

Scaly-leaved featherflower

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 or Geraldton District on (08) 9921 5955.



The leaves are a rounded shape and masses of flowers are produced at the end of the branches. Photo – Gemma Phelan

The scaly-leaved featherflower (*Verticordia spicata* subsp. *squamosa*) is an attractive compact shrub to 1.5 metres tall and one metre wide, with rounded to elliptic-shaped leaves, each of which has prominent oil glands. It produces masses of pinkish-white feathery flowers at the ends of its branches during late spring and early summer (October to December).

Verticordia spicata subsp. *squamosa* differs from *Verticordia spicata* subsp. *spicata* in its smaller flowers and leaves.



Pink flowers of the scaly-leaved featherflower. Photo – Gemma Phelan

The subspecies is found growing in deep yellow sand in low scrub among open mallee.

It was first found east of Three Springs in 1974. Since then only nine,

mostly small populations have been located.

Scaly-leaved featherflower was ranked as critically endangered in 1995.

DEC has set up the Moora and Geraldton districts threatened flora recovery teams to coordinate recovery actions addressing the most threatening processes affecting the species' survival in the wild (see overleaf).

Only a few small populations of this attractive featherflower are known and DEC is keen to know of any others.

If unable to contact the district offices on the above numbers, 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

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

Protection from current threats:

installation of rare flora markers to demarcate roadside populations; control of introduced weeds; rabbit control; erection of fences to exclude stock; undertaking smokewater and disturbance trials to stimulate germination; watering of both natural and translocated populations in drought years; development of a fire protection plan; and regular monitoring of the health of each population.

Protection from future threats:

conducting further surveys; rehabilitation of areas in and around populations of scaly-leaved featherflower; collection and storage of seed in DEC's Threatened Flora Seed Centre; maintenance of live plants away from the wild (i.e. in botanical gardens); researching the biology and ecology of the scaly-leaved featherflower; and enhancing plant numbers by removal of weeds, amelioration of some other limiting factor, or by direct propagation and translocation techniques. 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 threatening processes identified in the Interim Recovery Plan.



Top: A plant in full flower in early January. Photo – Anne Cochrane
Above: Seed gathering. Photo – DEC

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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Scaly-leaved featherflower. Photo – Benson Todd