

Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

Habenaria rumphii

Conservation status

Australia: Not listed

Northern Territory: Endangered



Photo: Bill Lavarack

Description

Habenaria rumphii is a terrestrial orchid with leaves 14 cm x 20 mm. The flower stem grows to 50 cm tall, is thin and wiry and bears up to thirty or more white flowers about 10 mm across. It is easily recognised by its scattered rosette of stiffly spreading leaves, the densely congested inflorescence and the obliquely erect labellum with the long mid-lobe and short pointed lateral lobes.

Flowering and Fruiting: Feb.

Distribution

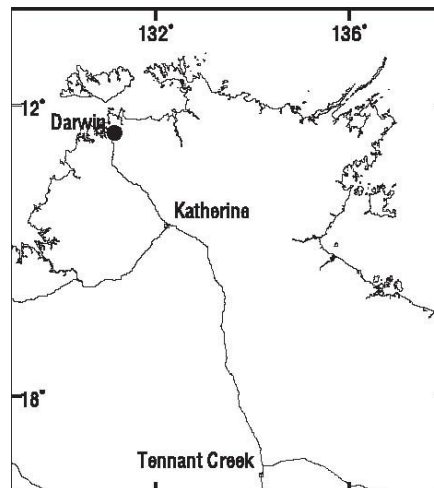
It is known from the northern parts of Queensland and overseas (Jones 1988). In the NT, it has been recorded only from the upper Howard River, Humpty Doo.

Conservation reserves where reported:
None.

Ecology

This species occurs in open forest and woodland growing amongst grass. It is reported to be prominent in low-lying sites that are partially inundated during the wet season. In the NT, this species has been

collected from a sand-plain adjacent to a spring-fed rainforest. It was previously known as *H. holtzei*.



Known locations of *Habenaria rumphii*.

Conservation assessment

In the NT, this species has been collected just once, in 1989, and is still known from only one locality despite considerable survey in the area during the wet season in 2000 and 2001.

Based on extent of occurrence and area of occupancy, this species qualifies for Critically Endangered. However, as a terrestrial geophyte with ephemeral above ground parts,

there is an element of data deficiency and as such it is listed as **Endangered** (under criteria B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii);D).

Declines in the extent and area of occurrence as well as the quality of habitat of this species are projected for the future based on the threatening processes listed below.

Threatening processes

Sand mining in the area is a current and continuing threat both directly through clearing of individuals and indirectly through changes to hydrology in the area. The impact of increases in exotic weeds and changes to the fire regime is unknown and the disturbance by feral animals such as pigs is yet to be assessed. The area is also extensively subdivided for rural residential allotments. As the grid references differed from the locality description, threats to this species were assessed on the written locality.

Conservation objectives and management

Further survey is required to relocate this species and establish its susceptibility to the threatening processes in the area. Recovery actions such as monitoring, fire management, weed and feral animal control and habitat reservation may need to be implemented.

Compiled by

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References

Jones, D. L. (1988). *Native Orchids of Australia*. (Reed, Sydney.)