

Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

Freycinetia excelsa

Conservation status

Australia: Not listed

Northern Territory: Vulnerable



Photo: A. Small GHD 2003

Description

Freycinetia excelsa is a small woody climber with stems to 7-8 mm in diameter. The leaf auricles each have a rounded apex and no distinct lobe. The bracts are orange to red. The male spikes are yellow to cream-brown; and fruit strawberry-red (Stone 1982).

Fruiting: Feb.



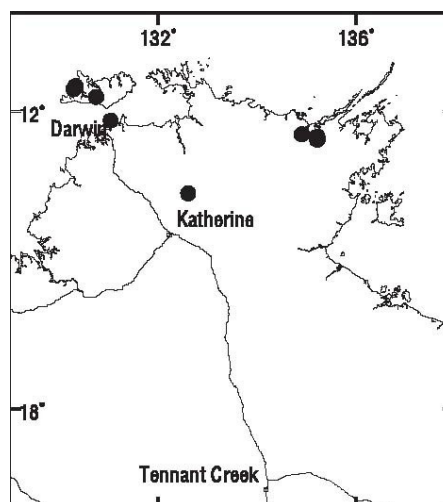
Photo: K. Brennan

Distribution

This species is known from Australia and New Guinea. In the Northern Territory, it has been recorded from seven localities from Bathurst Island to the Arafura Swamp.

Conservation reserves where reported:

Kakadu National Park.



Known locations of *Freycinetia excelsa*.

Ecology

It occurs in wet lowland rainforest and spring-fed rainforests in sandstone gullies (Woinarski *et al.* 2003).

Conservation assessment

This species is known from only seven localities across the Top End. The species qualifies as **Vulnerable** (under criteria D1+2) based on:

- the total number of individuals is estimated to be <1000; and
- a restricted area of occupancy estimated to be <20 km².

Threatening processes

The impact of feral animals on this species is unknown but pigs in large numbers are likely to affect recruitment either through disturbance or browsing. Populations on the Tiwi Islands could be susceptible to severe cyclonic events. This species has not been collected while reproductive, despite re-survey throughout the year (K. Brennan *pers. comm.*). Changes to hydrology, although none are foreseen, are likely to affect this taxon.

One population is located at Glyde Point, in an area proposed as industrial estate and is consequently at risk.

Conservation objectives and management

A Recovery Plan for this species, and other threatened plants on the Tiwi Islands, is due to be released in 2007, but many actions in its draft are currently being implemented.

Research and further surveys are required to establish the status of these populations, the distribution of the species and the impact of feral animals. Conservation of the Glyde Point population is recommended. A monitoring program should be established for at least some populations.

Complied by

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References

- Stone, B.C. (1982). The Australian species of *Freycinetia* (Pandanaceae). *Brunonia* 5, 79-94.
- Woinarski, J., Brennan, K., Cowie, I., Kerrigan, R., and Hempel, C. (2003). *Biodiversity conservation on the Tiwi islands, Northern Territory. Part 1. Plants and environments*. 144 pp. (Department of Infrastructure Planning and Environment, Darwin.)