

Rough emu bush

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)
Moora District on (08) 9652 1911.**



Rough emu bush is a low-growing, spreading shrub. Photo – Emma Richardson

Commonly known as rough emu bush, *Eremophila scaberula* is a low-growing shrub with rough, slightly sticky branches and foliage. The branches have raised lines which extend from each leaf stalk. The crowded leaves are four to eight millimetres long and have a flat upper surface and a prominent midrib underneath. Solitary flowers emerge from the leaf axils and their pale to dark purple flower tube is about 10 to 12 millimetres long. Flowering occurs from July to November.

Rough emu bush differs from heath-like eremophila (*Eremophila microtheca*) in its low growing habitat, slightly rough branches and foliage, hairless calyx segments, and less wrinkled fruits. It differs from Sargent's poverty bush (*Eremophila sargentii*) in that it is non-aromatic, has star-shaped hairs on the



A close-up of the solitary purple flowers of rough emu bush. Photo – Andrew Brown

branches and leaves, and a densely hairy corolla tube.

Rough emu bush was first collected in 1903 at Moora. Despite further searches, no more plants were located until 1996 when DEC discovered a population south of Moora. There are currently three populations known over a range of less than 20 kilometres.

Rough emu bush is found on rich loam or clay flats that support open low salmon gum woodland over low

scrub and grasses. Generally the plants are healthy although the surrounding habitat is badly degraded.

Due to the restricted distribution and continuing decline in the quality of the species' habitat, rough emu bush was declared as rare flora in October 1996 and was ranked as critically endangered in November 1998. The main threats are road, rail and firebreak maintenance, weed competition, inappropriate fire regimes, lack of appropriate disturbance to stimulate germination and degraded habitat.

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

Rough emu bush is currently known from three 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 Species and Communities Branch on (08) 9334 0455.


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 or Interim Recovery Plan (IRP), which outline the recovery actions that are required to urgently address those threatening processes most affecting the ongoing survival of the threatened species 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.



Department of
Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future 



Rough emu bush

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

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

Protection from current threats: control of weeds; conducting further surveys; and regular monitoring of the health of each population.

Protection from future threats: 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 (i.e. in botanical gardens); and researching the biology and ecology of the species. Other actions include ensuring that relevant authorities, landowners and DEC staff 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.

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

This project is funded by the Australian and State governments' investment through the Natural Heritage Trust, administered in the Midwest Region by the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council.



Above: A cluster of purple flowers on the rough emu bush. Photo – Emma Richardson
Below: Habitat of rough emu bush. Photo – Gina Broun

