

# *Leucopogon esquamatus*



*Leucopogon esquamatus*. S.Harris.

**FAMILY:** EPACRIDACEAE

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Leucopogon esquamatus*,  
R.Br., *Prodr.* 546 (1810)

**COMMON NAME:** Swamp beardheath

**COMMONWEALTH STATUS:** (*EPBC Act*)  
Not Listed

**TASMANIAN STATUS:** (*TSP Act*) rare

## Description

A small shrub with numerous erect branches that stands between 30-60 cm tall. **Leaves:** The leaves are often crowded and hairless. They are also erect, lance-shaped and end in a sharp point. The bases narrow into a very short, broad stalk. The leaves are mostly flat and approximately 15 cm long and 3 mm broad. **Flowers:** The flowers are in groups of 2-3 and are borne in the leaf axils (where the stem meets the leaf) on very short stalks. The flowers are white, shortly tubular and up to 4 mm long and about 7 mm wide with 5 spreading petal lobes that are covered in white hairs. **Fruit:** The fruit are narrowly oval and approximately 4 mm long (description from Curtis 1963, Viridans 1998). Herbarium specimens have been collected from September to June.

## Distribution and Habitat

On the mainland this species occurs in New South Wales. In Tasmania, *Leucopogon esquamatus* is found in sandy heathland on Flinders and Cape Barren Islands in the Furneaux Group (Curtis 1963).

## Known Reserves

This species is reserved in the Wingaroo Nature Reserve.

## Key Sites and Populations

Key sites include Palana Road, Summer Camp, Whitemark, the Darling Range, west of Mt. Boyes, south of Leeka, Mount Killicrankie (near tin workings east of Mt Tanner) and west of Mt. Munro and Ned's Point on Cape Barren Island.



*Leucopogon esquamatus*.  
R. Hale.

### **Ecology and Management**

*Leucopogon esquamatus* can cope with the frequent firing that occurs in the heaths of the Furneaux Group, however very high fire regimes may be a disadvantage. Birds and small mammals may disperse the fleshy fruits that are produced by this species (Kirkpatrick 1991). *Leucopogon esquamatus* is frequently found in areas that have been affected by root rot (*Phytophthora cinnamoni*), which is particularly unusual for a species in the Epacridaceae family. Populations can be large with one population reported to extend for 12 kilometres and to easily exceed 100,000 with up to 50 plants per square metre (J. Whinray pers. comm.).

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

### **Conservation Status Assessment**

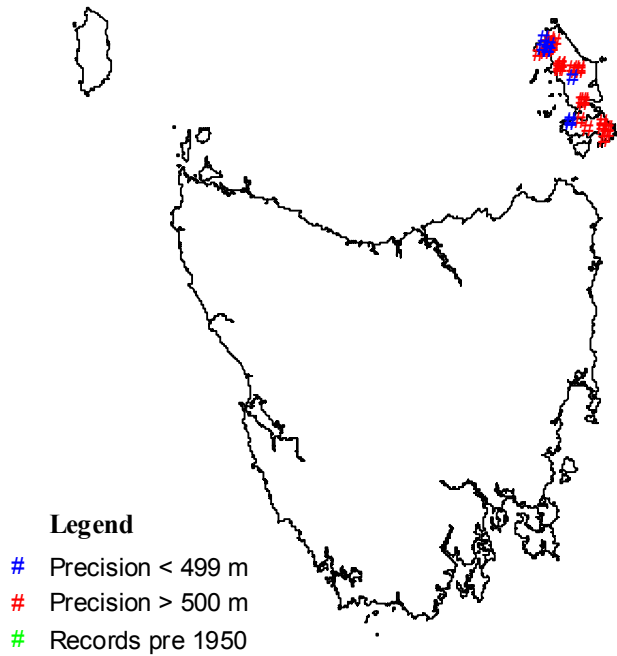
There is no immediate need for reassessment of *Leucopogon esquamatus*.

### **Further Information**

- Curtis, WM 1963, *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*, Part 2, Government Printer, Hobart.
- Kirkpatrick, JB 1991, *Tasmanian Native Bush: A Management Handbook*, Tasmanian Environment Centre, Hobart.
- Underwood, S 1998, *Synecology & Conservation of Vegetation on Aeolian Calcarenite, Flinders Island, Bass Strait*, BAppSc thesis, University of Tasmania.
- Viridans Biological Databases 1998, *Wild Plants of Victoria*, Brighton East, Victoria.

## Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Unit records, June 2003)



### 1:25 000 Map Sheets

Anderson, Fisher, Kerford, Leventhorpe, Memana, Palana, Passage, Puncheon, Tanner.

Date last modified: 18/08/03