

Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

Platysace saxatilis

Conservation status

Australia: Not listed

Northern Territory: Vulnerable

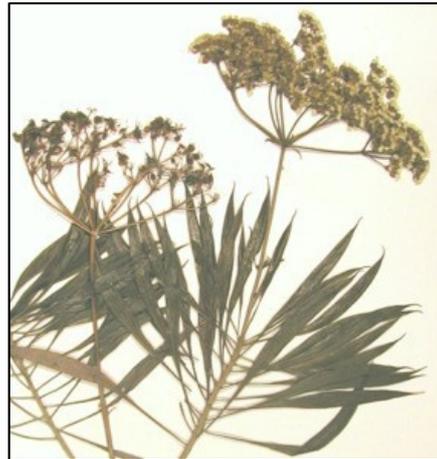


Photo: M. Armstrong

Description

Platysace saxatilis is a multi-stemmed shrub to 1.5 m, rarely more. Its leaves have a sweet spicy aroma when crushed. The flowers are white.

Flowering: Apr – Oct.

Fruiting: Jun, Oct, Nov.

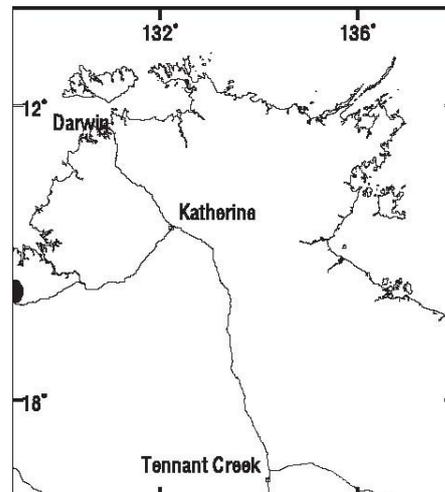
Distribution

This recently-described species (Keighery 1996) is an Australian endemic. It is known from Hidden Valley, Kununurra (Western Australia) and Keep River National Park.

Conservation reserves where reported:
Keep River National Park.

Ecology

It occurs on sandstone cliff faces. Two collections record the species growing on sand, reaching a height of 3m.



Known locations of *Platysace saxatilis*.

Conservation assessment

In the NT, this species has a very restricted area of occupancy near the border with Western Australia. The likelihood of immigration of propagules from the WA border population is unknown, but is considered low given the habitat of this species. Approximately 500 individuals were counted in recent survey of known populations in the NT.

The species is classified as **Vulnerable** (under criteria D1+2) based on:

- an estimated population size of <1000 individuals; and
- an area of occupancy estimated to be <20km².

Threatening processes

As a cliff face species, it is susceptible to rock falls and other stochastic events. Its habitat suggests a susceptibility to fire and it is unlikely this species will colonise areas regularly burnt. Populations are difficult to assess because of their position in the landscape. It was thus difficult to quantify the number of juveniles in the population. Recruitment is expected to be low given the limited availability of suitable crevices and low likelihood of successful dispersal to them.

Conservation objectives and management

Research into the status of the population and further survey are required. A monitoring program should be established. Access to populations to count juveniles will always be difficult. Seed has been collected by the Darwin Botanic Gardens.

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References

Keighery, G.J. (1996). A new species of *Platysace* (Apiaceae) from Northern Australia. *Nordic Journal of Botany* **16**, 135-137.