

Haloragis heterophylla



Haloragis heterophylla.
Tasmanian Herbarium specimen.

FAMILY: HALORAGACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Haloragis heterophylla*,
Brongn., *Voy. Monde*, Atlas: t.68A (1826)

COMMON NAME: prickly raspwort

COMMONWEALTH STATUS: (EPBC Act)
Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS: (TSP Act) rare

Description

A perennial herb, between 15-40 cm high, rising from a deep lateral rootstock and covered with sparse, rigid hairs. **Stems:** The stems are green, erect and heavily branched from the base. **Leaves:** The leaves are stalkless, narrow and lance-shaped with three lobes in the upper part. **Flowers:** The flowers are tiny, mauve and clustered in groups of 1-4 in the leaf axils (where the stem meets the leaf). Flowering is from September to February (Flora of Victoria). **Fruit:** The fruit is pear shaped and about 2.5 mm long, borne singly or in pairs on very short stalks (description from Cunningham *et al.* 1992, Curtis & Morris 1975, Kirkpatrick *et al.* 1988).

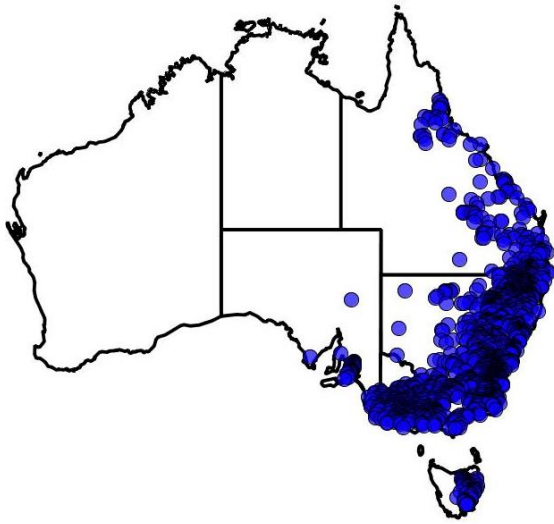
Survey Time and Habitat Guide (*black* = best, *dark grey* = possible, *light grey with slash* = poor time to survey, as guided by collection dates of specimens and records)

<i>Haloragis heterophylla</i>	Spring			Summer				Autumn				Winter												
variable raspwort	S	S	O	O	N	N	D	D	J	J	F	F	M	M	A	A	M	M	J	J	J	J	A	A

- Flowering of this perennial herb is from September to February (Flora of Victoria). Most observations of the species have been recorded from late October to early February. Vegetative features can be used to distinguish *Haloragis heterophylla* from other members of the genus at any time of the year.
- In Tasmania, *Haloragis heterophylla* occurs in poorly-drained sites (sometimes only marginally so), which are often associated with grasslands and grassy woodlands with a high component of *Themeda triandra* (kangaroo grass). It also occurs in grassy/sedgy *Eucalyptus ovata* forest and woodland, shrubby creek lines, and broad sedgy/grassy flats, wet pasture and margins of farm dams.

