

Spyridium vexilliferum var. *vexilliferum*



Spyridium vexilliferum var. *vexilliferum*.
E. Lazarus.

FAMILY: RHAMNACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Spyridium*
vexilliferum var. *vexilliferum*, (Hook.)
Reissek, *Linnaea* 29: 285 (1858)

COMMON NAME: Helicopter bush

COMMONWEALTH STATUS: (*EPBC*
Act) Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS: (*TSP Act*) rare

Description

A slender, much-branched shrub, 30-90 cm tall. **Leaves:** The leaves are narrow and lance-shaped, spreading, with either a blunt or short, narrow, hard tip. The upper surface of the leaves is hairless and the underside covered with white or rust coloured hairs. **Flowers:** The flowers are 1.5 mm in diameter and clustered in small, dense heads on slender stalks about as long as the leaves. Each head has 1-3 conspicuous white, velvety, floral bracts. Flowering is from September to January (Flora of Victoria). **Fruit:** The fruit is a capsule (description from Curtis & Morris 1975). **There is only one variety of *Spyridium vexilliferum* in Tasmania.**

Distribution and Habitat

On the mainland this species occurs in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. In Tasmania, *Spyridium vexilliferum* var. *vexilliferum* is found in sandy heaths and on rocky outcrops in the east, north and west of Tasmania (Curtis & Morris 1975).

Key Sites and Populations

Key sites for this species include Couta Rocks, the west side of Chinese Creek, Schouten Island, Coles Bay, the Molesworth area, Queenstown, the Cataract Gorge, Coles Bay towards Fisheries, Coles Bay near Hazards, Risdon, Launceston, Flinders Island, near Little Swanport, Cape Portland, Prime Seal Island, Apsley Marshes, Patrick River near Nunamara, Temma Road near Arthur River, Marrawah, near Moulting Lagoon, Bluff Hill, Bluff Hill Point, Bluff above Pipers River near Karoola, Epping Forest and Kafoozalum Creek.



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Known Reserves

Reserved in the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area, Butlers Ridge Nature Reserve, Buxton River Forest Reserve, Cape Portland Private Sanctuary, Castle Cary Regional Reserve, Coles Bay Conservation Area, Freycinet National Park, Molesworth Conservation Area, Moulting Lagoon Game Reserve, Tom Gibson Nature Reserve and the West Point State Reserve.

Ecology and Management

Research suggests that a fire frequency higher than 5-6 years has the potential to eradicate *Spyridium vexilliferum* var. *vexilliferum* from a site (Butterworth 2001). This species does not appear to be sensitive to root rot (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*). The population in the Tom Gibson Nature Reserve is confined to an area where gravel had been mined in the past (Butterworth 2001). The population appears to have benefited from the disturbance and from the removal of topsoil, reducing productivity at the site thereby resulting in a reduction of competition from other species (Kirkpatrick 2007).

Insects are the most likely pollination vector for this species (A. Hingston pers. comm.).

Conservation Status Assessment

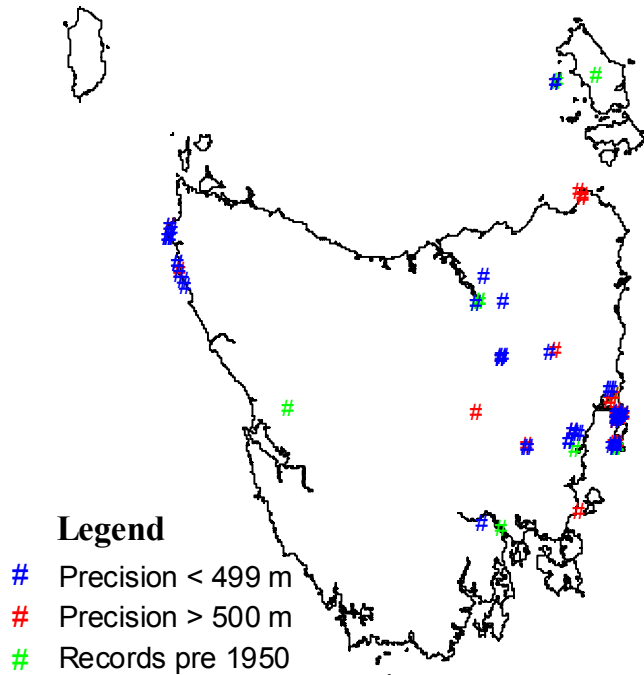
Further taxonomic work may show that occurrences on the West Coast are a different variety of *Spyridium vexilliferum*, in which case, reassessment of the conservation status of both varieties will be required.

Further Information

- Butterworth, J 2001, *Conservation Ecology of a Rare Shrub Spyridium vexilliferum*, BSc Hons, School of Geography, University of Tasmania.
- Curtis, WM & Morris, DI 1975, *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*, Part 1, Government Printer, Hobart.
- Kirkpatrick JB 2007, Collateral benefit: unconscious conservation of threatened plant species. *Australian Journal of Botany*, vol. 55, pp 221–224.
- Kirkpatrick, JB, Barker, P, Brown, MJ, Harris, S & Mackie, R 1994, *The Reservation Status of Tasmanian Vascular Plant Communities*, Tasmanian Conservation Trust Incorporated, Hobart.

Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Unit, January 2003)



1:25 000 Map Sheets

Bluff, Cleveland, Coles Bay, Friendly, Gormanston, Hanleth, Hobart, Interlaken, Launceston, Lemont, Leventhorpe, Lilydale, Lodi, Lyme Regis, Marrawah, New Norfolk, Nunamara, Ordnance, Royalty, Schouten, St Pauls Dome, Temma, Tooms, Wybalenna.

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