

# Action statement

*Flora & Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*

## Dwarf Kerrawang (*Commersonia prostrata*)

Taxon ID: 502965

Action statements are developed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act). Their preparation and implementation complement the FFG Act strategy *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037* and its vision that “Victoria's biodiversity is healthy, valued and actively cared for”.

### Species and Distribution



Dwarf Kerrawang. Image by Marcia Riederer.



This habitat distribution model displays the indicative range of Dwarf Kerrawang, based on occurrence records and likely habitat. See [NatureKit](#) for an interactive map. The species also occurs outside Victoria.

### Conservation Status

#### Endangered

**Listing criteria:** 4.1.2(a), (b)(i,ii,iii,iv,v), c(v) of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Regulations 2020.

This means that:

- its geographic distribution is highly restricted; and
- the distribution of the population or habitat of the taxon is severely fragmented; and
- it is restricted to a limited number of areas that are subject to the same threat or suite of threats that can impact all individuals present; and
- there is a continuing decline or reduction in:
  - its extent of occurrence; and
  - area of occupancy; and
  - the area, extent or quality of habitat; and
  - the number of locations or subpopulations; and
  - the number of mature individuals; and
- there are extreme fluctuations in the numbers of mature individuals.

**Corresponding International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria:**

B1ab(i,ii,iii,iv,v)c(iv)+2ab(i,ii,iii,iv,v)c(iv).

More information on IUCN listing criteria can be found here: [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#).

## Species Information

Species information such as its description, distribution, ecology and references are provided in the [Dwarf Kerrawang Species Forecast Report](#) and [VicFlora](#).

## Threats

Threats listed below have been identified through expert elicitation, consultation, published literature and spatial analysis.

Threat	Description
<b>Climate change</b>	
Altered rainfall regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A change in rainfall patterns can alter and shift the location of suitable habitat and may impact population size.</li> </ul>
Increased frequency or length of droughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long-term drying of habitat may stop or reduce recruitment and encourage shrub invasion.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire</b>	
Altered fire regimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased frequency and intensity of fire may kill adult plants before they reach maturity, eventually depleting the soil seedbank. Climate change is likely to exacerbate this threat.</li> </ul>
<b>Introduced species</b>	
Deer, feral pigs, rabbits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sambar Deer (<i>Cervus unicolor</i>), Hog Deer (<i>Axis porcinus</i>), and potentially Fallow Deer (<i>Dama dama</i>), feral pigs (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) and rabbits (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>) damage habitat by browsing, trampling, pugging, and/or foraging.</li> </ul>
Weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weeds may lower habitat quality, particularly where hydrology is altered. Weeds of concern include Radiata pine (<i>Pinus radiata</i>), African Love-grass (<i>Eragrostis curvula</i>), Spiny Rush (<i>Juncus acutus</i>), Kikuyu (<i>Cenchrus clandestinus</i>) and Common Blackberry (<i>Rubus anglocandicans</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Native species</b>	
Burgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burgan (<i>Kunzea</i> spp.) encroaches into drying wetlands and can change habitat structure. Burgan may outcompete Dwarf Kerrawang.</li> </ul>
Macropods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Browsing by Black-tailed Wallabies (<i>Wallabia bicolor</i>) and Eastern Grey Kangaroos (<i>Macropus giganteus</i>) threatens juveniles and drought-stressed individuals.</li> </ul>
<b>Habitat loss, degradation or modification</b>	
Groundwater extraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in groundwater levels can dry out wetlands, degrading habitat or reducing available habitat.</li> </ul>
Land use change/intensification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural intensification and land use change alters hydrology, degrades habitat, and fragments populations.</li> </ul>
Livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Populations on private land may be exposed to browsing and pugging by livestock.</li> </ul>

Threat	Description
Plantation operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plantations can alter hydrology by increasing the uptake of groundwater and may cause the drying of wetlands.</li> <li>Aerial weed spraying in plantations can kill individuals where spray drift occurs.</li> </ul>
<b>Human disturbance</b>	
Fire prevention activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road construction and maintenance, firebreak creation and mechanical disturbance can lead to habitat loss and individual mortality.</li> </ul>
Recreational activities - motor vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles and motorbikes damage plants in the Holey Plains area.</li> </ul>

## Conservation Objectives

Conservation objectives are informed by the conservation status and criteria under which the species was listed under the FFG Act. This provides a framework to understand how we can work towards recovery and improve the species' conservation status over time as per the objectives of the FFG Act.

The key objectives of this action statement are:

- Mitigate threats to populations and habitat to increase resilience and minimise future population decline.
- Establish at least two new populations within its historic range.
- Increase knowledge of biology, ecology, distribution, demography, emerging threats, and conservation requirements
- Support community participation and improve awareness of the Dwarf Kerrawang and conservation of wetland environments.

## Conservation Actions

The actions below have been identified through expert consultation, published literature and spatial analysis. Actions are listed in alphabetical order to allow all interested parties to prioritise based on their context, capacity and capability. Landscape scale actions may mitigate threats for other species. For more information on where to undertake actions that benefit multiple species and identify the most beneficial locations to undertake actions for this species, please refer to [NatureKit](#).

