

Threatened species of the Northern Territory

Prostanthera schultzii

Conservation status

Australia: Vulnerable

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Northern Territory: Vulnerable

Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976



Credit: J. Risler

Description

Prostanthera schultzii is a shrub to 1.5 m high. The leaves are orbicular, shaped like a ping-pong paddle, 4-8 mm with thickened margins. The flowers are sessile, white with purple spots and yellow patches on the centre of the lower lip. They are bilaterally symmetrical with a distinct upper and lower lip¹.

This taxon was previously in the genus *Wrixonia* but recent taxonomic revision places it in *Prostanthera*².

Flowering: April, July, September–November.

Fruiting: May, September–November.

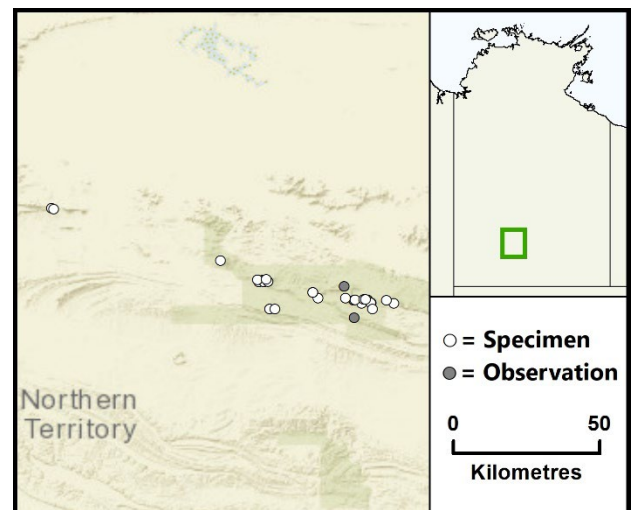


Caption: Flowers (Credit: D. Albrecht)

Distribution

This species is endemic to the Northern Territory (NT), and confined to the MacDonnell Ranges Bioregion, where it is restricted to the high altitude tops of the quartzite ranges in the West MacDonnell Ranges (Chewings Range, Mt Sonder) with an outlying population on Mt Edward³. The latitudinal range is 34 km and the longitudinal range is 107 km.

NT conservation reserves where reported: West MacDonnell/Tjoritja National Park.



Caption: Known locations of *Prostanthera schultzii* in the NT (nrmmaps.nt.gov.au)

Ecology and life-history

Prostanthera schultzii occurs on upper slopes and crests of quartzite mountains and ranges, particularly on southerly aspects. It grows in shallow soils.

This species does not appear to be negatively impacted by current fire regimes given that adults have a moderate-high capacity to resprout (estimated c. 65% of individuals). Increased fire severity and frequency, associated with climate change, may threaten this species in the future. Hotter summer temperatures and changed rainfall from climate change may also cause high mortality rates in this species.

Threatening processes

There are no known extant threats to this species. However, given its small size and restricted distribution, *Prostanthera schultzii* may be vulnerable to the effects of stochastic processes such as disease. The habitat of this species has a narrow climatic envelope that is likely to be strongly affected by climate change. More frequent fire may have negative consequences for this species, but data are presently lacking.

Conservation objectives and management

Population size and key threats need to be assessed for this species. Accurate mapping would also aid management. A monitoring program should be established to track population and habitat changes through time.

References

- ¹ Jessop, J. 1981. *Flora of Central Australia*. (Reed Books, Sydney.)
- ² Wilson, T.C., Henwood, M.J. and Conn, B.J., 2012. Status of the genus *Wrixonia* F.Muell. (Lamiaceae). *Telopea* 14, 3.
- ³ White, M., Albrecht, D., Duguid, A., Latz, P., and Hamilton, M. 2000. *Plant species and sites of botanical significance in the southern bioregions of the Northern Territory. Volume 1: significant vascular plants*. A report to the Australian Heritage Commission. (Arid Lands Environment Centre, Alice Springs.)