

Acrotriche cordata



FAMILY: EPACRIDACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Acrotriche cordata*,
(Labill.) R.Br., *Prodr.* 547 (1810)

COMMON NAME: coast groundberry

COMMONWEALTH STATUS: (*EPBC Act*)
Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS: (*TSP Act*)
vulnerable

Acrotriche cordata. Harris *et al.* (2002)

Description

A shrubby perennial that grows up to 50 cm tall. **Leaves:** The leaves are hairless, lance-shaped and have a stiff sharp point that is prickly to the touch. They are approximately 14 mm long and 4 mm wide. The leaves also have 3 parallel central veins. **Flowers:** The flowers are found in clusters of 4-6 and are pale yellow-green, usually occurring on the lower parts of the plant where they are hidden by the leaves. The tubular flowers have 5 narrow lobes at the top (each with a tuft of hair at the tip) and are approximately 3.5 mm long. Nectar is often visible in the slightly swollen base of the flower tube. Flowering occurs around November. **Fruit:** The fruit are green, fleshy, spherical in shape and approximately 3 mm wide (Harris *et al.* 2002, TPLUC 1996, Willis 1972). Herbarium specimens have been collected from August to December.

Distribution and Habitat

On the mainland this species occurs in South Australia and Western Australia. Its most southerly distribution is limited to the Furneaux Group, where it can be found on Prime Seal Island, near Killiecrankie and Wybalenna on Flinders Island. This species is associated with calcareous soils and is found on broken, rocky ground and in heath, scrub and low forest (Harris *et al.* 2001, Kirkpatrick 1991).



Acrotriche cordata habitat. (S. Harris)

Key Sites and Populations

The key sites recorded for the Furneaux Group include Settlement Point, Marshall Bay, Port Davies (Emita) and Leeka (west end) on Flinders Island. *Acrotriche cordata* has been recorded on the island from Settlement Point around the West Coast to North Point. The Melbourne Herbarium also holds voucher specimens from Prime Seal Island and Killiecrankie Bay (Underwood 1998).

Known Reserves

This species is reserved in the Killiecrankie Nature Recreation Area. Underwood (1998) suggests that 67% of the plants can be found on unprotected private freehold and unallocated Crown land.

Ecology and Management

Acrotriche cordata can survive at least moderately frequent fire regimes, however it is not known if this species is capable of regrowing vegetatively. It is suspected that occasional fire may be required to ensure survival, as the biggest threat to *Acrotriche cordata* is successional development of its habitat to dense scrub. As this species produces fleshy fruit, it is also possible that seeds require passage through the digestive system of birds and/or animals to break dormancy (Kirkpatrick 1991). The lack of information regarding the regeneration requirements of this species means that the use of fire as a management strategy should be avoided until more information is known. *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (root rot) is recognised as a threat to populations of *Acrotriche cordata* by Underwood (1998). However, this species is associated with alkaline soils, an environment that is not conducive to *Phytophthora cinnamoni* expression (S. Harris pers. comm.).

Mammals and lizards are the most likely pollination vectors for this species (A. Hingston pers. comm.).

Conservation Status Assessment

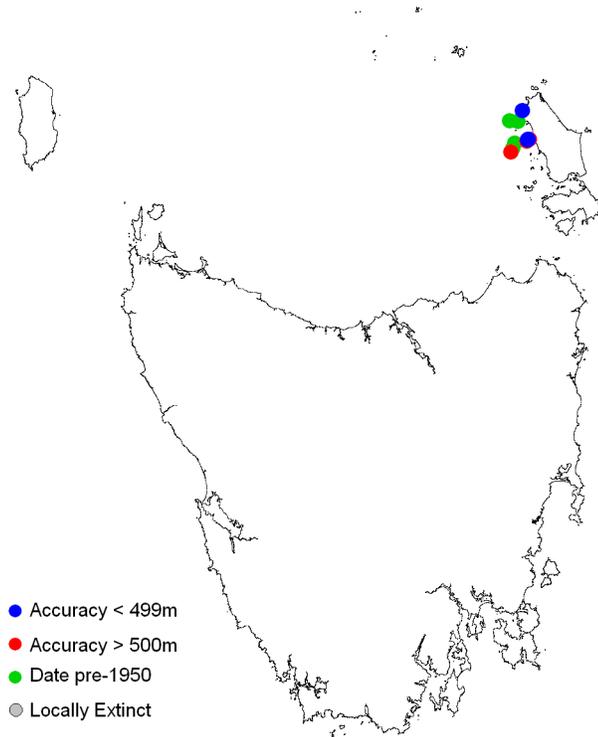
This species may require reassessment due to the low number of populations and poor reservation status.

Further Information

- Kirkpatrick, JB 1991, *Tasmanian Native Bush: A Management Handbook*, Tasmanian Environment Centre, Hobart.
- Harris, S, Buchanan, A & Connolly, A 2001, *One Hundred Islands: The Flora of the Outer Furneaux*, Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Hobart.
- Willis, JH 1972, *A Handbook of Plants in Victoria*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.
- Underwood, S 1998, *Synecology & Conservation of Vegetation on Aeolian Calcarenite, Flinders Island, Bass Strait*, BAppSc thesis, University of Tasmania.

Tasmanian Distribution

(From Natural Values Atlas records July 2008)



1:25 000 Map Sheets

Emita, Palana, Tanner, Wybalenna.

Date last modified: 21/7/08

View

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

Contact details

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Permit

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