

THREATENED SPECIES - MANAGEMENT

Certain plants and animals are naturally rare because they exist within a small range and/or in small populations and as a result are vulnerable to changes that alter their habitat or wipe out whole populations. Other more common species may become threatened with extinction due to current processes or actions that, if left unmanaged, threaten their existence over time.

In either case, future survival requires conservation management and both federal and state governments have legislation for categorising and protecting endangered species.

Threatened species are given a listing category depending on the extinction risks the species face. The listing criteria are slightly different between Commonwealth and Tasmanian listings and species can be listed differently under the State and Commonwealth Acts (Table 1).

TABLE 1: STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION CATEGORIES FOR THREATENED SPECIES

TASMANIAN ACT: THREATENED SPECIES PROTECTION ACT 1995	
COMMONWEALTH ACT: ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999 (EPBC ACT)	
TASMANIAN	COMMONWEALTH
Extinct (X): Those species presumed extinct.	<p>Extinct (EX): Where a species has not definitely been located in the wild for the past 50 years. A well known Tasmanian example is the thylacine. The last recorded, proven sighting was in 1936. Since then we have had many reported sightings, often dozens a year. However none of the thylacine sightings has been confirmed, so it is presumed extinct and under the IUCN category can be listed as officially extinct.</p> <p>Extinct In The Wild (EW): This is when a species can not be found living in the wild despite exhaustive surveys, but is still known to exist in captivity.</p> <p>Critically Endangered (CR): In this case a species is in extreme danger of becoming extinct in the immediate future.</p>
Endangered (E): Those species in danger of extinction because long term survival is unlikely while the factors causing them to be endangered continue operating.	Endangered (EN): A species at very high risk of becoming extinct in the near future.
Vulnerable (V): Those species likely to become endangered while the factors causing them to become vulnerable continue operating.	Vulnerable (VU): A species is facing a high risk of extinction in the medium term future.
Rare (R): Those species with a small population in Tasmania that are at risk.	

TASMANIA

There are currently more than 650 species listed as threatened under the *Tasmanian Threatened Species Act 1995*, including 471 threatened plants and 182 threatened animals.

Southern Tasmania has a variety of these species which we have a duty of care to protect, focussing not only on the species themselves but also their habitat, including threatened vegetation communities.



Tasmanian devils
Photo: P. Tonelli

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF TASMANIAN THREATENED SPECIES LISTED IN 2014

GROUP	EXTINCT	ENDANGERED	VULNERABLE	RARE	TOTALS
<i>Vascular plants</i>	19	129	65	248	461
<i>Non vascular plants (lichens, mosses and algae)</i>	1	9	4	16	30
<i>Mammals</i>	1	7	1	2	11
<i>Birds</i>	4	18	11	3	36
<i>Reptiles</i>	0	2	4	1	7
<i>Amphibians</i>	0	1	1	0	2
<i>Fish</i>	0	6	7	2	15
<i>Invertebrates</i>	3	32	21	63	119
<i>Totals</i>	28	204	114	335	681



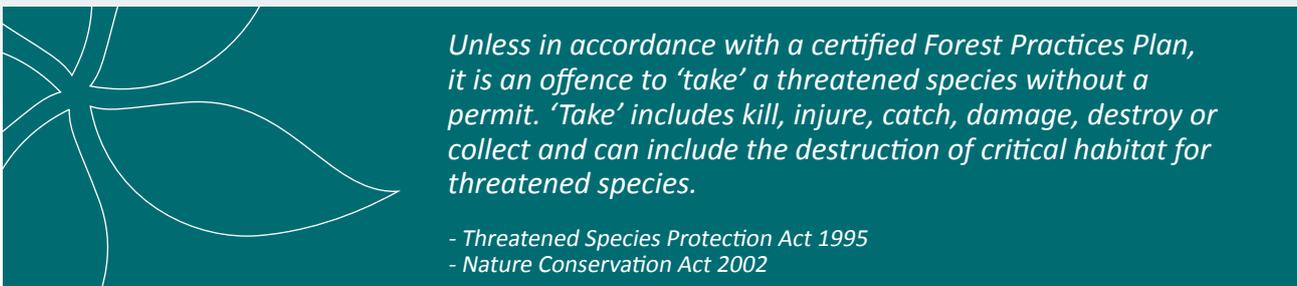
Changes to the landscape as outlined in Table 3 continue to impact on our fauna and flora. Landholders can assist in providing some refuge for threatened species in our region by considering how habitat could be protected or enhanced to benefit any species that may potentially inhabit their land.

TABLE 3: THREATENED SPECIES MANAGEMENT

The processes identified as having the greatest impact on our Threatened Species (fauna and flora).

KEY THREATENING PROCESSES	EXAMPLES OF BIOTA MOST AFFECTED
Clearance of native vegetation	Grassland and grass woodland species, hollow-nesting birds, wedge-tailed eagle
Impacts of pests, weeds and diseases	Species of riparian, lowland open forest and heathland communities, freshwater fish
Degradation of water systems	Aquatic invertebrates, cave fauna, burrowing crayfish, wetland and riparian species
Inappropriate use of fire	Log dwelling fauna, litter and bark invertebrates, some heathland species
Inappropriate and illegal harvesting	Seabirds and marine species, freshwater crayfish, stag beetles
Impacts of stock	Orchids, palatable herbs, riparian flora

SOURCE: *Threatened Species Strategy for Tasmania (2000)*



Unless in accordance with a certified Forest Practices Plan, it is an offence to 'take' a threatened species without a permit. 'Take' includes kill, injure, catch, damage, destroy or collect and can include the destruction of critical habitat for threatened species.

- Threatened Species Protection Act 1995
- Nature Conservation Act 2002

FURTHER INFORMATION

NRM SOUTH FACT SHEETS

Supplementary information can be found on other threatened species factsheets in this series on mammals and birds: www.nrmsouth.org.au

THREATENED SPECIES LINK

The Threatened Species Link is a new easy-to-use website providing management and conservation advice on Tasmania's threatened species. You can find out which species might be on your land, and how to plan around their management and conservation needs: www.threatenedspecieslink.tas.gov.au

For more information please refer to NRM South's Healthy Farming & Environment Reference Guide: <http://www.nrmsouth.org.au/>

