



ENDANGERED



MCCUTCHEON'S GREVILLEA

The winter-flooded, shallow loams that occur over small areas of ironstone outcropping at the base of the Whicher Range, near Busselton, support many plant species found nowhere else. One such species is the critically endangered McCutcheon's grevillea (*Grevillea mccutcheonii* ms).

The first collections of this recently discovered species were made in 1991, by a local farmer interested in cultivating grevilleas. After several unsuccessful attempts to propagate it, he took a sample to Graham McCutcheon, then a member of CALM's Environmental Protection Branch in Bunbury and now retired. On examination, it was clear to Graham that it was an undescribed species (a formal description will be provided in a future edition of *Nuytsia*, published by CALM).

McCutcheon's grevillea is a dense shrub growing up to two metres, with large, handsome, red flowers and distinctive, three-lobed leaves that encircle the stem (a cultivated plant is established in the Endangered Species Garden at Kings Park and Botanic Garden). It is distantly related to

Grevillea manglesioides, which grows in the same area, but differs in its smooth, hairless leaves, rigid, stem-clasping leaves and larger, hairless flowers. Flowering occurs between May and December, peaking from July to November.

The vegetation type in which McCutcheon's grevillea grows was probably once a dense shrubland, but is now very degraded. Plants are growing in a seasonally wet area in shallow loamy soil over ironstone. Now regionally rare, it is estimated that just seven hectares of these wet ironstone communities remain intact on public lands in the southern Swan Coastal Plain.

Surveys in 1993 found 27 plants—five on a road verge and 22 on the adjoining private property. By early 1994, the private property plants had disappeared. This was possibly due to partial clearing and grazing by cattle. Further extensive surveys failed to locate any new plants. As only a single population is known, with just a few plants confined to a

narrow degraded roadside, the species was declared as rare flora in 1994.

At present, the population consists of just three mature plants. These have now been fenced, along with some adjoining private farmland, to protect them from accidental destruction and grazing by rabbits. It is hoped that the plants will spread into the fenced farmland.

In September 1995, CALM pledged \$300 000 for conservation of critically endangered flora and fauna (see 'Bush Telegraph'). Using a combination of these funds and funding from the Australian Nature Conservation Agency (ANCA), CALM has engaged a consultant to coordinate the implementation of urgent recovery actions for 38 critically endangered plant species, including McCutcheon's grevillea.

The benefits of protecting McCutcheon's grevillea in the Busselton area will extend to other threatened plants found nearby. For instance, *Grevillea elongata* is located in the same area and is a species which may be proposed for declaration as Rare Flora in 1996.

By Andrew Brown
Photos by Andrew Brown



Visitors can walk in the treetops along a series of walkways, platforms and stairways at the new Forest Heritage Centre in Dwellingup. (See page 10.)



A major survey of the Carnarvon Basin has recently been completed by staff from CALM, the WA Museum and the University of WA. What did they find? (See page 15.)

LANDSCOPE

VOLUME ELEVEN No. 2 SUMMER ISSUE 1995-96



It was a very good year in the Wildflower State. Find out just how good in our story on page 38.



Australia has its own families of songbirds that are very different from their European namesakes. See 'True Blue Birds' on page 45.



Quokkas were once widespread on WA's mainland, but the most visible populations are now found on just two islands. 'Where Have All the Quokkas Gone?' (See page 49.)

FEATURES

- THE FOREST HERITAGE CENTRE**
TAMMIE REID & MANDY CLEWS 10
- PATTERNS IN NATURE**
ALLAN BURBIDGE & NORM MCKENZIE 15
- LIVING WITH LOGGING**
IAN ABBOTT & PER CHRISTENSEN 21
- SERPENTINE NATIONAL PARK**
DAVID GOUGH, PAUL BROWN,
DAVID LAMONT & WAYNE TAYLOR 28
- ROCK WALLABIES OF YARDIE CREEK**
JACK KINNEAR 36
- THE WILDFLOWER STATE**
NEVILLE MARCHANT 38
- TRUE BLUE BIRDS**
LES CHRISTIDIS & ALLAN BURBIDGE 45
- WHERE HAVE ALL THE QUOKKAS GONE?**
ELIZABETH SINCLAIR & KEITH MORRIS 49

REGULARS

- IN PERSPECTIVE** 4
- BUSH TELEGRAPH** 6
- ENDANGERED McCUTCHEON'S GREVILLEA** 44
- URBAN ANTICS** 54

COVER

Western black-footed rock-wallabies are on the increase in Yardie Creek, thanks to a CALM fox-baiting program. Their numbers are being monitored by local tour operators Neil and Rhonda McGregor. See our story on page 36.

Illustration by Philippa Nikulinsky



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