

Approved Conservation Advice  
(s266B of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*)

**Approved Conservation Advice for  
*Parsonia dorrigoensis* (Milky Silkpod)**

This Conservation Advice has been developed based on the best available information at the time this conservation advice was approved.

**Description**

*Parsonia dorrigoensis*, Family Apocynaceae, also known as Milky Silkpod, is a slender twiner to 6 m tall with milky latex from cut stems or broken leaf stalks. Its adult leaves are opposite on the stem, narrowly triangular to broadly egg-shaped, 3–12 cm long, 1.4–5 cm wide, green to purplish on the underside with broadly lobed to square to rounded leaf bases, and long acuminate and finely tipped apices. The flowers are relatively small, cream or yellowish and in groups of 3–11. Its fruit is a slender, rounded capsule, 5–7 cm long, approximately 0.5 cm diameter, splitting open to release numerous seeds, each with long silky hairs at one end (Williams, 1996).

**Conservation Status**

Milky Silkpod is listed as **endangered**. This species is eligible for listing as endangered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) (EPBC Act) as, prior to the commencement of the EPBC Act, it was listed as endangered under Schedule 1 of the *Endangered Species Protection Act 1992* (Cwlth). It is listed as vulnerable under Schedules 2 of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (NSW).

**Distribution and Habitat**

Milky Silkpod grows in tall eucalypt forests and in subtropical and warm-temperate rainforests from Kendall to Woolgoolga on the NSW North Coast. It has a preference for more open areas and forest margins, and usually grows in clay soils derived from meta-sediments, at 100–800 m above sea level, with mean annual rainfall of 1400–2000 mm (Harden & Williams, 1992; Williams, 1996; DECC, 2005). The species has a well developed root stock and responds to fire by regenerating from basal stem buds. It also regenerates from a stored soil seed bank (Richards, 1999).

It has been recorded from Newry, Conglomerate, Kerewong, Die Happy, Roses Creek, Scotchman, Oakes, and Orara West State Forests; Limeburners Creek, Ngambaa, Baalijin and Jaaningga Nature Reserves; and in Dorrigo, New England, Bindarri, Chaelundi, and Bellinger River National Parks (DECC, 2005). Richards (1999) lists nine populations with a total of 1475 individual plants. Associated plant species include *Lophostemon confertus*, *Eucalyptus microcorys*, *E. andrewsii* subsp. *campanulata*, *E. pilularis*, *E. saligna*, *Schizomeria ovata*, *Acmena smithii*, *Trochocarpa laurina*, and *Tristaniopsis collina* (Quinn et al., 1995).

This species occurs within the Northern Rivers and the Hunter–Central Rivers (NSW) Natural Resource Management Regions.

The distribution of this species overlaps with the “White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland” EPBC Act-listed threatened ecological community.

### **Threats**

The main identified threat to Milky Silkpod is low numbers (Richards, 1999).

The main potential threats to Milky Silkpod include clearing of habitat for agriculture or road works; invasion of habitat by introduced weeds, particularly Lantana (*Lantana camara*); and detrimental burning regimes. State Forest populations may be affected by forest operations (DECC, 2005; Richards, 1999).

### **Research Priorities**

Research priorities that would inform future regional and local priority actions include:

- Design and implement a monitoring program.
- Undertake survey work in suitable habitat and potential habitat to locate any additional populations/occurrences.

### **Regional Priority Actions**

The following regional priority recovery and threat abatement actions can be done to support the recovery of Milky Silkpod.

#### **Habitat Loss, Disturbance and Modification**

- Monitor known populations to identify key threats.
- Monitor the progress of recovery, including the effectiveness of management actions and the need to adapt them if necessary.
- Identify populations of high conservation priority.
- Manage threats to areas of vegetation that contain populations/occurrences/remnants of Milky Silkpod, particularly on State Forests with logging activity.
- Ensure chemicals or other mechanisms used to eradicate weeds, particularly Lantana, do not have a significant adverse impact on Milky Silkpod.
- Ensure road widening and maintenance activities (or other infrastructure or development activities involving substrate or vegetation disturbance) in areas where Milky Silkpod occurs do not adversely impact on known populations.

#### **Invasive Weeds**

- Develop and implement a management plan for the control of Lantana in the local region.

#### **Fire**

- Develop and implement a suitable fire management strategy for Milky Silkpod.
- Provide maps of known occurrences to local and state rural fire services and seek inclusion of mitigative measures in bush fire risk management plans, risk register and/or operation maps.

#### **Enable Recovery of Additional Sites and/or Populations**

- Undertake appropriate seed collection and storage.
- Investigate options for linking, enhancing or establishing additional populations.
- Implement national translocation protocols (Vallee et al., 2004) if establishing additional populations is considered necessary and feasible.

### **Local Priority Actions**

The following local priority recovery and threat abatement actions can be done to support the recovery of Milky Silkpod.

#### **Habitat Loss, Disturbance and Modification**

- Control access routes to suitably constrain public access to known sites on public land.

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- Minimise adverse impacts from land use at known sites, particularly on State Forests, by conducting searches for Milky Silkpod prior to any logging operations.

#### Invasive Weeds

- Identify and remove weeds in the local area, particularly Lantana, which could become a threat to Milky Silkpod, using appropriate methods.
- Manage sites to prevent introduction of invasive weeds, which could become a threat to Milky Silkpod, using appropriate methods.

This list does not necessarily encompass all actions that may be of benefit to Milky Silkpod, but highlights those that are considered to be of highest priority at the time of preparing the conservation advice.

#### **Information Sources:**

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