



Threatened Plants
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Threatened Plants Tasmania

2024-2025

Newsletter



The endangered *Leucochrysum albicans* subsp. *tricolor* (grassland paperdaisy) flowering during the Midlands grassland extension surveys, November 2024. (Image: PA Harrison)



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Presidents Report

By Priscilla Richards, TPT President

This was a transition year for the TPT committee, with the biggest turnover in committee members in quite a while. Behind the scenes, we've had a year of settling into our new roles, getting everyone up to speed on using our systems, and reviewing our policies and procedures.

TPT has had another successful year assisting our partner organisations to conduct critical surveys and recovery actions for a number of threatened flora. Collectively we provided approximately 980 volunteer hours in the field over 25 days.

- NRE Tas - *Ozothamnus reflexifolia* (Mt Direction), *Zieria veronica* (Mt William)
- Milford Forest Landcare - *Caladenia saggicola*, *Paraprasophyllum milfordense*
- Landscape Recovery Foundation - Midlands threatened orchids
- Derwent Catchment Project + PWS - weeding at remnant grassland (Jordan NR)
- Forico - *Paraprasophyllum crebriflorum*
- Tasmanian Land Conservancy - Pine Tier - various spp.
- Understorey Network / Hobart Airport - *Calocephalus citreus* seed collecting

We also ran a very popular native grass identification workshop, thanks to Phil Collier and Mark Wapstra, and a Bryophytes field day thanks to Stella Fish.

2025 - 2026 Planning

As for the coming year, we've had the opportunity to partner with NRM South on a successful grant application to continue recovery actions for the Southport Heath, which will include a weeding trip in spring.

The Davies waxflower recovery project with NRE that started last year is well underway, and there are several trips to the St Helens area planned for constructing exclosures and translocating plants that have been propagated at the RTBG.

Many other field trip plans are still forming, including trips that the we on the TPT committee are organising ourselves, as well as trips with TLC, NRE, Forico, Milford Forest Landcare, Derwent Catchment Program and more. This will be posted on the website's Proposed Field Trip Program page soon.



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In June, the committee met for a planning day to discuss new field trip ideas, and agree on criteria for prioritising proposed field trips. With 493 threatened plant species listed under Tasmania's Threatened Species Protection Act 1995, we need to prioritise what we put our time and efforts into. The recent re-prioritisation model for Tasmania's threatened flora based on IUCN Red List criteria, developed by Joe Quarmby at NRE (2023), provides us with valuable information, and is a key part of our criteria.

Field Trip priority is based on a combination of these factors:

- Target species are high on the 2023 re-prioritisation model (IUCN Red List Criteria)
- Actions to be taken are part of an existing Recovery Plan or Listing Statement
- Data to be recorded fills a gap in NVA records
- Whether the target species are poorly reserved
- Whether there is more than one target species at a site
- Where species presence is unknown, the site's vegetation types and conditions are assessed as likely to be supporting threatened flora
- Building a relationship with a Partner Organisation or landholder is feasible
- Site is suitable for volunteers (consider access, terrain, proximity to roadside, etc)
- Conditions on the ground are right for the survey
- Aim for balanced taxonomic and geographic spread of trips around the state

It's hard to believe it's been 5 years already, but in 2020 TPT took steps towards becoming an independent, incorporated association. I'm pleased to report that we did pretty well against our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. The table below shows our progress.



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Review of TPT's 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan

Strategy	Action	Completion date	Progress
Prioritise target species	Undertake a desktop assessment of Tasmania's threatened flora to support TPT's threatened species prioritisation	December 2020	Achieved by Joe Quarmby (2023), Evaluating extinction risk in Tasmania's vascular flora using rapid IUCN Red List assessments
	Coordinate a workshop with threatened flora experts to prioritise TPT's target species	December 2021	Criteria for prioritising trips achieved
Coordinate volunteer field Trips	Work with partners to develop annual field trip program	June - August each year	Achieved
	Coordinate field trip program	September - February each year, with out of season events as required	Achieved
	Provide field trip reports to participants and ensure that data is submitted to the NVA	Within 1 month of a field trip	Field trip reports sometimes achieved. Data submitted to the NVA achieved.
	Provide reports to land managers for field trips that involve threat assessment	Within 1 month of a field trip involving population threat assessments	Achieved
	Secure investment and in-kind support for event coordination and administrative support (2 weeks per year to support current activities) and website maintenance	January each year	Achieved in some years. Covid affected some negotiations.



