



PLANT

*Prasophyllum pallidum*

Pale Leek-orchid

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism	Life History
V	R	V	State	Perennial

Family ORCHIDACEAE



Photo: © Cathy Houston

### Conservation Significance

Endemic to SA. The AMLR distribution is part of a limited extant distribution in adjacent regions within SA. Within the AMLR the species' relative area of occupancy is classified as 'Very Restricted'.<sup>5</sup>

Some forms of *Prasophyllum fitzgeraldii* have very pale flowers but can be readily separated on the basis of their free lateral sepals. These and plants of *P. lindleyanum* have resulted in erroneous records of *P. pallidum* in VIC. This is a free flowering species which can still be found at the type location near Adelaide.<sup>2</sup>

### Description

Plant slender, to 30 cm tall. Leaf long and lax, base green. Flowers many, to 7 mm across, wholly pale green, in loose spikes, standing well out from the spike. Flowers are sweetly fragrant.<sup>2</sup>

### Distribution and Population

Occurs in FR, NL and SL regions.<sup>4</sup>

Belair NP contains the largest known conserved population in the AMLR. Small populations also occur in Scott, Sandy Creek, Ferguson and Cromer CPs, Onkaparinga River NP, and Anstey Hill RP (Davies 1986, 1992, 1995a; Lang and Kraehenbuehl 1999; G. Hastwell, D. Murfet and R. Taplin *pers. comm.*).<sup>6</sup>

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records indicate a scattered distribution with records from Scott CP, Belair RP, Black Hill CP, Anstey Hill RP, Mount Crawford Forest and near Harrogate.<sup>5</sup>

Pre-1983 AMLR filtered records suggest a historically wider range in the MLR (Adelaide Hills) from the Barossa Valley to Onkaparinga River. Also known from the Victor Harbor area and records from the northern Adelaide Plains.<sup>5</sup>

### Habitat

Grows singly or in small groups on the more fertile soils of woodland and well-grassed open forests.<sup>2,4</sup>

Habitats recorded include:

- *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* open forest, low open forest, and low woodland
- *E. goniocalyx* woodland
- *E. fasciculosa* low woodland, and low open woodland
- *E. microcarpa* woodland
- *Callitris gracilis/Eucalyptus fasciculosa* low open forest (Davies 1986).<sup>7</sup>
- *Allocasuarina verticillata* over *Lissanthe strigosa*, *Amphipogon strictus* and *Tricoryne elatior*.<sup>6</sup>

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Grassy Woodland and Heathy Woodland.<sup>5</sup>

Within the AMLR the species' degree of habitat specialisation is classified as 'Moderate-Low'.<sup>5</sup>

### Biology and Ecology

Flowers from September to November.<sup>2,4</sup> Flowers are pollinated by native wasps, which puncture the labellum to obtain secretions produced by the flower. Grows at higher densities in regenerating vegetation that has recently been burnt (Davies 1986).<sup>7</sup>

### Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the AMLR distribution occurs in Ngarrindjeri, Peramangk and Kaurna Nations.<sup>5</sup>

### Further information:

Biodiversity Conservation Unit, Adelaide Region  
Phone: (61 8) 8336 0901 Fax: (61 8) 8336 0999  
<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/>

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Prepared as part of the Regional Recovery Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities of Adelaide and the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia 2009 - 2014





# ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Threatened Species Profile

Department  
for Environment  
and Heritage

Orchidaceae species are recorded as being a traditional food source for Aboriginal people in NSW. The small tubers were roasted (Flood 1980).<sup>1</sup>

## Threats

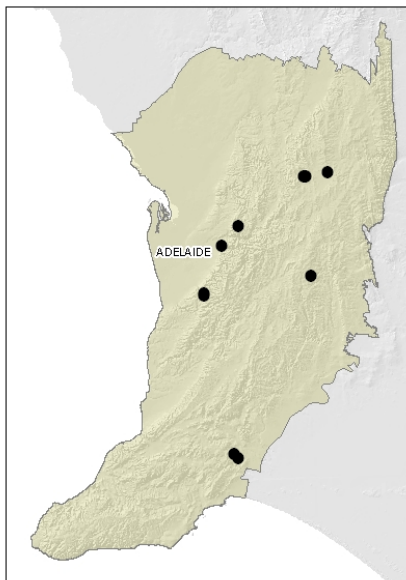
Threats include:

- grazing by rabbits, kangaroos and livestock
- weed competition (e.g. Boneseed, Harlequin Flower, exotic grasses, Bridal Creeper)
- inappropriate site management (e.g. mowing in spring when in flower)
- human impacts (e.g. residential development, damage from foot traffic)
- lack of regeneration (e.g. vegetation being allowed to reach climax state)
- small population size is an issue for some sub-populations.<sup>3,7</sup>

Within the AMLR, the majority of known distribution occurs within 2 km of confirmed or suspected *Phytophthora* infestations.<sup>5</sup>

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

## Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.<sup>5</sup> Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species' distribution within the AMLR.

## 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).

**1** Australian National Botanic Gardens (2007). *Aboriginal Plant Use - NSW Southern Tablelands*. Available from <http://www.anbg.gov.au/apu/index.html> (accessed August 2007).

**2** Bates, R. J., ed. (2007). *South Australian Native Orchids. Electronic version, August 2007*. Native Orchid Society of South Australia.

**3** Davies, R. J.-P. (1986). *Threatened Plant Species of the Mount Lofty Ranges and Kangaroo Island Regions of South Australia*. Conservation Council of South Australia Inc., Adelaide.

**4** Department for Environment and Heritage *Electronic Flora of South Australia species Fact Sheet: Prasophyllum pallidum Nicholls*. Available from <http://www.flora.sa.gov.au> (accessed July 2007).

**5** Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Recovery Pilot Project Database*. Unpublished data extracted and edited from BDBSA, SA Herbarium (July 2007) and other sources.

**6** Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *State Herbarium of South Australia Database*. Unpublished data, extracted October 2007.

**7** Turner, M. S. (2001). *Conserving Adelaide's Biodiversity: Resources*. Urban Forest Biodiversity Program, Adelaide.

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