Pterostylis falcata  
Sickle Greenhood

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**Family** ORCHIDACEAE

**Conservation Significance**
The AMLR distribution is disjunct, isolated from other extant occurrences within SA. Within the AMLR the species’ relative area of occupancy is classified as ‘Extremely Restricted’.

Critically endangered in SA.

**Description**
Large-flowered terrestrial greenhood with a curved hood which resembles a sickle. Leaves four to six in a loose rosette, to 8 cm long. Flower stem to 30 cm tall with several stem bracts. Flower single rather large and elongate, green and white with a bulge at the base of the sickle shaped hood.

**Distribution and Population**
Also occurs in QLD, NSW, ACT and VIC. In SA occurs in SL, KI and SE regions. More common in eastern Australia.

In the AMLR, known from Higgs Swamp (2002) near Myponga, however the provenance is uncertain (may be planted) (R. Bates pers. comm.). Last definite plants recorded from Scott Creek CP (Author’s note: not mapped below, data unavailable).

There are no pre-1983 records.

**Habitat**
Occurs on fertile black acid soils of swamps and creek beds in shaded places, often flowering only when the creeks begin to dry out in late spring-summer. Rosettes may be covered by a metre of often fast flowing water in winter.

At Almanda Creek, Scott Creek CP, occurs along edge of Leptospermum lanigerum (+/-) Acacia provincialis swamp (T. Jury pers. comm.).

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation group is Wetland.

Within the AMLR the species’ degree of habitat specialisation is classified as ‘Very High’.

**Biology and Ecology**
Flowers from November to January. Hybridises with Pterostylis nutans and P. cucullata. All known pollinators of the Pterostylis genus are male insects of the fungus gnat and mosquito family.

**Aboriginal Significance**
Post-1983 records indicate the entire AMLR distribution occurs in southern Kaurna Nation.

Species of Orchidaceae are recorded as being a traditional food source for Aboriginal people in NSW. The small tubers were roasted (Flood 1980).

**Threats**
Has become exceedingly rare in SA due to loss of habitat (vegetation clearance), Blackberry infestation, increased salinity (in relation to Kangaroo Island populations) and stock trampling. In the AMLR, weeds, in particular Blackberries, are a significant threat. Competition from Coral Fern and Leptospermum sp. also poses a threat (J. Quarmby pers. comm. 2009).

Other potential threats include site disturbance, recreational impacts, drought and climate change, reduced water quality, and rubbish dumping.

Additional current direct threats have been identified and rated for this species. Refer to the main plan accompanying these profiles.

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Photo: © Ken Bayley
Regional Distribution

Map based on filtered post-1983 records. Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species' distribution within the AMUR.

References

Note: In some cases original reference sources are not included in this list, however they can be obtained from the reference from which the information has been sourced (the reference cited in superscript).


