

Viola cunninghamii



Tasmanian Herbarium specimen

FAMILY: VIOLACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Viola cunninghamii*
Hook.f., *Bot. Antarct. Voy. II. (Fl. Nov.-Zel.)*
1: 16 (1852)

COMMON NAME: Alpine violet

COMMONWEALTH STATUS (EPBC Act):
Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS (TSP Act): rare

Description

Viola cunninghamii is a perennial herb with a slender, branched rhizome. Its leaves grow in a tufted rosette; blades triangular-ovate to sub-orbicular, c. 10 to 20 mm in diameter, with obscurely crenate margins; stalk longer than blade. Flowers occur singly on stalks that are longer than the leaves; flowers white or pale violet, 6 to 10 mm long, the anterior (rear) petal with a short, blunt spur. Fruit a capsule, opening into three valves. (description from Curtis & Morris 1975 and Kirkpatrick 1997). Flowering period: November to February (?). **Confusing species:** *Viola cunninghamii* may be distinguished from other *Viola* species in Tasmania by its rhizomatous character, its spurred anterior petal (rather than merely pouched), and its rounded leaves (cf. lanceolate or oblong).

Distribution and Habitat

Viola cunninghamii is known from New Zealand and Tasmania (Curtis & Morris 1975). Its habitat in Tasmania has been described as ‘... short alpine herbfield, grassland and grassy heath in the higher parts of the eastern and central mountains’ (Kirkpatrick 1997).

Key Sites and Populations

Insufficient information.

Known Reserves

Central Plateau Conservation Area, Devils Gullet State Reserve, Great Western Tiers Conservation Area, Mount Field National Park, Vale of Belvoir Conservation Area, Walls of Jerusalem National Park.

Ecology and Management

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

Conservation Status Assessment

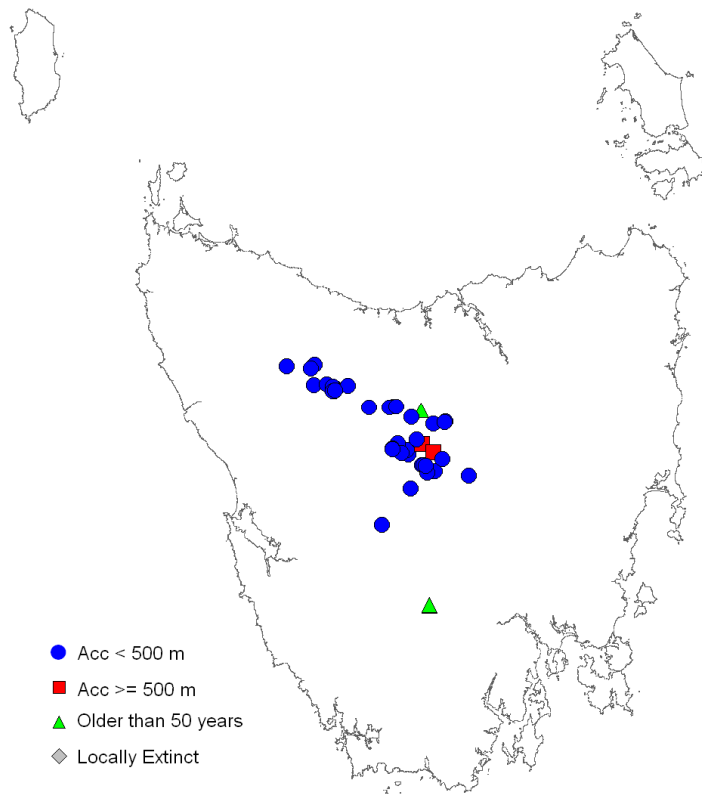
The true status of *Viola cunninghamii* in Tasmania has been shrouded in confusion since its listing on the TSP Act in 1995, primarily due to the presence in DPIPWE's Natural Values Atlas database of numerous unvouchered records from lowland sites, well removed from its purported sub-alpine habitat; all lowland records have been flagged as 'bad' in the Natural Values Atlas (as at October 2012). Reassessment of the species' conservation status on the TSP Act may be warranted, though in the first instance surveys are required of recorded subalpine sites to determine their veracity, status and extent.

Further Information

- Curtis, W.M. & Morris, D.I. (1975). *The Student's Flora of Tasmania, Part 1*. Government Printer, Hobart.
- Kirkpatrick, J.B. (1997). *Alpine Tasmania*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Section records, December 2012)



1:25 000 Map Sheets

Ada, Borradaile, Breona, Dobson, Guildford, Ina, Lake Mackenzie, Lea, Loongana, Miena, Monpeelyata, Olive, Pencil Pine, Split Rock, Wihareja.

Date last modified: 7/01/2013

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.