

# *Pultenaea humilis*



Image by Richard Schahinger

**FAMILY:** FABACEAE

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Pultenaea humilis*  
Benth. ex Hook.f., *Fl. Tasm.* 1: 91 (1856)

**COMMON NAME:** Dwarf bushpea

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

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

## Description

*Pultenaea humilis* is a hairy undershrub in the pea family. It has a short, thick, woody stem, with upward-sloping to erect branches that are up to 15 to 30 cm long. Leaves are arranged alternately along the stem, shortly-stalked, crowded, spreading and nearly erect, with blunt tips; they are 8 to 12 mm long with margins that curl upwards. The lower surface of the leaf is darker in colour and covered with silky hairs, becoming glabrescent with age. Pea-like flowers are borne on short stalks in the leaf axils; they are usually solitary and form clusters at or near the ends of the branches. The outermost whorl of floral parts (calyx) is between 6 to 8 mm long and covered with long, soft hairs, while the corolla has orange-yellow petals. Flowering peaks in mid November (Lynch 1993). The fruit is an inflated pod which is almost enclosed by the hairy calyx; each pod contains 1 to 2 light to dark brown seeds. (Description from Curtis & Morris 1975, Lynch 1993, Walsh & Entwisle 1996)

## Distribution and Habitat

On mainland Australia *Pultenaea humilis* occurs in New South Wales and Victoria, while in Tasmania the species is restricted to the Northern Midlands (with unvouchered records from the Southern Midlands and near Swansea). The species' preferred habitat is grassy *Eucalyptus amygdalina* dry sclerophyll forest on Cainozoic deposits, a vegetation community listed as threatened under the Tasmanian *Nature Conservation Act 2002*.

## Key Sites and Populations

Powranna and Epping Forest. Fewer than ten subpopulations have been recorded in Tasmania. The bulk of the total population occurs in the Powranna area, with several thousand plants growing in an area of several hectares; plant numbers at most of the other sites are in the 10s.

## Known Reserves

Powranna Nature Reserve, Tom Gibson Nature Reserve.

## Ecology and Management

*Pultenaea humilis* may recruit from a soil-stored seedbank after fire or other gap-forming disturbance (Lynch 1993). The species may also resprout after fire and, indeed, may benefit from the occasional high intensity fire (as observed at the Powranna Road site after a wildfire in February 2012); however, frequent low intensity fires will be to the species' detriment. *Pultenaea humilis* is thought to be intolerant of heavy grazing. Bees are the most likely pollination vector for this species (Hingston & McQuillan 2000).

## Conservation Status Assessment

A reassessment of the species' conservation status may be warranted, though in the first instance surveys are required of most of the recorded sites to determine their current status and, in the case of apparent 'outliers' that lack supporting herbarium specimens, confirmation of their identity.



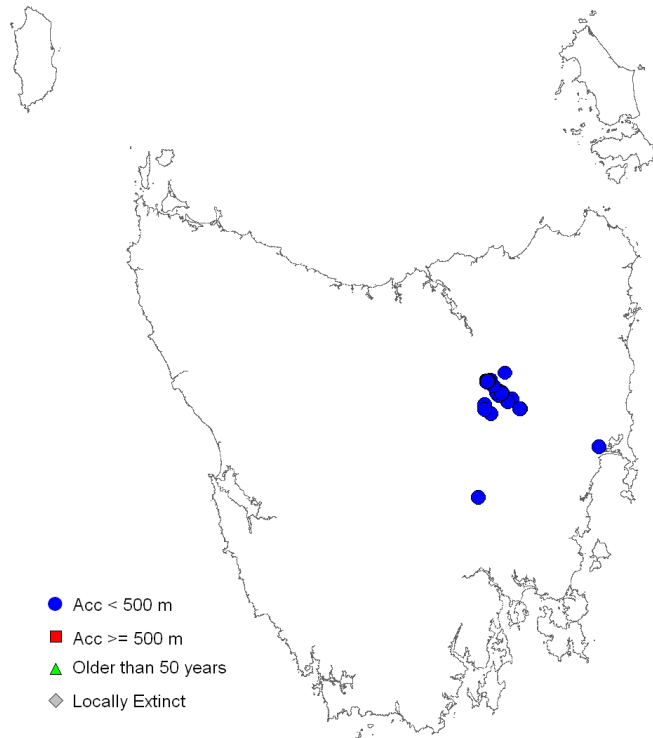
*Pultenaea humilis*: habit at Powranna Nature Reserve

## Further Information

- Curtis, W.M. & Morris, D.I. (1975). *The Student's Flora of Tasmania, Part 1*. Government Printer, Hobart.
- Hingston, A.B. & McQuillan, P.B (2000). Are pollination syndromes useful predictors of floral visitors in Tasmania? *Austral Ecology* 25: 600–609.
- Lynch, A.J.J. (1993). *Conservation Biology and Management of 16 Rare or Threatened FABACEAE Species in Tasmania*. Australian National Parks & Wildlife Service Endangered Species Program Project No. 4, Parks & Wildlife Service, Hobart.
- Walsh, N.G. & Entwisle, T.J. (1996). *Flora of Victoria. Volume 3. Dicotyledons: Winteraceae to Myrtaceae*. Inkata Press, Melbourne.

## Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Section records, March 2013)



### 1:25 000 Map Sheets

Cleveland, Conara, Cranbrook, Cressy, Dennistoun, Diamond, Nile, O'Connors

Date last modified: 12/03/2013

### View

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

### Contact details

Threatened Species Section, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water & Environment, GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 7001. Phone (03) 6233 6556; fax (03) 6233 3477.

### Permit

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