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Work with partners on on-ground recovery projects	Work with partners to develop annual field trip program including working bees to undertake on ground recovery actions	August each year	Achieved every year
	Work with partners to support funding applications and lobby to increase resources for threatened flora recovery	December 2025	Successful funding partnerships: LRF - midlands orchids NRE - davies waxflower NRM South - Southport Heath
Increase opportunities for TPT members	Secure investment and in-kind support for event coordination and administrative support (1 week per year to support current activities)	January 2021, and January each year following	Achieved in-kind support from partners organising trips
	Survey TPT members to determine if volunteer coordination and training events are meeting volunteer needs	October 2020, and every two years following	Scheduled for 2025-26 to inform next strategic plan
	Undertake volunteer training events on topic as determined by TPT member surveys	December 2025	Flora ID: Orchids Native grasses Bryophytes



2024-2025 Field season

By Peter Harrison, TPT Newsletter Editor

What a bumper field season it has been! The Threatened Plants Tasmania held a total of nine field trips over the 2024-2025 season, with volunteers contributing important population census information that supports the on-going management for many of Tasmania's threatened plants. Many thanks to all the volunteers for their valuable help and continued support to protect Tasmania's iconic flora.

Some highlights from this year include: the third highest number of sagg spider orchids recorded since the annual survey first begun; the discovery of a new population of *Pterostylis commutata* and *Prasophyllum incorrectum*; new discoveries of the Milford leek orchid; and the highest number of the crowed leek orchid seen at Surry Hills in the past three years, which was topped off by the discovery of new tiny midge-orchid and short bentgrass populations.

The 2025-2026 field season is shaping up to be another amazing year and we look forward to seeing you all on the trips.

Annual census of the sagg spider orchid

Milford, Sept 2024

Technical lead: Graham Green

Trip Coordinator: Sally Anthony

The annual survey for the critically endangered sagg spider orchid (*Caladenia saggicola*) was undertaken in September. This endemic species is only found at two locations, growing in deep sandy soils where white gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and sagg (*Lomandra longifolia*) dominate.

There was much trepidation about this trip as no plants were found during the 2023 survey, which was attributed to the extreme dry spell and consistently warmer than average temperatures. The drought was temporarily broken with some reasonable rainfall over the winter months and there was hope that the timing of the rain would stimulate the emergence of the spider orchids.

We weren't disappointed! The group found a total of 710 spider orchids, most of which were sagg spider orchid (702), with the other eight being the tailed



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spider orchid (*Caladenia caudata*) and hybrids.

The count this year was the third highest number since the annual surveys began in 2009 and well above the long-term average of 373 plants. The two previous highest counts were also associated with excellent rainfall. In 2020, 876 sagg spider orchids were observed, and 761 in 2021.

Monitoring survey for Reflexed everlasting bush

Mount Direction, Oct 2024

Technical lead: Joe Quarmby

In partnership with NRE Tasmania, 6 volunteers assisted in re-establishing transects for monitoring *Ozothamnus reflexifolius*. Quadrats were established to monitor population trends. A surprise (to us!) visit from Richard Schahinger, who originally described the species, shared his wealth of knowledge with participants, making the trip a great opportunity to connect and learn. Joe reported that overall, the population is stable but appears to have reduced in extent over the last 10 years. Some senescence was observed but also lots of recruitment in the core area without fire. Long-term transect data suggests that there has been a decline in some areas.

Census of Pink zieria

Mt William National Park, Nov 2024

Technical lead: Joe Quarmby

Trip Coordinator: Sally Anthony

In partnership with NRE Tasmania, TPT volunteers conducted a census of *Zieria veronicea*. Joe reported that census results were similar to slightly higher numbers found from previous census but has declined in some areas due to thick bracken regeneration. No impacts were observed from phytophthora which is throughout the area, and numbers have recovered from a previous planned burn in part of the population.

