

THREATENED FLORA LINK

Working together to protect
Tassie's threatened plants



2016

Tasmania is home to many unique and fragile plant species. Of Tasmania's 683 species listed as under threat (Tasmanian Species Protection Act), over 70% are flora. Nearly a third of these species are endemic.

They can be charismatic and colourful; small and drab; long-lived and slow growing or ephemeral; only appearing briefly after rain or fire. Some are threatened by habitat clearance and fragmentation, others are impacted by weeds, invasive animals, or inappropriate fire regimes. Others are simply naturally rare, while there are also those that remain a mystery – where we lack knowledge of their distribution.

The Threatened Flora Link (TFL) project works to increase knowledge of both the distribution of and threats to Tasmania's threatened plant species, carrying out a range of activities that will help stop them from heading towards extinction. A team of volunteers assist with monitoring, on-ground activities and propagation efforts in the laboratory at the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens.

Key project areas include protection of grassland remnants through weed control, ex-situ and on-ground conservation efforts for threatened orchid species, and

work to protect seedlings in one of the only remaining patches of Morrisby's gum (Calvert's Hill).

The project has built on the work of previous partnerships, and has been running for four years in its current format. Two years ago, NRM South took on a statewide coordinating role and, during this time, there has been a focus on continuously developing partner organisations and volunteers. Over the last four years, project activities have contributed to volunteer-driven recovery activities for a steadily increasing percentage of Tasmania's threatened flora – from an estimated 4-6% in 2012-14 (southern data only) to 21-22% in 2014-16.

The growing number of threatened species for which survey, monitoring and site assessments are undertaken has increased available data regarding population size, distribution and threats, with recommendations

for changes in conservation status and management actions resulting from this work.

"The contribution that the TFL makes to threatened flora recovery is significant at all levels, and it is an extraordinary achievement. There is nothing like it in Australia in terms of the number of species involved and the demonstrable benefits the program brings. I am very proud that DPIPWE can contribute to it, and I look forward to being able to continue that support in the coming year."

ANDREW CRANE, SECTION HEAD, THREATENED SPECIES SECTION, DPIPWE.

In 2015-16, for each dollar of funding provided by the three Tasmanian NRM bodies, over \$9 was partner in-kind or additional leveraged funding. This contribution has grown from the previous year, largely due to the increase in volunteer time towards project activities across the State.

The Threatened Flora Link (TFL) is a partnership between Threatened Plants Tasmania (Wildcare Inc), the Friends of the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens, DPIPWE's Threatened Species Section, Tasmania's three NRM bodies, and the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens.

