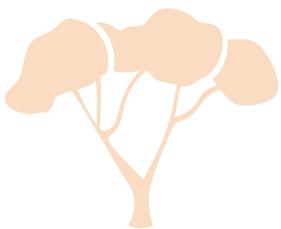




## SIGNIFICANT FLORA FACT SHEET

**Slender Darling-Pea is listed as vulnerable in South Australia where it is only known from two definite localities – the Flinders and Olary Ranges**



## SLENDER DARLING-PEA

*Swainsona murrayana* ssp. *murrayana*

Slender Darling-Pea is an annual leguminous herb which occurs in South Australia and Queensland (with less than four recordings each), and more commonly in New South Wales and Victoria. It is listed as vulnerable in South Australia where it is only known from two definite localities – the Flinders and Olary Ranges.

Interstate it is listed variously as vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered. It is also rated as vulnerable under the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Slender Darling-Pea is at risk of loss through grazing as it is considered palatable to stock, feral and native herbivores.

Almost all darling-peas (*Swainsona* spp.) are annual or ephemeral, and hence are only found after good winter or spring rainfalls.

Slender Darling-Pea can form an attractive flowering shrub when growing well.



### IDENTIFICATION

There are more than 30 identified *Swainsona* species and often these are difficult for the untrained observer to tell apart, particularly when an abundance of other annual growth is present.

Slender Darling-Pea is best identified by its unique leaf shape and bushy habit of the plants.

Plants are short-lived erect forbs with sparsely-downy stems 10-30 cm long. Flowers are pea-like, yellowish-pink to purple with red stripes and greyish, stiffly-tapered, leathery pods.

### DISTRIBUTION

Although there are a few collections from South Australia, this species has been recorded from only two specific locations in the southern Flinders Ranges near Mookra Pound (Carrieton) and from Bimbowrie Conservation Park in the Olary Ranges near the Barrier Highway.

Associated plant communities are semi-arid grasslands or chenopod shrublands of bluebushes (*Maireana* species) or of *Eremophila* species.

### THREATS

This subspecies is under significant threat due to its rarity and continuing impacts of grazing and cultivation of young plants.

Throughout its known range it occurs in some of the most highly modified landscapes – semi-arid grasslands and shrublands.

Very little is known about the ecology of the plant. It is not known in cultivation and there are relatively few collections (presumably because of its annual growth habit and palatability to stock and other herbivores).



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The recovery of potential suitable habitat for Slender Darling-Pea will be assisted by improved land management of the rangelands and grasslands of semi-arid South Australia, specific management of these landscapes for biodiversity conservation, and the creation of new parks and reserves such as Bimbowrie.

Improved land management to assist the nationally endangered Thick Billed Grasswren (*Amytornis textilis*) will also benefit Slender Darling-Pea since both require protection and restoration of our semi-arid grassland ecosystems.



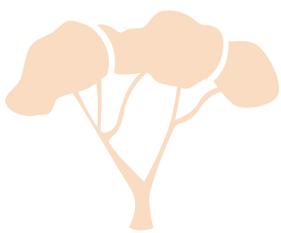
Healthy plant  
P. Ainslie



Typical habit  
P. Ainslie



Fruiting pods  
P. Ainslie



Flowering spike  
D. Kraehenbuehl