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Department of Biodiversity,
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Wilson's wattle

Endangered flora of Western Australia



Seeds of Wilson's wattle. Photo – Benson Todd

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

Protection from current threats:

control of weed invasion along road sides; regular monitoring of the health of known populations; and conducting further surveys for this plant in areas containing similar soils and geology to known populations.

Protection from future threats:

collection of seed and storage at DEC's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; the maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); researching the biology and ecology of Wilson's wattle; enhancing plant numbers by direct propagation and translocation techniques; ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and DEC staff are aware of its presence and the need to protect it; and the development of an Interim Recovery Plan for the species.

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

This project is funded by the Australian and State governments' investment through the Natural Heritage Trust, administered in the Midwest Region by the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council.



Above: Mature Wilson's wattle in flower. Photo – Jane Mansergh
Below: A mature plant of Wilson's wattle. Photo – Kathy Himbeck



Wilson's wattle

Endangered flora of Western Australia

**If you think you've seen this plant, please call the
Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's)
Moora District on (08) 9652 1911.**

Commonly known as Wilson's wattle, *Acacia wilsonii* is a low, spreading, wiry shrub to 50 centimetres high with horizontally spreading branches and erect, narrow phyllodes (modified leaf stalks) six to 22 centimetres long. One or two golden, globular flower heads to one centimetre across emerge from the base of each phyllode and are held close to the ground near the base of the plant. The seed pods are linear, greenish grey with yellowish margins to 5.5 centimetres long.

Wilson's wattle has been observed flowering from September to March. Flowering is thought to be dependent on rainfall, though plants in the same population can be seen flowering at different times.

Wilson's wattle occurs between Badgingarra and Eneabba in the northern agricultural region of Western Australia, growing on white or yellow sand with lateritic gravel in low heath or sandy clay over laterite. All populations are found within a 50-kilometre radius of each other.

The species was first collected by Paul Wilson in 1965 but was not formally named until Richard Cowan and Bruce Maslin described it in 1999. The species is currently known from five populations consisting of less than 200 individuals and DEC is keen to know of any others.



Close up of the Wilson's wattle flower. Photo – Jane Mansergh

Most populations occur in highly disturbed situations and it is thought that disturbance may be required for germination of soil-stored seed.

In 2003 the species was proposed for listing as declared rare flora and was subsequently ranked as endangered.

DEC has set up the Moora District Threatened Flora Recovery Team to coordinate recovery actions that address the greatest threats to the survival of this species in the wild.

The main threats include roadside maintenance (grading, construction of drainage channels and removal of roadside vegetation), weed invasion and inappropriate fire regimes.

If unable to contact DEC's Moora District Office on the above number, please phone DEC's Species and Communities Branch on (08) 9334 0455.

Recovery of a species

DEC 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 outline the recovery actions that are required to urgently address those threatening processes most affecting the ongoing survival of the threatened species in the wild and begin the recovery process.

IRPs are prepared by DEC and implemented by regional or district recovery teams consisting of representatives from DEC, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.



Department of
Environment and Conservation

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