



Montane thicket of the eastern Stirling Range

TEC Description

The community occurs in the high peaks of the eastern Stirling Range mountains. It is commonly found at altitudes of approximately 900 to 1090 m above sea level, but extends to lower altitudes in two occurrences. It comprises a heathland and dense shrub thicket with a number of endemic species. Several endemic and characteristic species within the community and the near absence of *Eucalyptus* species differentiate it from other vegetation in the range. Thirteen species of threatened flora are known in the community: *Andersonia axilliflora*, *Banksia brownii*, *Banksia montana*, *Darwinia collina*, *Darwinia nubigena*, *Darwinia squarrosa*, *Daviesia obovata*, *Deyeuxia drummondii*, *Lambertia fairallii*, *Latrobea colophona*, *Leucopogon gnaphalioides*, *Persoonia micranthera* and *Sphenotoma drummondii*.

Twenty-one priority flora taxa also occur in the community. *Andersonia axilliflora* is a characteristic endemic species of the community. Five threatened fauna occur within the community: *Setonix brachyurus* (quokka), *Pseudococcus markharveyi* (*Banksia montana* mealybug), *Trioza barrettiae* (*Banksia brownii* plant-louse), *Zephyrarchaea robinsi* (eastern massif assassin spider), *Atelomastix tumula* (Bluff Knoll atelomastix millipede) and a priority land snail *Bothriembryon glauerti* (priority 2).



Distribution

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) Region: South Coast
DBCA District: Albany
Local Government Authority: Gnowangerup

Habitat Requirements

This community occurs on shallow soils on quartzite mountain summits from approximately 750 m above sea level (a.s.l.) to 1090 m a.s.l. Conditions are distinctively montane with extremes of temperatures, high humidity and exposure, and occasional snowfalls.

Indigenous Interests

An Aboriginal Sites Register is kept by the Department of Indigenous Affairs and lists one significant site in the vicinity of occurrences. The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC), an umbrella group, covers the areas in which the community occurs. Traditional owner group: Minang.

Conservation Status

Listed as critically endangered under WA Minister Environmentally Sensitive Areas list in policy.

The Eastern Stirling Range Montane Heath and Thicket is listed as endangered under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Threatening Processes

The main threats to the community include dieback disease caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, too frequent fire, grazing and browsing, recreational impacts, and a drying climate.

Recovery Plan

An interim recovery plan has been developed for the community that outlines the recovery actions required to reduce the threats, maintain or improve the overall condition in the known locations, and reduce the level of threat to ensure the community's long-term survival. Recommended actions include applying phosphite to control dieback, managing browsing and rabbits, monitoring flora and vegetation, dieback hygiene, managing fire, storing seed, developing a restoration strategy, mapping critical habitat, installing protection from physical trampling, and promoting awareness.

Citation

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. (2020). Recovery plans and interim recovery plans <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/plants-and-animals/threatened-species-and-communities/wa-s-threatened-ecological-communities>.

Key References

Barrett S. (1996). Biological Survey of Mountains of southern Western Australia. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Albany.

Department of Parks and Wildlife (2016). Montane Heath and Thicket of the South West Botanical Province, above approximately 900 m above sea level (Eastern Stirling Range Montane Heath and Thicket Community). Interim Recovery Plan 2016-2021 for Interim Recovery Plan No. 370. Perth.

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