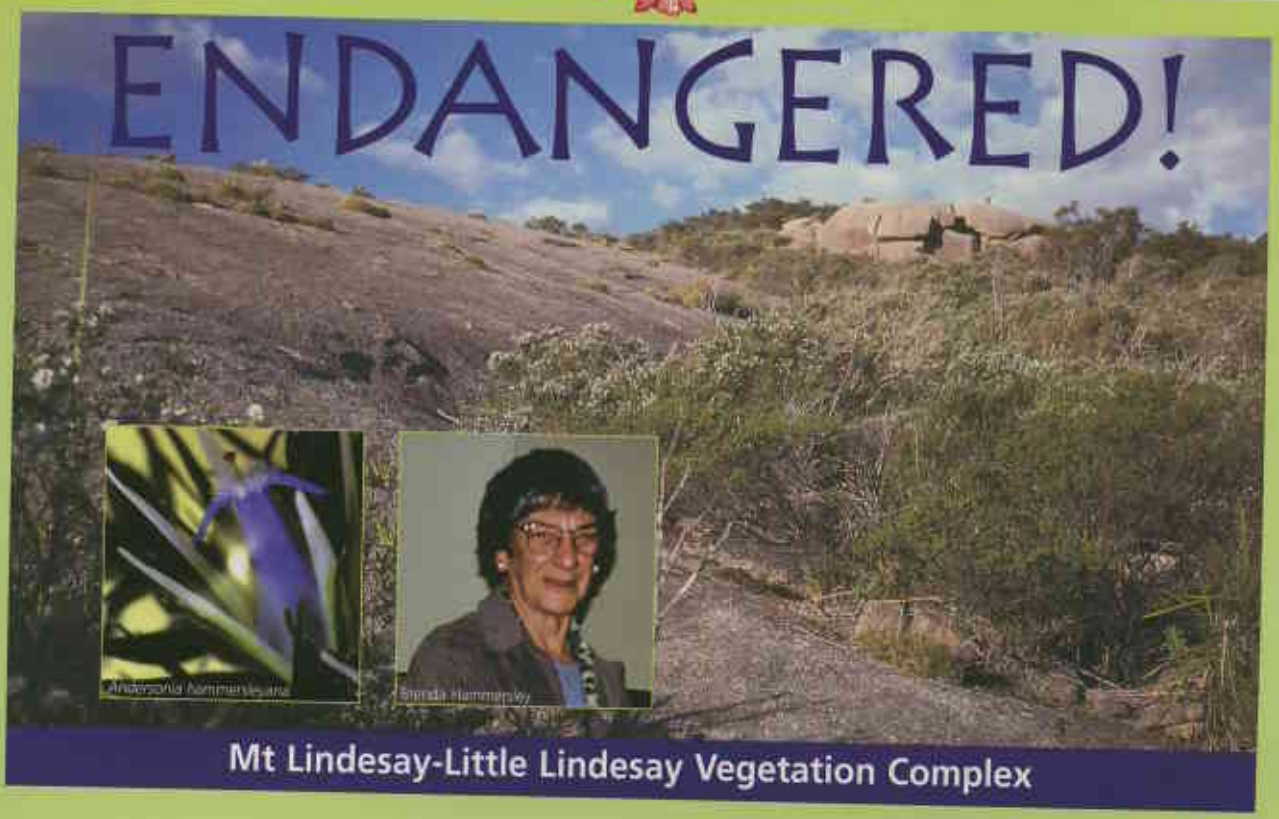
ENDANGERED!



Mt Lindesay-Little Lindesay Vegetation Complex

The impressive granite massifs of Mt Lindesay and Little Lindesay, near Denmark, host rare and endemic plant species and provide a last refuge for biodiversity eliminated from more altered lowland landscapes.

The 'Mt Lindesay-Little Lindesay Vegetation Complex' is listed as a threatened ecological community in the Endangered category. The complex is distinct from the plant communities of other similar mountain ecosystems near the southern coast, such as the Critically Endangered 'Montane Thicket of the Eastern Stirling Range'.

Jarrah shrub-mallee and heath predominate on the shallow to skeletal soils of the upper slopes and summit area, with mixed jarrah-marri-bullich low woodland in gullies. The middle slopes comprise relatively bare granite rock slabs and support a unique plant assemblage of scrub and open herbs. Four plants are endemic to Mt Lindesay: *Andersonia hammersleyana* ms, *Cryptandra congesta*, *Grevillea fuscolutea* and *Laxmannia grandiflora* subsp. *brendae*. Some other species are endemic to the immediate area, having their main populations on Mt Lindesay, as well as one or two populations close by. These include *Borya longiscapa*, *Andersonia virolens* ms, *Eucalyptus virgineae* ms, *Calothamnus* sp. Mt Lindesay and *Lasiopetalum cordifolium* subsp. *acuminatum* ms.

Other Rare and Priority plants that occur in the complex include Two Peoples Bay moss (*Pleurophascum occidentalis*), dwarf hammer orchid (*Drakaea micrantha*), James' paper lily (*Laxmannia jamesii*), two paper heaths (*Sphenotoma parviflorum* and *Sphenotoma* sp. Stirling Range), *Verticordia endlicheriana* var. *angustfolia*, showy flame pea (*Chorizema reticulatum*), *Gonocarpus trichostachyus*, *Sphaerolobium benetectum*, *S. pubescens*, *S. rostratum* and *Sollya drummondii*.

Volunteers, such as amateur botanist Brenda Hammersley, have added to our knowledge of this area by documenting flora and locating previously unrecorded rare and endemic plants. Two of the endemic plants located by Brenda are currently being described. These are the *Laxmannia* and the *Andersonia*—both being named after Brenda.

The Mt Lindesay-Little Lindesay Vegetation Complex is restricted to approximately 1900 hectares, all of which is located within an area of State forest that is a proposed conservation reserve. This ecological community is threatened by dieback caused by infection by the pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. While pockets of dieback-free vegetation still exist, dieback is widespread and has had a severe impact on large sections of the upper slopes. Other potential threats to the complex are frequent fire, feral animals and impacts of recreational activities.

The department's Warren region has put aside funds to map the current extent of dieback using aerial photography and ground survey. The photography and map will provide the necessary baseline information for future management actions. Immediate action will involve extensive *Phytophthora* control by applying phosphite using backpack misters. Volunteers and community groups will assist departmental staff in this work.

by Sally Black

photos by Sarah Barrett, Roger Hearn & Kath White

Winner of the Alex Harris Medal for excellence in science and environment reporting

LANDSCOPE

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An exciting range of recreational opportunities are being offered in some national parks, creating employment for locals. See page 28.

Native animals need tree hollows and people need wood. How are these conflicting uses managed? See page 20.

The search to find out the cause of a new tree killer known as Mundulla Yellows. See page 41.

Declining water levels threaten a remarkable community of cave-dwellers in Yanchep National Park. Turn to page 34.

Re-discovering the long-forgotten memoirs of a Kimberely pioneer. See page 48.

FEATURES

REGULARS

COVER

Leafy seadragons are occasionally seen in the seagrass around the Busselton Jetty (see page 10). They are in the same family as seahorses but, unlike seahorses, they have leafy appendages that make them almost invisible in their surroundings. The male carries the eggs in the skin beneath his tail. After hatching, the young swim off to fend for themselves.

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