers are creamy white, and petals are equal or shorter in length than the sepals. The broad-based petals embrace the stamens and the upper portion of the petals form a ligule. Flowering occurs in August.

Trigwell's rulingia was discovered in the West Arthur area in 1970 by Richard and Brenda Trigwell, and is known only from a single wild population. The species is found on a lateritic ridge supporting open low jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) and marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) woodland, with the plants growing in small fissures in the rock. It is not known whether this is the species' preferred habitat or whether these plants have survived because they were less accessible to grazing animals, including sheep and rabbits.

A translocation project is under way, and includes translocation of plants back into the wild population, but also aims to establish up to six other self-sustaining populations.

Due to the extremely small population size, restricted distribution and threats associated with growing in a specialised habitat, *Rulingia* sp. Trigwell Bridge was declared as Rare Flora in November 1993, and ranked as Critically Endangered in September 1995.

CALM has set up the Central Forest Region Threatened Flora Recovery Team to coordinate recovery actions that address threats to the survival of the species in the wild (see overleaf).

Threats include grazing, inappropriate fire regimes and weeds.

The species is currently known from a single wild population 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.



Trigwell's rulingia has distinctive globular fruits. Photo – Andrew Brown



Creamy white flowers of Trigwell's rulingia. Photo – Ray Smith

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, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.

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Trigwell's rulingia

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

Protection from current threats: controlling grazing; control of weeds; maintenance of dieback hygiene; and regular monitoring of the health of the population.

Protection from future threats: further translocations; the development of a fire management strategy; collection and storage of seed at CALM's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (in botanical gardens); and researching the biology and ecology of the species. Other actions include ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and CALM personnel 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.



An adult plant of Trigwell's rulingia. Photo – Bob Fitzgerald

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



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The habitat of Trigwell's rulingia. Photo – Bob Fitzgerald



Department of Conservation and Land Management