

Approved Conservation Advice for:
***Epacris graniticola* (Mt Cameron Heath)**

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

This Conservation Advice has been developed based on the best available information at the time this Conservation Advice was approved; this includes existing plans, records or management prescriptions for this species.

Description

Epacris graniticola, also known as the Mt Cameron Heath, is an erect woody shrub growing to 1.5 m high, with small hard leaves and solitary white flowers arranged in clusters at the ends of its branches (Keith, 1998).

Conservation Status

This species is listed as **critically endangered**.

This species is eligible for listing as critically endangered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) (EPBC Act) because its geographic distribution is very restricted and is precarious for the survival of the species. The species is also listed as vulnerable under the Tasmanian *Endangered Species Protection Act 1995*.

Distribution and Habitat

The Mt Cameron Heath occurs in north-eastern Tasmania at eight locations on the Mt Cameron Range, Mt Stronach and south of Rossarden, with an extent of occurrence of 1200 km², an area of occupancy of approximately 0.06 km². In 1998, it had an estimated total population of approximately 20 000 mature individuals (DPIWE).

It grows on skeletal soils on rocky outcrops of Devonian granites, usually on summits, in heaths and dry scrub-forests between 90 and 720 m above sea level (Keith, 1998).

This species occurs within the North Natural Resource Management Region of Tasmania.

Threats

The main potential threats to the Mt Cameron Heath include inappropriate fire regimes, disease and stochastic risk.

Research Priorities

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

- Undertake research to establish an appropriate fire regime

Priority Actions

The priority recovery and threat abatement actions required for the Mt Cameron Heath are identified below:

Habitat Loss, Disturbance and Modification

- Monitor known populations to identify key threats or the progress of recovery, including the effectiveness of management actions and the need to adapt them if necessary.
- Identify populations of high conservation priority.
- Control access routes to suitably constrain public access to known sites on public land.
- Continue survey work in potential habitat to locate any additional populations/occurrences/remnants.

This conservation advice was approved by the Minister on 17 June 2009

- Minimise adverse impacts from land use at known sites.
- Protect populations of the listed species through the development of conservation agreements and/or covenants.
- Manage threats to areas of vegetation that contain populations/occurrences/remnants of the Mt Cameron Heath.

Fire

- Develop and implement a suitable fire management strategy for the Mt Cameron Heath.
- Identify appropriate intensity and interval of fire to promote seed germination;
- Research action to identify an appropriate fire regime.

Diseases, Fungi and Parasites

- Develop and implement suitable hygiene protocols to protect known sites from outbreaks of dieback caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

Conservation Information

- Raise awareness of the Mt Cameron Heath within the local community.

Establishing Additional Populations

- Undertake appropriate seed collection and storage.
- Undertake seed germination and/or vegetative propagation trials to determine the requirements for successful establishment.
- Investigate options for linking, enhancing or establishing additional populations.
- Implement appropriate translocation protocols if establishing additional populations is considered necessary and feasible;
- Consider the establishment of ex-situ populations.

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

Existing Plans/Management Prescriptions that are Relevant to the Species

Keith, D. (1998). Recovery Plan — Tasmanian Forest Epacrids 1999–2004. Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Hobart.

Threatened Species Section (2006). Draft flora recovery plan: Tasmanian forest epacrids. Department of Primary Industries and Water, Hobart.

Information Sources:

Crowden, R.K. (2007). Additions to Epacris (Epacridoidae, Ericaceae) in Tasmania. *Muelleria* 25: 126.

Council of Heads of Australasian Herbaria (CHAH) (2005). Australian Plant Census. (www.chah.gov.au/apc)

Council of Heads of Australasian Herbaria (CHAH) (2008). Australian Plant Census.

DPIW (2008). Unpublished data. Department of Primary Industries and Water, Hobart .

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Keith, D. (1997). The distribution and population status of rare Tasmanian forest Epacrids. Unpublished report, Nature Conservation Branch, Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Hobart.

Keith, D. (1998). Recovery Plan — Tasmanian Forest Epacrids 1999–2004. Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Hobart.

Keith, D.A. (2000). Sampling designs, field techniques and analytical methods for systematic plant population surveys. *Ecological Management & Restoration* 1(2): 125–139.

North, A., Johnson, K., Ziegler, K., Duncan, F., Hopkins, K., Ziegeler, D. & Watts, S. (1998). Flora of Recommended Areas for Protection and Forest Reserves in Tasmania. Summary. Forest Practices Board, Forestry Tasmania, and Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania.

Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Tasmania and Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (PWS, FT & DPIWE (2003). Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice. Department of Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts, Hobart.

Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) (1997). Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement. Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Tasmania.

Threatened Species Section (2006). Draft Flora Recovery Plan: Tasmanian Forest Epacrids. Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Hobart.