

***The Nematolepis wilsonii session: CONSERVATION FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE:
HOW DO WE MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS OF BOTH?***

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Parks and people: Maximising the benefits of conservation

Plant translocations are a conservation tool that aim to reinstate or augment declining or lost resources and they should be used to help inspire a public sense of optimism in the face of biodiversity loss. However, plant conservation activities in Western Australia often suffer from a low public profile and a lack of media attention. Yet, since 1998 more than 60 threatened species have been translocated to new locations in the wild in this State, including existing and new sites or those where the species are now locally extinct. Only one of these projects has deliberately focussed effort on interpreting the conservation activity for the public. Here, I will present a case study of interpretation provided for a translocation project for the critically endangered *Acacia awestoniana* from the species-rich Stirling Range National Park in Western Australia's South West. Safe public access, a viewing area and interpretative signage were provided for the new translocation site in a bid to reduce the potential for trampling, introduction of disease and taking of material for private or commercial purposes. The escalation in numbers of threatened plant species in Western Australia requiring translocation as a conservation measure predicates the potential for further such interpretive efforts. Improving public understanding of conservation issues and government responses, including research actions that aim to assist wild plant conservation, ought to enhance people's awareness and appreciation of Western Australia's natural heritage and the sometimes seemingly insurmountable issues involved in its conservation.



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