Orchid and threatened grassland species extension surveys

Midlands, Oct-Nov 2024

Technical lead & Trip Coordinator: Fiona Walsh

During spring 2024, the Landscape Recovery Foundation, with generous support from Threatened Plants Tasmania (TPT), carried out a series of orchid extension surveys across privately owned properties throughout the Midlands. Many of these properties are managed under the Midlands Conservation Partnership, a long-standing collaboration between the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and Bush



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Heritage Australia, which continues to demonstrate the importance of private land stewardship for Tasmania's rarest flora.

This survey effort, funded by the Australian Government's Saving Native Species Program, focused on locating new or previously undocumented populations of several threatened and critically endangered species, including *Paraprasophyllum incorrectum*, *P. tunbridgense*, *P. olidum*, *P. taphanyx* (one can always hope!), *Pterostylis commutata*, *P. ziegeleri*, *P. wapstrarum*, and *Caladenia anthracina*. Some properties were situated close to known sites, while others were true wildcards, offering the exciting possibility of entirely new populations.

Over the course of a month, we surveyed around nine sites and had a wonderful time exploring some of the state's best native grassland remnants. One of the standout achievements of the season was the discovery of three new sub-populations of the Midlands greenhood (*Pterostylis commutata*). These finds represent one of the most significant conservation gains for the species since it was listed as threatened in 2001. Each newly confirmed plant is far more than a record in a database, it is a sign of resilience and a reminder of the impact that dedicated fieldwork can have. Seed collections were made, and we are

delighted to report that the first successful germination occurred in early 2025.

In addition, a new sub-population of the golfers leek orchid (*Paraprasophyllum incorrectum*) was identified on a northern Midlands property, thanks to the keen eyes and botanical expertise of TPT members. This exciting discovery allowed us to return in 2025 for more intensive surveys, ultimately expanding the known extent of the population even further.

These combined outcomes demonstrate the immense value of collaborative surveys, careful monitoring, and passionate volunteer involvement. A heartfelt thank-you to all TPT members who contributed their time, skills and good humour, your efforts were central to the success of this work and continue to shape the future of threatened plant conservation in Tasmania.

Fiona Walsh and Magali Wright,
Landscape Recovery Foundation



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(top row) Newly recorded orchids were caged to protect from browsers and for seed. (bottom row) Surveying for threatened grassland species – not even blustering winds and rain could dampen the spirits of the team. (Images: PA Harrison)



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Annual survey of the Milford leek orchid

Milford, Nov 2024

Technical lead: Graham Green

Trip Coordinator: Masaki Pike

The annual survey for the critically endangered Milford leek orchid (*Paraprasophyllum milfordense*) occurred in November 2024. This species is only known from a single population growing in woodlands dominated by white gum and sagg on sandy soils.

By the time the survey came around, the extremely dry conditions had returned. Rainfall was below average, and the site had experienced consistent high winds through October and early November.

During the survey, 121 Milford leek orchids were observed, just slightly below the long-term average of 129. It was a big relief to find so many records of the orchid, especially given the 2023 survey failed to find any plants of this species and the continuing challenging climatic conditions in 2024.

The Milford leek orchids observed this year were generally smaller in size, had matured earlier than in previous years, and had a few surprises in their distribution. Some usually reliable locations for the orchid had low census counts, whilst other locations had no observations of the orchid.

Despite the patchy observations, there was one significant highlight. Four Milford leek orchids were observed in a new location (in Management Unit 10) about 500 metres away from the where the orchid had been observed in the past. This exciting find provides hope that extension surveys into the north-eastern management units on the property may be a worthwhile exercise in the future.



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Annual census of the crowded leek orchid

Surrey Hills, Jan 2025

Technical lead & Trip Coordinator: Kerri Spicer

The annual survey of Forico's Surrey Hills property occurred in January 2025. The Saturday crew visited Racecourse Outstation/Racecourse Plain and Peak Plain and the Sunday crew visited Gatcomb South, Hatfield Plain and Westwing.

What did we find? Bumper numbers of the crowded leek orchid (*Paraprasophyllum crebriflorum*), with the highest numbers recorded at some of the highly browsed sites. The Hatfield Plain transect had been getting down to just one or a few orchids but this year 20 were recorded (only a quick looky outside the transect happened this year). Westwing was another location where good numbers were found both inside the enclosure (21) and outside (47) where there is heavy browsing pressure, and a much greater extent recorded than previous years (compared to 4 plants recorded in 2024).

