

Coloured Spider-orchid

Caladenia colorata



Coloured Spider-orchid (close-up)
Photos provided by Julianne Jakaitis

Description

- Leaves are dull green with a reddish base, erect, hairy and 4-10cm long, 6-9mm wide
- Flowers are 5-30cm long, wiry and densely hairy
- Flowers are solitary, 5cm wide, commonly cream-green with a maroon centre but can vary to blood-red and mauve to pink
- Flowers may have a faint petrochemical or musky odour

Ecology

- The flowering period of Coloured Spider-orchid extends through August and September
- Commonly found growing in sand or sandy loams

Conservation rating

Coloured Spider-orchid is listed as nationally endangered with approximately 4000-5000 plants remaining in the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin.

Threats

- Kangaroo grazing
- Stock grazing
- Rabbit grazing
- Weed competition
- Small population size
- Illegal collection

Coloured Spider-orchid is at particular risk from a variety of grazing animals including rabbits, kangaroos, stock and possibly caterpillars and snails. Highly invasive weed species including Bridal Creeper and Perennial Veldt Grass are competing with Coloured Spider-orchid at many sites. Many populations are small which reduces their ability to successfully reproduced and survive. Illegal collection of plants and picking of flowers may be threatening some populations.

Habitat

Coloured Spider-orchid occurs in woodland and mallee communities.

The overstorey of woodland habitats is dominated by:

- Pink Gum (*Eucalyptus fasciculosa*)
- Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *leucoxylon*)
- Mallee Box (*Eucalyptus porosa*)
- Southern Cypress Pine (*Callitris preissii*)

The overstorey of mallee habitats is dominated by a variety of species, including:

- Coastal White Mallee (*Eucalyptus diversifolia*)
- Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*)
- Drooping Sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*)
- Common Boobialla (*Myoporum insulare*)

Understorey plants are typically dominated by scattered shrubs over native heaths and sedges and scattered grasses.



Distribution

Coloured Spider-orchid is found in South Australia and Victoria. Within South Australia, populations are located in the following areas:

- Murray Bridge
- Murray Plains
- Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges
- Upper South East

How you can help

Please be aware of native plants and help preserve them by:

- Preventing damage by grazing
- Preventing removal/illegal collection
- Preventing competition from weeds
- Never pick native flowers, take a photo instead
- Volunteering with NR SAMDB or join your local native vegetation group and help to look after a threatened plant population
- Reporting any sightings of Coloured Spider-orchid to the contacts listed below



Distribution of Coloured Spider-orchid in the SA MDB



Coloured Spider-orchid in flower



Coloured Spider-Orchid growing in the understory of a eucalypt woodland

For further information

Natural Resources Centre

South Australian Murray-Darling Basin

Murray Bridge: (08) 8532 9100

Berri: (08) 8580 1800

E: enquiries-samdb@sa.gov.au

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/samurraydarlingbasin

