

Koobabbie eremophila

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.**



Bee pollinating the Koobabbie eremophila flower. Photo – Andrew Crawford

Koobabbie eremophila (*Eremophila koobabbiensis* ms) is an erect shrub to 1.5 metres high with small, prominently lobed leaves four to six millimetres long and small, dark purple flowers, 1.5 to two millimetres wide. These are generally produced between October and December but can appear sporadically at other times of the year. The species is related to *Eremophila pinnatifida* but is distinguished by its smaller flowers and leaves. *Eremophila lehmanniana* is distantly related to these two species but differs in its white or blue flower colour.

Koobabbie eremophila grows on flat brown loamy soil in woodland dominated by salmon gum (*Eucalyptus salmonophloia*), gimlet (*Eucalyptus salubris*) and York gum (*Eucalyptus loxophleba*). Understorey species associated with Koobabbie eremophila include *Eremophila sargentii*, *Acacia hemiteles* and *Mairrana brevifolia*.

Alison Doley first collected Koobabbie eremophila on her property in 1995 and following searches found a second small population nearby. Interestingly, the areas where Koobabbie eremophila grows had been grazed since 1906, with

plants germinating following fencing of the remnant in 1986. For this reason it is thought that the seed of Koobabbie eremophila can persist in the soil for long periods of time.

Koobabbie eremophila has a very restricted range with the only known populations occurring in the Shire of Coorow. The species was declared as rare flora in 2005 and is currently ranked as critically endangered.

DEC has set up the Moora District Threatened Flora Recovery Team to coordinate recovery actions that address the greatest threats to the survival of the species in the wild. The property owner is also actively protecting the plants and habitat.

The main threats include grazing by kangaroos and rabbits, invasion of weeds and limited recruitment. Additionally, the low numbers of plants may pose a risk to the species due to the limited genetic variability present in the species.

If unable to contact DEC's Moora District Office on the above number, 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.



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

Protection from current threats: control of weed invasion; regular monitoring of the health of known populations; and conducting further surveys for this plant on soils and geology similar to that of the known populations.

Protection from future threats: collection of seed and storage at 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 Koobabbie eremophila; enhancing plant numbers by direct propagation and translocation techniques; ensuring that relevant authorities; landowners and DEC staff are aware of its presence and the need to protect it; and the ongoing implementation of recovery actions outlined in the IRP for the species.

IRPs will be deemed a success if the number of individuals within the population and/or the number of populations have increased.

This project is funded by the Australian and State governments' investment through the Natural Heritage Trust, administered in the Midwest Region by the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council.



Above: Koobabbie eremophila flower. Photo – Andrew Crawford

Below left: Woodland habitat where Koobabbie eremophila grows. Photo – Andrew Huggett



Above: Koobabbie eremophila in the foreground growing in a salmon gum woodland. Photo – Andrew Huggett