

Scleranthus fasciculatus



FAMILY: CARYOPHYLLACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Scleranthus fasciculatus*,
(R.Br.) Hook.f., *Fl. Tasm.* 1: 42 (1855)

COMMON NAME: Spreading knawel

COMMONWEALTH STATUS: (*EPBC Act*)
Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS: (*TSP Act*) vulnerable

Scleranthus fasciculatus.
Threatened Species Unit.

Description

A straggling, ground dwelling perennial with a non-woody base. **Stems:** The stems are up to 30 cm long and usually hairy. **Leaves:** The leaves are in clusters, curved inwards and usually hairy, between 4-12 mm long and 0.3-0.8 mm wide. The tips of the leaves are pointed and have very narrow margins that are thin, dry and translucent. **Flowers:** The inflorescence consists of two flowers held by bracts (leaf-like structures) that are attached directly onto the top of a stem, which is up to 7 mm long and usually hairy. The bracts are also usually hairy. Flowering is from September to March (Flora of Victoria). **Fruit:** The fruit is not ribbed and the veins are not obvious. The fruit measure between 1.5-2.4 mm long and 0.6-0.9 mm wide (description from Walsh & Entwistle 1996). **Confusing species:** *Scleranthus fasciculatus* resembles a sprawling, overgrown version of the more widespread common knawel (*Scleranthus biflorus*), which is a tight green cushion plant sold in nurseries (description from Bushcare 1999).

Distribution and Habitat

On the mainland this species occurs in Victoria and New South Wales. It is also known from New Zealand. In Tasmania, *Scleranthus fasciculatus* is only recorded from a few locations in the Midlands and south-east. The vegetation at most of the sites is silver tussock grassland/grassy woodland. It appears to need gaps between the tussock spaces for its survival and both fire and stock grazing maintain the openness it requires (Bushcare 1999, TPLUC 1996, Walsh & Entwistle 1996).



Key Sites and Populations

Key sites for this species include Mt Murray, Ellesmere, St. Peters Pass, Lambert Park and the Queens Domain in Hobart (TPLUC 1996).

Known Reserves

This species is reserved in the Mount Rumney Conservation Area.

Ecology and Management

Scleranthus fasciculatus can benefit from disturbance that creates open patches of ground. The species persists despite disturbance from fire, domestic and native grazing and firewood collection. Adverse impacts include forest clearance, herbicide, road construction and road maintenance. This species also suffers from invasion by broom along roadsides (TPLUC 1996).

Conservation Status Assessment

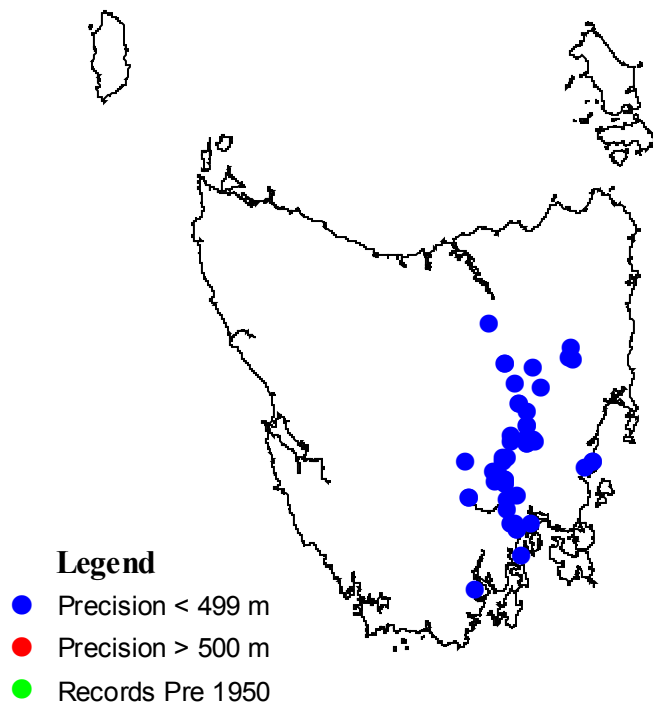
Scleranthus fasciculatus may qualify for downlisting to rare.

Further Information

- Bushcare 1999, *Tasmanian Bushcare Toolkit: Kit 5 Threatened Species in your bush*, Department of Primary Industries, Water & Environment, Hobart.
- Kirkpatrick, JB 1991, *Tasmanian Native Bush: A Management Handbook*, Tasmanian Environment Centre, Hobart.
- Tasmanian Public Land Use Commission 1996, *Environment & Heritage Report Vol IV, Background Report*, Part C, Tasmanian Commonwealth Regional Forest Agreement, Hobart.
- Walsh, NG & Entwistle, TJ eds 1996, *Flora of Victoria*, Volume 3, Inkata Press, Melbourne.

Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Unit records, June 2003)



1:25 000 Map Sheets

Blackmans Bay, Bothwell, Bougainville, Bushy Park, Conara, Elderslie, Hobart, Jacobs, Kempton, Longford, Montacute, New Norfolk, O'Connors, Oatlands, Raminea, Ross, Roys, St Pauls Dome, Stonor, Taroon, Tea Tree, Triabunna, Tunbridge, Vincents.

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