



# ENDANGERED!



## DIEBACK-PRONE PLANTS OF THE EASTERN STIRLING RANGES

Thirteen species of flowering plants are confined to the thicket vegetation of the upper parts of the high eastern peaks of the Stirling Range National Park (Mt Success to Ellen's Peak). Four of these species are highly susceptible to dieback disease (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*), which is now a problem in the park and is present in their restricted habitat.

These species were mapped in 1986. They are currently being restudied as part of the proposed management plan for the Stirling Range to ensure their continued survival in the face of this threat.

The most widespread of the four species is the giant candle heath (*Andersonia axilliflora*) which, although being decimated on the Bluff Knoll Plateau, is found on several isolated

Top: *Dryandra* sp. nov. Left to right: *Andersonia axilliflora*, *Lambertia fairalli*, *Lambertia fairalli*.  
Photos - Greg Keighery

ridges and hilltops which are apparently free of disease.

The most restricted species, Fairall's lambertia (*Lambertia fairallii*), is only known from two isolated ridgelines which are fortunately disease-free.

Perhaps the most endangered species are, paradoxically, two plants which were once abundant on the Bluff Knoll Plateau but not found elsewhere. These species (an unnamed species of *Dryandra* and an unnamed species of *Persoonia*, both Proteaceae) have been severely affected by mass deaths caused by dieback.

During the studies leading up to

the production of the management plan, all known populations will be resurveyed for dieback status and effects. Dieback-free populations must be protected against accidental introduction of the disease, and all species need to be brought into cultivation and/or long-term seed storage, in case all populations become infected.

These species, always highly restricted in their natural ranges, face a bleak future unless we can protect them from an alien disease that humans brought into their world.

We hope the discovery and protection of dieback-free populations provide the time to research a more permanent solution to the disease.

GREG KEIGHERY



Cloud-capped Bluff Knoll, majestically brooding sentinel of the Stirling Range. Does it hold a secret in its stony heart - perhaps the answer to the missing mammal mystery? See story on page 9.



A western swamp tortoise (*Pseudemys umbrina*). Could this be one of the last to be photographed? Not if CALM's ten-year recovery plan succeeds. See page 28 for details.

# LANDSCOPE

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Mulga and fire - at best an uneasy relationship - sometimes symbiotic, sometimes disastrous. Find out when and where on page 20.



The Kimberley's rugged grandeur is deceptively fragile. Additional reserves managed by CALM help protect the region's delicate, complex and diverse ecosystems. See page 35.



An uncommon dragon, *Caimaniops amphibolurioides* inhabits mulga shrubs. Many other dragon lizards prefer harsher habitats such as rock-piles and salt lake/beds. See page 51.

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## COVER

Central netted dragon (*Ctenophorus inermis*), one of the more than 60 species of dragon lizard that inhabit the arid and semi-arid parts of Australia. The acute eyesight and swiftness of dragon lizards are essential in order to avoid predators and to capture food. See page 51.

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