Action	Description
Avoid and/or mitigate impacts associated with fire management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure species distribution data and information about ecological requirements is available and considered during fuel management and bushfire suppression planning.</li> <li>Undertake biodiversity values check prior to any fuel management in areas of the species' habitat to confirm treatment suitability and timing.</li> </ul>
Collect and store reproductive material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain seed storage. Ensure: the material represents adequate genetic diversity from across its range; that seed is processed for long term storage; that adequate numbers are available for future reintroduction; and that essential information (such as dormancy) is known.</li> </ul>
Community engagement and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to engage landholders with Dwarf Kerrawang on their property and provide information on the species and its management needs, including livestock grazing regimes which support recovery of the species.</li> </ul>

Action	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with plantation managers where the species is known to occur within and adjacent to plantations, to support the species' recovery.</li> </ul>
Control deer*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement effective management and control of deer, particularly Sambar and Hog Deer.</li> </ul>
Control pigs and rabbits*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement effective management and control of feral pigs and rabbit.</li> </ul>
Control weeds*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement effective management and control of Burgan using appropriate methods e.g. cutting and painting, under appropriate planning permits or exemptions where applicable.</li> </ul>
Develop, update and apply forestry protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate measures to protect relevant environmental values into timber harvesting plans for plantations.</li> </ul>
Establish and maintain herbivore exclusion fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erect and maintain exclusion fences and/or cages around populations to protect from browsing by deer, rabbits or native herbivores where practical.</li> </ul>
Identify and protect key habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage protection of the species and habitat on private land (for example through voluntary mechanisms and incentives, and permanent protection covenants).</li> <li>Update Habitat Distribution Model to include new records that extend its current range.</li> </ul>
Manage over-abundant macropod	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage the impacts of macropods to minimise the impact on young plants.</li> </ul>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake research into germination requirements, seed longevity and viability.</li> <li>Investigate and determine an appropriate ecological burning regime for the species.</li> <li>Identify climate refuges that may be suitable for translocations.</li> </ul>
Surveys and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensively survey likely habitat to locate any additional populations.</li> <li>Implement a monitoring program to assess population size and trends, habitat condition and degradation, and recruitment and longevity at all known populations.</li> </ul>
Translocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish new populations at suitable sites that account for future climate conditions, and ensure risk-spreading to minimise species level impacts from stochastic events.</li> </ul>

*\*Indicates landscape-scale actions that may deliver benefits to multiple species*

## Past Actions

The key conservation management actions listed below have been delivered in the past 10 years.

Past action	Description
Control weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted and general weed control has been undertaken in Dwarf Kerrawang habitat by land managers.</li> </ul>
Covenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Populations have been protected within three Trust for Nature reserves and a number of private land covenants.</li> </ul>

Past action	Description
Develop, update and apply forestry protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The risk of forestry operations was assessed for this species in 2020 under the Victorian Government Threatened Species and Communities Risk Assessment. Additional permanent protections were not found to be required.</li> </ul>
Ex-situ management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria have cultivated and maintain the species.</li> </ul>
Exclusion fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Herbivore exclusion fencing has been established on at least six sites.</li> </ul>
Introduced species management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rabbit and deer control has been undertaken within the species' distribution.</li> </ul>
Manage over-abundant native species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burgan has been controlled at multiple sites by Parks Victoria and Trust for Nature.</li> </ul>
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring was undertaken as part of the Reducing Bushfire Risk Program for the Gippsland Plain bioregion.</li> </ul>

## Decision Support Tools

Decision making for conservation actions is supported through the following Victorian Government tools which may be of assistance in choosing the most appropriate or beneficial actions for biodiversity:

- [Choosing actions for nature: NatureKit](#)
- [Biodiversity Knowledge Framework](#)

## Further Information

- [Dwarf Kerrawang Species Forecast Report](#)
- [Threatened Species Assessment report – Dwarf Kerrawang \(\*Commersonia prostrata\*\)](#)
- [Commonwealth Species Profile and Threats database](#)
- [Threatened Species and Communities Risk Assessment](#)
- [Victorian Deer Control Strategy](#)
- [Commonwealth Threat Abatement Plans](#)
- [Victoria's changing climate – understanding the impacts of climate change in Victoria](#)
- [Flora and Fauna Guarantee Regulations 2020](#)
- [IUCN Red List criteria descriptions](#)

## Get Involved and Take Action

If you are interested in supporting this species' recovery, there are some important things you need to consider.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is committed to engaging and partnering with Traditional Owners on how they wish to be involved in the planning and implementation of actions for this species. Steps must be taken to avoid harm and where appropriate ensure actions can deliver cultural benefits.

You can find advice about required approvals, land manager / owner permissions, options and incentives for private land conservation, and engagement with Traditional Owners and public land managers here: [Action statements \(environment.vic.gov.au\)](#)

To identify the relevant Traditional Owners, use the [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System \(ACHRIS\) Welcome to Country and Acknowledgements Map](#).



Interested parties are encouraged to work together across community, government, private and public land managers and Traditional Owners to undertake these actions and secure funding for their implementation.

You can also register your interest in taking action so we can connect you to other people or organisations working to help us secure the future for this species at [threatened.species@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:threatened.species@deeca.vic.gov.au)

## Reporting Actions

Activity data is critical to monitoring the implementation and progress of actions and evaluating action statements. These data are also used to:

- Determine progress towards achieving the contributing targets for [Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037](#).
- Inform the five-yearly State of the Environment Report.

For guidance on reporting actions undertaken on this species, refer to [Activity Data](#).

## Submitting Monitoring Data

The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) provides a foundational dataset showing where biodiversity occurs across the Victorian landscape and how it may have changed over time. As a core input for decision support tools that inform conservation action, public land management, research activities and reporting, we encourage all participants in the delivery of on-ground actions to submit species records and observations, including for weeds and introduced animals, as they carry out their projects.

For further information see: [Victorian Biodiversity Atlas \(environment.vic.gov.au\)](https://environment.vic.gov.au)

Sign up and begin submitting your data today at: <https://vba.biodiversity.vic.gov.au/>

### Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



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