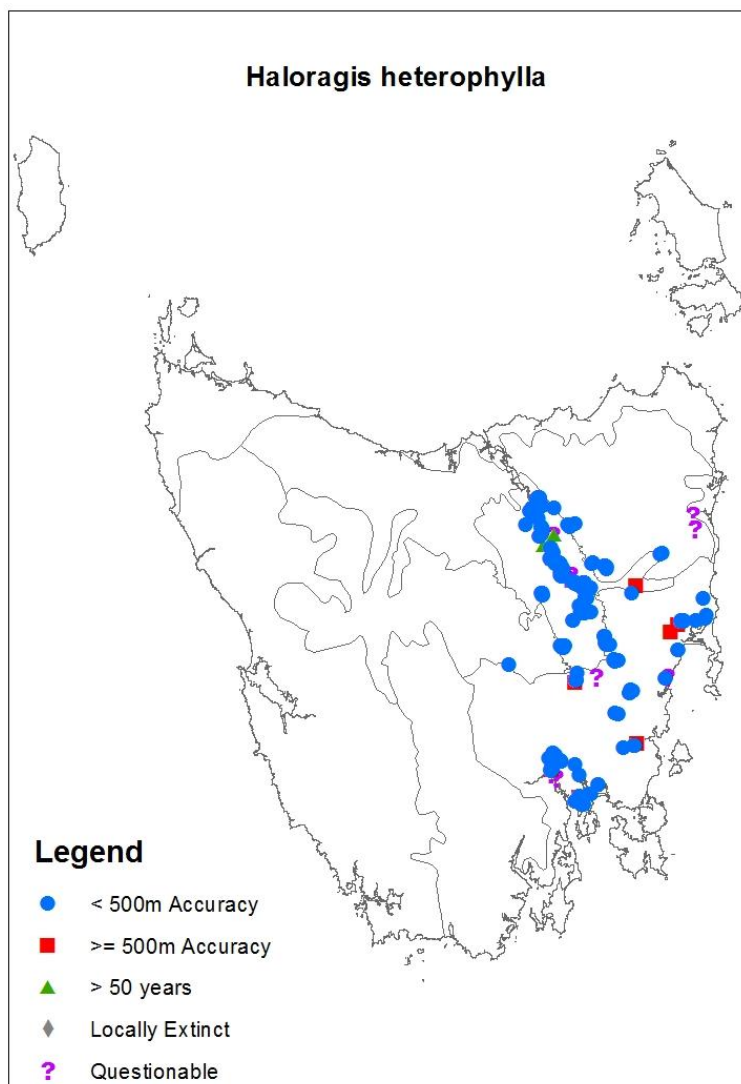
Distribution

(Atlas of Living Australia 2/11/2016)



Tasmanian Distribution

(Natural Values Atlas May 2015)



Known Reserves

Reserved in the Tom Gibson Nature Reserve, Tom Gibson Nature Reserve, Freycinet National Park and the Trevallyn Nature Recreation Area. It also occurs in 12 areas on private property covered by conservation covenants under the Tasmanian *Nature Conservation Act 2002*.

Ecology, Population Parameters, Threats and Management

Although the distribution of *Haloragis heterophylla* is not restricted and the number of subpopulations not low, the abundance of the species is limited as it occupies very small areas within its range (estimated at about 2 ha in total) and the number of mature individuals is low and fluctuates with increased germination following favourable rainfall events, with the species recruiting from soil stored seed. Mature plants can be multi-branched and become tangled, leading to overestimates of the number of individuals. The total number of mature individuals is possibly fewer than 10,000.

The number of known locations for the species has increased significantly since 2003 from about 20 to 60. However, most of the new records have been as a result of impact assessments for development proposals indicating that this low abundance species is at risk of significant decline without appropriate regulation. Most occurrences are on private land though the reservation status of the species has been improved through conservation covenants registered under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. All the reserved sites are on land subject to management plans.

Habitat loss is the main threat with about 20 permits naming the species issued for developments since 1995 though a number of dam construction permits not requiring the loss of this species or its habitat to be specified are also likely to have been issued. Threats include agricultural development (including pasture improvement and cropping), dam construction, inappropriate grazing, forest clearing, road realignments and inappropriate roadside management. Many occurrences occur on native pastures and woodland used for raising domestic stock. The species is palatable and may be at risk from overgrazing. The small occurrences, particularly those in an agricultural landscape and along roadsides, may make them susceptible to edge effects such as weed invasion and inappropriate weed management. The species is also susceptible to infection from *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (root rot). Small scale soil disturbance may be beneficial to promote germination but extended drought may deplete the soil seed store sufficiently to lead to local extinctions, particularly of smaller occurrences.

Conservation Status Assessment

The conservation status of *Haloragis heterophylla* was assessed for possible delisting in 2014 though the available abundance data was considered inadequate to confidently determine whether the species has fewer than 10,000 mature individuals with 2,500 safe from sudden largely irreversible losses as per subcriterion B1 for the rare category.

Further Information

- Cunningham, GM, Mulham, W, Milthorpe, P & Leigh, J 1992, *Plants of Western New South Wales*, Inkata Press, Sydney.
- Curtis, WM & Morris, DI 1975, *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*, Part 1, Government Printer, Hobart.

- Kirkpatrick, JB, Gilfedder L & Fensham RJ 1988, *City Parks and Cemeteries: Tasmania's Remnant Grasslands and Grassy Woodlands*, Tasmanian Conservation Trust, Hobart.
- Kirkpatrick, JB, Barker, P, Brown, MJ, Harris, S & Mackie, R 1994, *The Reservation Status of Tasmanian Vascular Plant Communities*, Tasmanian Conservation Trust Incorporated, Hobart.
- Tasmanian Public Land Use Commission 1996, *Environment & Heritage Report Vol IV, Background Report*, Part C, Tasmanian Commonwealth Regional Forest Agreement, Hobart.

Cite as:

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View:

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

Contact details

Threatened Species Section, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 7001. Phone (03) 6165 4340.

Permit

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

Notesheet revised 2/11/2016.