



Leafy Greenhood *Pterostylis cucullata*

Vulnerable

Description

Pterostylis cucullata is an annual, terrestrial orchid. It has 5 to 7 large basal leaves (9 cm long) forming a rosette that emerges in winter. It produces a single flower stem in Sept-Nov (10-25 cm tall) with 3 to 5 cauline leaves, and one or two flowers. The flowers are green and brown and with translucent, white and dark green stripes. The lateral sepals and petals are dark brown. The lip (labellum) is dark brown and does not protrude from the galea.



Flower of *Pterostylis cucullata*.

J. Quarmby

Habitat

P. cucullata grows in *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (South Australian Blue Gum), *E. fasciculosa* (Pink Gum) and *E. obliqua* (Stringybark) grassy woodland. The understorey usually includes *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle), *A. melanoxylon* (Blackwood) and *Bursaria spinosa* (Christmas Bush). The groundcover is dense with grasses, ferns, lilies and other herbs.

It usually grows in moist shady areas (eg in gullies and along creek lines), on south-facing slopes in fertile sandy loam soils.



Typical habitat of *Pterostylis cucullata*.

T. Jury

Distribution and abundance

P. cucullata is known from five populations in the Mount Lofty Ranges of South Australia, and is also found in Victoria and Tasmania. Its range extends from Second Valley in the south to Lobethal in the north.

The population size of *P. cucullata* in South Australia was estimated to be approximately 8100 mature plants in 2007. The majority of plants are found within Belair National Park. Annual monitoring indicates that the number of flowering plants is declining.

Conservation Rating

P. cucullata is listed as nationally **Vulnerable** under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Distribution of *Pterostylis cucullata* in South Australia.



- Current populations
- + Historical populations

Threats



Climate Change



Weed Invasion



Phytophthora



Herbivory



Recreation



Wildfire



Illegal Collection

P. cucullata is under particular threat from weed invasion, especially Montpellier Broom, Boneseed and Sweet Pittosporum. Herbivory by kangaroos, rabbits and invertebrates is also a threat. *P. cucullata* is also at risk from wildfire.

Recovery Actions

P. cucullata is included in a recovery plan for 12 threatened orchids in the Lofty Block region, which outlines strategies and actions for species recovery, including:

- Monitoring population size and trends.
- Surveying historical and potential habitat for populations.
- Mitigating the threats to populations (eg weed control, caging, rabbit control *etc*).
- Protecting and managing habitat (eg protecting land under Heritage Agreement, fencing *etc*).
- Collecting and preserving seed and mycorrhizal fungi.
- Preparing and implementing translocation proposals.
- Undertaking research related to the ecology and biology of the species.
- Informing, encouraging and supporting landholders and the community.

How you can help

If you think you have seen *P. cucullata* please report it to the Department for Environment and Heritage (see contacts below).

You can also volunteer your time to assist with surveys, monitoring, weed control, fencing, and other recovery actions for the species.



Group of *Pterostylis cucullata* plants.

P. Lang

Further reading

Quarmby J.P (2006) *Recovery plan for 12 threatened orchids in the Lofty Block region of South Australia 2007-2012*. Department for Environment and Heritage, Adelaide.

www.environment.sa.gov.au

For Further information please contact

Lofty Block Threatened Orchid Recovery Project Officer
Department for Environment and Heritage

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Australian Government

Threatened Plant Action Group



Native Orchid Society of South Australia