

# Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

## Zeuxine oblonga

### Conservation status

Australia: Not listed

Northern Territory: Vulnerable



Photo: David Jones, CSIRO

### Description

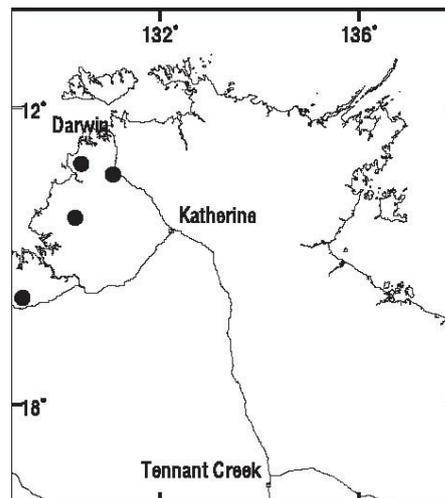
*Zeuxine oblonga* is a deciduous terrestrial orchid. Its stem is fleshy, creeping, to 15 cm tall. There are 3-7 leaves in a loose rosette, 8 cm x 30 mm, dark green, thin textured with wavy margins. The flower stem is pinkish, bearing 5 to 30 dull green and white flowers about 4 mm across. It is recognised by its small, dull green and white hairy flowers and the divided labellum or lower lip (Jones 1988).

Flowering: Sep.

### Distribution

This species is an Australian endemic, recorded from the NT, Queensland and New South Wales. In the Northern Territory, it is known from five widely spaced localities from Keep River to near Adelaide River (Liddle *et al.* 1994). One of these is in the Daly River area but specific locality information is not available.

*Conservation reserves where reported:*  
Keep River National Park.



Known locations of *Zeuxine oblonga*.

### Ecology

This species occurs in dark, moist situations on the floor of rainforests and usually grows in colonies. It is also locally common in small swampy areas adjacent to streams, growing in peaty soil (Jones 1988).

### Conservation assessment

Very little information is available on the status of this species. It was recorded as uncommon by one collector. It has not been collected since 1992, despite efforts to relocate the Keep River population in 2000 and 2001.

As a terrestrial orchid with ephemeral above ground parts there is a negative collection bias associated with this species. In

consideration of this bias, although current data would satisfy a classification of Endangered, it is listed as **Vulnerable** (under criteria D1+2) based on:

- a population size estimated at <1000 individuals; and
- a restricted area of occupancy (estimated to be <20 km<sup>2</sup>).

### **Threatening processes**

Potential threats include feral animal disturbance. As a wet rainforest species, changes to hydrology could affect populations (although hydrological changes have not been identified for any of these localities). There is a possible threat from horticultural harvesting.

### **Conservation objectives and management**

Research into the status and extent of the populations is required. Collection of propagation material, translocation to botanic gardens and availability of stock commercially may protect species from horticultural harvesting.

### **Compiled by**

Raelee Kerrigan  
Ian Cowie  
[April 2006]

### **References**

- Jones, D. L. (1988). *Native Orchids of Australia*. (Reed, Sydney.)
- Liddle, D.T., Russell-Smith, J., Brock, J., Leach, G.J., and Connors, G.T. (1994) *Atlas of the vascular rainforest plants of the Northern Territory*. Flora of Australia Supplementary Series No. 3. (ABRS, Canberra.)