

# *Stylidium perpusillum*

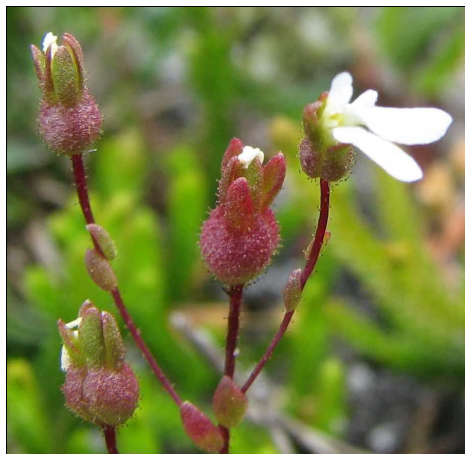


Image by Mark Wapstra

**FAMILY:** STYLIDIACEAE

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Stylidium perpusillum*  
Hook.f., *London J. Bot.* 6: 266 (1847)

**COMMON NAME:** Tiny triggerplant

**COMMONWEALTH STATUS** (EPBC Act):  
Not Listed

**TASMANIAN STATUS** (TSP Act): rare

## **Description**

Slender annual herb, with erect flowering stems 1.5 to 5 cm high, thread-like but rigid, with scattered glandular hairs. Leaves few, in a basal rosette, linear spathulate to obovate, 2 to 4 mm long, 1 to 2 mm wide. Flowers terminal, solitary or in an open few-flowered corymb. Receptacle globose; calyx lobes with scattered glandular hairs, almost equal, oblong with apex rounded, c. 1.5 mm long. Corolla white; tube short; lobes paired vertically; anterior lobes largest and 2 to 3 mm long, relatively broad and with small wings at the base; posterior lobes smaller, sometimes more-or-less cucullate. Filaments of the two stamens united with the style to form a column, the anthers attached at its top and the shortly stipitate, bearded stigma between them; column c. 1 mm long, mobile. Capsule globose, 1.5 to 2.0 mm in diameter. Seeds ellipsoid, c. 0.2 mm long, smooth. Flowering October to December (depending on seasonal conditions). (Description from Curtis 1963 and Gray 2011)

**Confusing species:** There are two other annual *Stylidium* species in Tasmania, *S. beagleholei* and *S. despectum* (Wege 2011). *Stylidium perpusillum* differs most obviously from these two species in having a globose capsule rather than an obloid one (Wege 2011).

## **Distribution and Habitat**

On mainland Australia *Stylidium perpusillum* occurs in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia (Gray 2011). In Tasmania the species occurs mainly in near-coastal areas in the north and northeast (and possibly Flinders Island), with small colonies also known the northwest and King Island. It grows in sandy humic heaths and open shrublands, moist depressions and poorly drained hollows.

## **Key Sites and Populations**

Key sites include Mt William, Narawntapu, Waterhouse and Stony Head.

### **Known Reserves**

Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area, Cameron Regional Reserve, Counsel Hill Conservation Area, Granite Point Conservation Area, Mount William National Park, Narawntapu National Park and Waterhouse Conservation Area.

### **Ecology and Management**

Plants of the genera *Stylidium* are known as ‘trigger plants’ ... when the base of the column bearing the anthers (pollen sacs) is disturbed, the column flicks forward, showering the back of visiting insects with pollen. This pollen is brushed off onto the female surface of other flowers visited (Curtis 1963).

With regard to threats and management, clearance of suitable habitat is considered a threat to sites on private land. Considerable areas of potential coastal heathland habitat have been cleared and converted to pasture since European settlement (Kirkpatrick 1977), and those that have not been converted are often subject to stock grazing. Areas where this species is encountered should be managed as stock-free zones, as it is considered susceptible to trampling. Suitable fire frequencies may benefit the species by reducing the competition for light from surrounding taller shrubs.

### **Conservation Status Assessment**

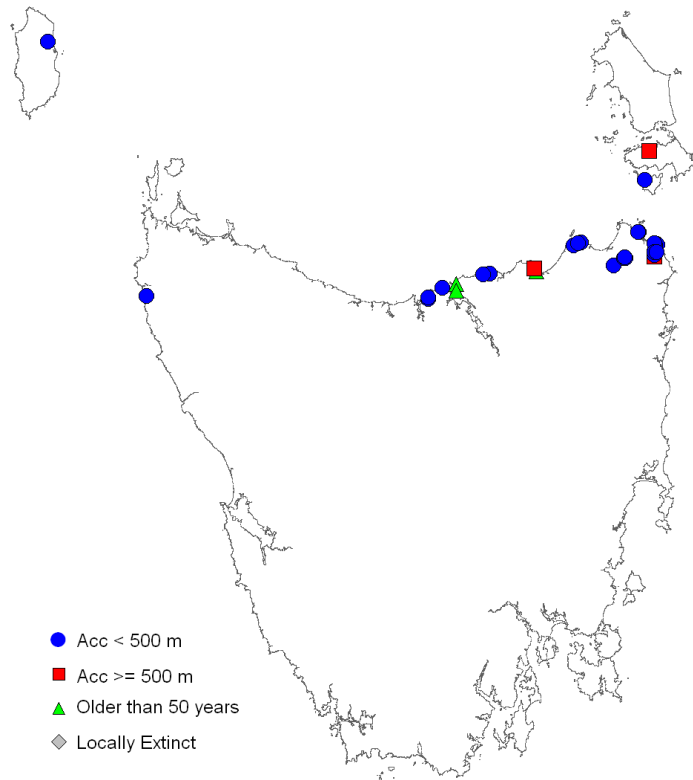
Several new sites have been discovered since the species was listed on the TSP Act in 1995, and its range extended significantly (Arthur-Pieman and King Island): a re-assessment of its conservation status may be warranted.

### **Further Information**

- Curtis, W.M. (1963). *The Student's Flora of Tasmania, Part 2*. Government Printer, Hobart.
- Gray AM (2011). 127 Stylidiaceae, version 2011:1. In MF Duretto (Ed.) *Flora of Tasmania Online*. 9 pp. (Tasmanian Herbarium, Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery: Hobart). [www.tmag.tas.gov.au/floratasmania](http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/floratasmania)
- Kirkpatrick, J.B. (1977). *The Disappearing Heath*. Tasmanian Conservation Trust, Hobart.
- Wege, J. (2011). A taxonomic revision of the *Stylidium despectum* group (Stylidiaceae) from southern Australia. *Australian Systematic Botany* 24: 375–404.

## Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Section records, December 2011)



### 1:25 000 Map Sheets

Anderson, Bridport, Eddystone, Gladstone, Greens Beach, Low Head, Lyme Regis, Monarch, Musselroe, Naturaliste, Port Sorell, Preservation, Saltwater, Sundown, Waterhouse, Weymouth.

Date last modified: 30/01/2012

### View

<http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/threatenedspecieslists>

### Contact details

Threatened Species Section, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water & Environment, GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 7001. Phone (03) 6233 6556; fax (03) 6233 3477.

### Permit

It is an offence to collect, disturb, damage or destroy this species unless under permit.