

Stirling Range banksia

E n d a n g e r e d F l o r a o f W e s t e r n A u s t r a l i a

If you think you've seen this plant, please call the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) Albany District on (08) 9842 4500.

Commonly known as Stirling Range banksia, *Banksia montana* is named from the Latin *montanus*, meaning 'of mountains'. This refers to its distribution, as it is only known from summits in the Stirling Range.

Stirling Range banksia is an erect woody shrub, growing to 2.5 m high with dense, rough foliage. Its yellow flowers are borne on old wood inside the foliage, and appear in November.

Stirling Range banksia was first collected by Fred Lullfitz in 1964 and again by Ken Newbey in 1966 from the same area. Another collection was made by Greg Keighery in 1986, also from the same locality. The species was named by Alex George in 1996.

The species occupies areas of brown loam on schist and quartz in very dense heath scrub in the upper peaks of the Stirling Range. It was distributed over a relatively large area in the late 1980s but is now known from just three populations, probably due to the impacts of dieback (caused by the plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi*) and fire. All populations are exposed to threats associated with fire and plant pathogens.

Due to the low number of plants and the threats associated with a highly specific habitat, Stirling Range banksia was declared as Rare Flora in September 1987 and ranked as Critically Endangered in September 1995.

DEC has set up the Albany District Threatened Flora Recovery Team to coordinate recovery actions that address threats to the survival of the species in the wild (see overleaf).

The species is currently known from only a few populations and DEC is keen to know of any others.

If unable to contact the district office on the above number, please phone DEC's Wildlife Branch on (08) 9334 0422.



Note the long pinnate leaves typical of this species. Photo – Emma Holland



A healthy young plant in active growth. Photo – Ellen Hickman

Recovery of a Species



DEC is committed to ensuring that Critically Endangered taxa do not become extinct in the wild. This is done through the preparation of a Recovery Plan (RP) or Interim Recovery Plan (IRP), which outlines the recovery actions that are required to urgently address those threatening processes most affecting the ongoing survival of threatened taxa in the wild and begin the recovery process.

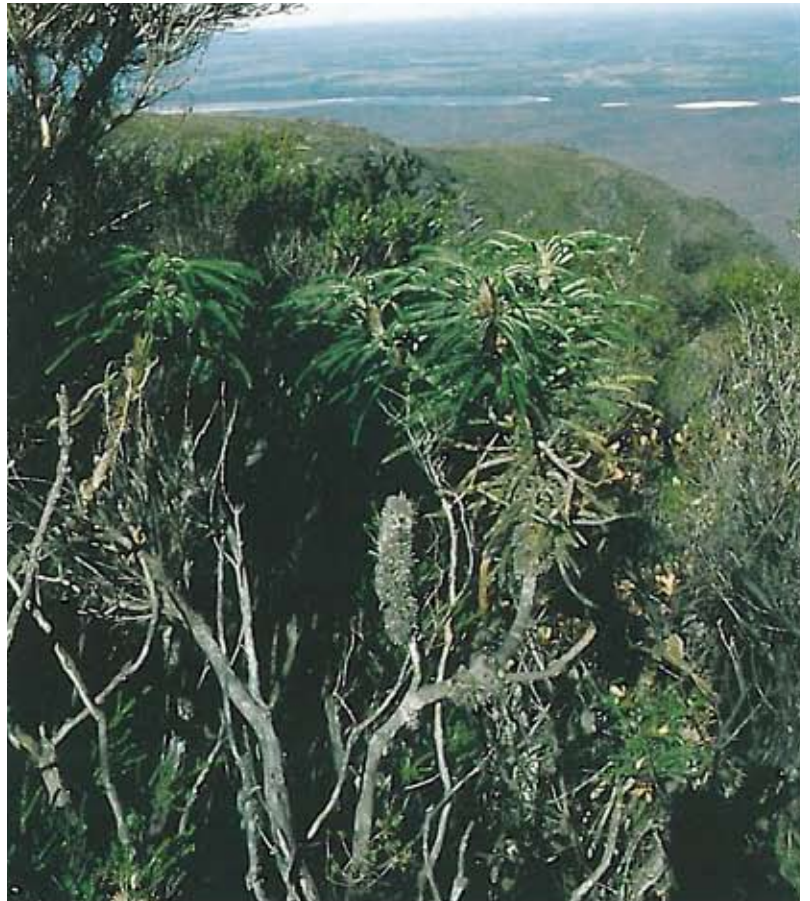
IRPs are prepared by DEC and implemented by Regional or District Recovery Teams consisting of representatives from DEC, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, community groups, private landowners, local shires and various government organisations.

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Recovery actions that have been, and will be, progressively implemented to protect the species include:

Protection from current threats: The maintenance of dieback hygiene and the control of dieback using phosphite spray; conducting more surveys; and regular monitoring of the health of the populations.

Protection from future threats: The development of both a translocation proposal and a fire management strategy; collection and storage of seed at DEC's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (in botanical gardens); and researching the biology and ecology of the species. Other actions include ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and DEC personnel are aware of the species' presence and the need to protect it, and that all are familiar with the threats identified in the Interim Recovery Plan.



A mature plant on one of the peaks of the Stirling Range. Photo – Ellen Hickman

IRPs will be deemed a success if the number of individuals within the population and/or the number of populations have increased.



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This photo illustrates the effect of dieback and fire on the habitat of Stirling Range dryandra. Photo – Emma Holland



Department of Environment and Conservation

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