

Pultenaea prostrata



Image by Tim Rudman

FAMILY: FABACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Pultenaea prostrata*
Benth. ex Hook.f., *Fl. Tasm.* 1: 89 (1856)

COMMON NAME: Silky bushpea

COMMONWEALTH STATUS (EPBC Act): Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS (TSP Act): vulnerable

Description

Pultenaea prostrata is small shrub with prostrate or decumbent branches to 20 cm long; the branches are pubescent. Leaves are simple, arranged alternately, linear-shaped and 4 to 6 mm long, the leaf margins inrolled and leaving only a channel along the upper surface, and a very blunt apex; leaves hairy when young. Flowers are borne singly at the tips of short lateral branches, the individual flowers being enveloped by numerous overlapping brown bracts. Calyx 5 to 6 mm long, silky hairy; corolla orange-yellow streaked with red, the standard about twice as long as the calyx, the keel red. Flowers from late October to December. Fruit an ovoid-shaped pod about as long as the calyx; the pod is hairy, and may contain two seed (description from Curtis & Morris 1975, Walsh & Entwisle 1996). **Confusing species:** *Pultenaea prostrata* has on occasion been confused with *Pultenaea tenuifolia*. The latter species has an altogether 'softer' and more open appearance, leaves that are villous and silver grey, lacks conspicuous bracts, and typically grows in sandy soils near the coast.

Distribution and Habitat

On mainland Australia *Pultenaea prostrata* occurs in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales (Curtis & Morris 1975, Walsh & Entwisle 1996). In Tasmania the species has been recorded from the Northern and Southern Midlands, where it grows within grassy woodlands or grasslands, mostly on Tertiary basalt or Quaternary alluvium.

Key Sites and Populations

Key sites include Campbell Town golf course, the Main Esk Road just east of the Midland Highway, Buffalo Plains near Avoca, and Pontville. Curtis & Morris (1975) had described the species as being 'local in grasslands in the midlands', local being an apt description, as the largest known site in Tasmania is in the order of 800 plants, the other key sites with typically 100 to 200 plants, and the others even fewer.

Known Reserves

Jordan Nature Reserve, Township Lagoon Nature Reserve.

Ecology and Management

Pultenaea prostrata may resprout from a woody rootstock after fire or heavy browsing, and may also recruit from a soil-stored seed bank (Lynch 1993). The species has been found in areas where the topsoil has been scraped away (Verrier 1999). 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 recorded sites to determine their current status and, in the case of several apparent 'outliers' that lack supporting herbarium specimens, confirmation of their identity.



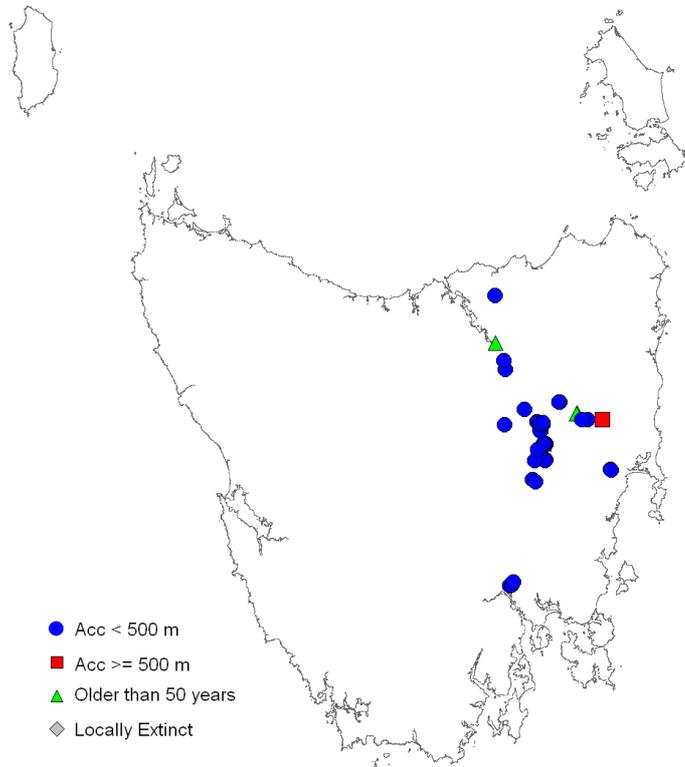
Pultenaea prostrata at Campbell Town golf course
(image by Richard Schahinger)

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.
- Verrier F.J. (1999). *Ecology and conservation of the native vegetation and vascular flora at the Pontville small-arms range complex, Tasmania*. BSc (Honours) Thesis, School of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania.
- 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

Campbell Town, Cleveland, Conara, Ellinthorp, Hanleth, Jacobs, Launceston, Leake, O'Connors, Prospect, Retreat, Ross, Stanhope, St Pauls Dome, Tea Tree, Tunbridge

Date last modified: 12/03/2013

View

<http://www.dpipwe.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.