



# ENDANGERED!



## PINNATE-LEAVED EREMOPHILA

A member of the family Myoporaceae, *Eremophila* is a relatively large genus of some two hundred named species distributed throughout all mainland States of Australia. There are also numerous unnamed species, with the estimated total around 400. Most occur in semi-arid or arid regions. Eremophilas are commonly known as emu bushes or poverty bushes. *Eremophila* is derived from the Greek *eremos*, meaning desert or lonely places, and *phileo*, the verb to love—in reference to the preferred habitat of many of the species.

Pinnate-leaved eremophila (*E. pinnatifida*) is an erect, rounded shrub that grows to over a metre in height when mature. Its unusual, distinctive leaves are in whorls of three, and are deeply pinnately lobed—the source of both the specific and common names. The species is allied to Wongan eremophila (*E. ternifolia*). However, it differs from Wongan eremophila and other allied species, such as Sargent's eremophila (*E. sargentii*) and whorled eremophila (*E. verticillatā*), by the diagnostic pinnate leaves and the densely hairy branches and leaves. The flower tube is deep purple with downy

hairs on the outside, and white with pale purple spots inside.

Its flowering period appears to be dependant on the species being in active growth and has been recorded between August and late January.

When Bob Chinnock first discovered pinnate-leaved eremophila in 1990, he counted 35 plants. However, it appears that the species could have a short life cycle, possibly less than 10 years, as the population had declined to just five plants by September 1998. In December 1996, an additional population of two plants was found and, in October 1998, a population of 16 plants was located on a narrow, very degraded road verge.

Volunteers from the Kalannie-Goodlands Land Conservation District Committee (LCDC) have searched for pinnate-leaved eremophila, but no new populations have been found. A survey of thirty large remnants in the north-eastern area of Dalwallinu Shire was carried out by the Goodlands-Jibberding LCDC in 1996,

and although these contained areas of similar habitat, no populations were found there either.

Pinnate-leaved eremophila grows only near Dalwallinu, in remnant tall open eucalypt woodland over sparse mixed shrubland of Drummond's eremophila (*E. drummondii*), quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) and *Acacia*-species, over dense annual grasses on brown clay loams.

Pinnate-leaved eremophila is ranked as Critically Endangered. Weed invasion is a threat to the long-term viability of all populations. An Interim Recovery Plan is in draft form and the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), through the coordination of the Merredin District Threatened Flora Recovery Team, is currently addressing those threats most endangering the species.

In June 1997, Alex Agáfonoff collected seed from two populations for storage in CALM's Threatened Flora Seed Centre. The material collected has only had initial processing, so its viability and germination rate is as yet unknown. Guy Richmond, who has been studying the ecology of rare *Eremophila* species, collected five cuttings in 1997.

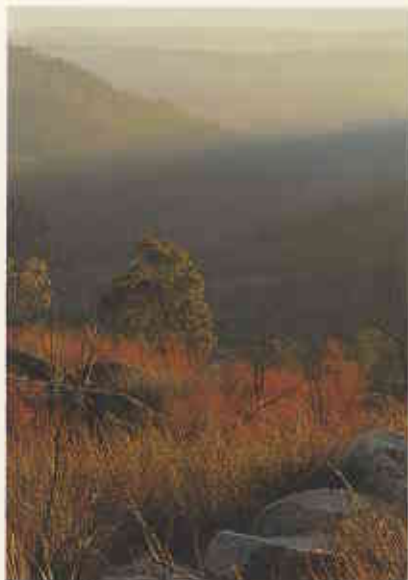
**Andrew Brown**

Photo – Andrew Brown

# LANDSCOPE

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*This land, where the Avon River cuts through the Darling Range, was home to WA's most notorious bushranger. His story is on page 10.*



*Just when everyone thought it was extinct, this small mammal suddenly reappeared. See 'Dibblers' on page 28.*



*100,000 hectares of bluegums by the year 2000. Was it a realistic target? See 'From Blue sky to Blue Chip' on page 35.*



*'What about the Animals', on page 21, discusses early findings from the Kingston Study.*



*'Karla Wongi: Fire Talk', on page 48, is a Nyungar perspective on the use of fire in the south-west of WA.*

## FEATURES

<b>BUSHRANGER COUNTRY</b> JOHN HUNTER.....	10
<b>SMALL STEPS TO SAVE SALMON GUMS</b> PATRICK PIGOTT.....	17
<b>WHAT ABOUT THE ANIMALS?</b> BRENT JOHNSON & KEITH MORRIS.....	21
<b>DIBBLERS</b> TONY START.....	28
<b>FROM BLUE SKY TO BLUE CHIP</b> CARIS BAILEY & TYM DUNCANSON.....	35
<b>A VIEW OF THE BAY</b> MANDY CLEWS, CHRIS SIMPSON & DAVID ROSE.....	43
<b>KARLA WONGI: FIRE TALK</b> GLEN KELLY.....	49

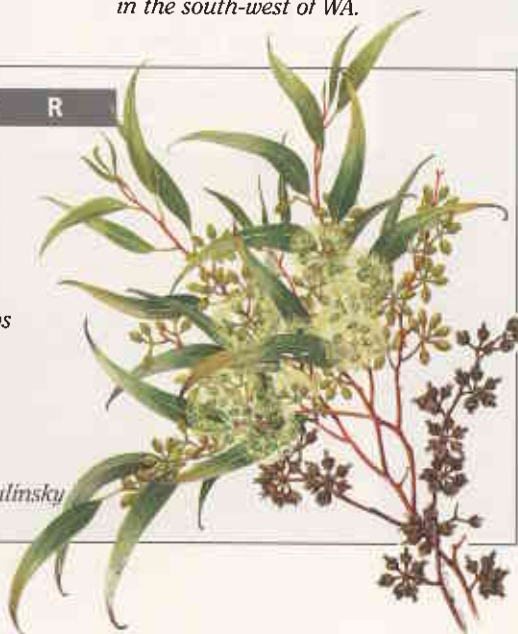
## REGULARS

<b>BUSH TELEGRAPH</b> .....	4
<b>ENDANGERED</b> PINNATE-LEAVED EREMOPHILA.....	16
<b>URBAN ANTICS</b> DUCK TALES.....	54

## COVER

*One of Western Australia's best-known woodlands may be under threat now, but research by CALMScience Division staff is playing a key role in safeguarding their future. See 'Small Steps to Save Salmon Gums', on page 17*

*Illustration by Philippa Nikulinsky*



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