Our extension survey at Racecourse Outstation was a success, while we didn't really stumble on another motherload in this grassland, there were reasonable numbers scattered (37), and it was great to get a better understanding of the

extent and distribution at this site. The main population in the southwest of this grassland burn unit was doing great (we didn't formally count this year but there would have been a good 200+ orchids).

Peak Plain was going off this year. Good seasonal conditions combined with browsing management undertaken over the last year gave crazy high numbers (318 in 2025 vs 45 in 2024) and a much greater extent than ever recorded before. The larger enclosure that hadn't been compromised had 100 orchids in it!!

Gatcomb South continued to have good numbers, its increase in numbers in part due to finding a new location that had 94 orchids. Thanks to those who decided that southern knoll needed searching this year and finding this new part of the population at Gatcomb South.

21 individual orchid cages were also put out in Jan. 2025 (thanks to TPT for helping set up a number of these) to help facilitate seed set but also to provide the opportunity for seed collection for the Landscape Recovery Foundation orchid conservation project. Seed was collected from a subset of these cages in February and March.

Other interesting threatened flora finds from the weekend included a new *Corunastylis nuda* (tiny midge-orchid) location at Peak Plain: the site found last year had 15 plants and the new



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location this year had 36 in a 6 x 4 m area. Mark's crew at Racecourse did a bit of extra exploring and Phil Collier found a new location of *Deyeuxia brachyathera* (short bentgrass). A grass typically found in wetter, sphagnum areas normally with only one or just a few plants making it a hard one to find (plus needing good botanical skills to ID). This find is just the third location recorded to date on Surrey Hills but it's good to be getting some more records.

Next year's survey has already been scheduled for the weekend of January 10-11. It's just too interesting not to want to see what the orchid does next year in response to the season and the management actions being implemented.



TPT volunteers at Gatcomb South – Surrey Hills (Image K Spicer)



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Extension surveys of threatened species at Pine Tier

Pine Tier, Feb 2025

Technical lead: Aimee Bliss

Trip Coordinator: Sally Anthony



TPT volunteers at Pine Tier (Image: A Bliss)

It was great to help the TLC in surveying an area of highland *Poa* grassland, riparian habitat and eucalyptus woodlands which had not previously been surveyed. The successful day resulted in mapping at least three threatened plant species in one trip: *Argyrotegium poliochlozum*, *Carex capillacea*, and *Muehlenbeckia axillaris*. It was also a great opportunity to learn from some experts in the field.

Seed collections for the rare lemon beautyheads

Hobart Airport, March 2025

Technical lead: Ruth Mollison

Trip Coordinator: Stuart Rose

TPT volunteers assisted the Understorey Network in a survey and seed collecting trip at Hobart Airport.

Ruth from the Understorey Network tells us that all of the *C. citreus*, *Coronidium gunnianum* and *Bolboschoenus caldwellii* seeds collected have been happily cleaned and labelled by TAFE students, and are now awaiting propagation in spring.

Weeding: *Disa bracteata*, South African orchid

Jordan Nature Reserve, Nov 2024

Technical lead: Mel Fazackerley

Trip Coordinator: Priscilla Richards

A small infestation of the weedy South African orchid, *Disa bracteata*, was noted last year at the Jordan Nature Reserve. This plant is considered a high-priority weed for control to prevent its establishment. TPT volunteers assisted Derwent Catchment Project volunteers in hand weeding the orchid, which involves digging out the plant and all its tubers. We certainly hope to prevent its establishment at this site, which hosts several threatened native grassland species, but it reproduces prolifically, with each plant potentially producing hundreds of viable seeds. There are already plans to return next year.



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Workshops

The 2024-2025 year also saw the running of four extremely popular workshops. Members honed their identification skills of Tasmania's native orchids at two workshop and gained new skills in identifying Tasmania's notoriously difficult grass species. Members were also treated to a field workshop to hone their skills in identifying the often forgotten, but enormously important, mosses.

We gratefully thank the convenors of the workshops for sharing their knowledge and infectious passion for these amazing plants. We look forward to offering members more workshops in 2025-2026! Reports from the native grasses identification and byrophytes workshops follow.

Native Grasses Identification Workshop

8 Dec 2024

To identify many Tasmanian grasses, a hand lens is essential in the field, and a detailed inspection of a specimen using a microscope is often required. This possibly explains why few amateur botanists become familiar with grasses, and put them aside for another day. Well, this was that day! Mark Wapstra and Phil Collier led 20 TPT members through excellent presentations and examples of the larger genera of Tasmanian grasses: *Agrostis* (*Lachnagrostis*), *Austrostipa*, *Deyeuxia*, *Poa* and *Rytidosperma*, plus a few others, and how they differ from common weedy grasses. With a microscope each, we examined dozens of specimens to get familiar with the structures that set each species apart. Mark even brought along his personal herbarium of native grasses for us to

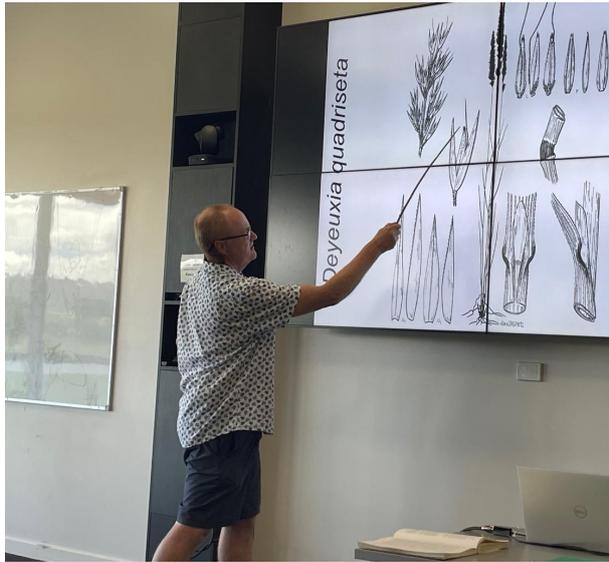
browse. All up it was a wonderful opportunity. We believe that everyone went away with some new knowledge no matter where they are on their journey of understanding native grasses. Casual feedback since the workshop indicates this is one we should run again if possible.





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Bryophytes Field Workshop

Myrtle Gully Track, April 2025

Until this workshop, Threatened Plants Tasmania had never included cryptogams in its program. The trip leader was Stella Fish. She studied bryophytes, in particular liverworts, in New Zealand's South Island and came to Tasmania to extend her studies. This field workshop was held on the Myrtle Gully Track on the lower slopes of Mt Wellington.



Following acknowledgement of the traditional custodians, she took us to the start of the track where she introduced us to mosses and showed us four species living in the dry, exposed conditions of the first few meters. She explained the difficulties of classifying both mosses and liverworts including rules of thumb on how to separate mosses from liverworts and how some species are exceptions to these generalisations.



Tasmania has much of the Australian cryptogam flora with about 800 species of mosses compared to a total of about 1,000 Australia-wide. It also has about 400 species of liverworts of around 900 Australia-wide.

Native Grasses Workshop with Phil Collier and Mark Wapstra (Images P Richards)

A question that kept participants busy was "Is this a liverwort or moss?" Some of the most interesting and beautiful species encountered were the dendritic



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(umbrella) mosses with their tree-like forms. This included the species *Hypopterygium didictyon*. Then, to confuse us, we encountered the dendritic liverwort *Hymenophyton flabellatum*. We were shown how to differentiate between the native liverwort species *Marchantia foliacea* and the introduced invasive *Lunularia cruciata*.

Stella's knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject matter kept participants on their toes. By the end of the workshop, we were able to confidently identify several common species and had hugely increased our knowledge and appreciation of these often-overlooked species.

Altogether, we found 14 species of moss and 5 species of liverworts.

I think everyone really appreciated Stella's enthusiasm and the knowledge she shared with us!



Bryophytes field workshop with Stella Fish
(Images E Gaul)



TPT committee 2024-25

Name	Position	Contact
Priscilla Richards	President	president@tpt.org.au
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Peter Harrison	Committee	
Cody Pearce	Committee	
Masaki Pike	Committee	
Stuart Rose	Committee	



Photo of the committee, Campbell Town, June planning day. (Image S Anthony)
Judy, Priscilla, Peter, Stuart, Eddie, Masaki, Sally, Jill. Not pictured: Cody