

# Threatened species of the Northern Territory

## Glory of the Centre

### *Ricinocarpus gloria-medii*

#### Conservation status

##### Australia: Vulnerable

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

##### Northern Territory: Near Threatened

Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976

#### Description

*Ricinocarpus gloria-medii* is a shrub to 2 m high, erect or spreading. The leaves are narrow, grey-green with a covering of star shaped hairs; and the margins are strongly revolute. The flowers are white or creamy. The seed capsule is white-tomentose with star shaped hairs<sup>1</sup>.

Flowering: May–October.

Fruiting: July–October.

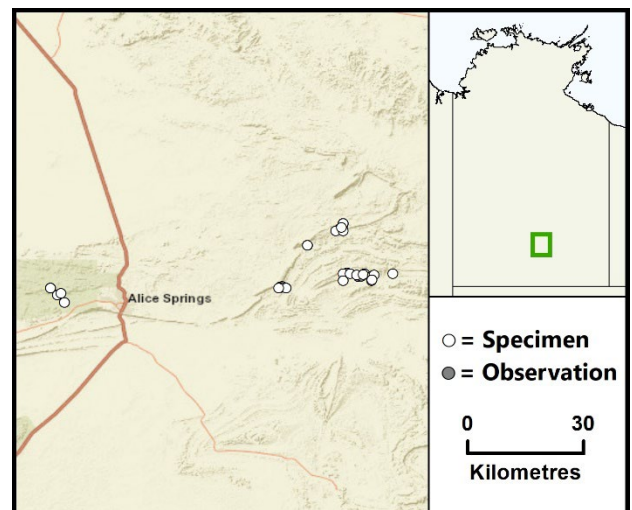


Caption: Female (above) and male flowers (below)



#### Distribution

This species is endemic to the Northern Territory (NT) and is confined to the MacDonnell Ranges Bioregion. It is known from five separate localities, three of which are within or partly within conservation reserves<sup>2</sup>. Its distribution is predominantly in the East MacDonnell Ranges. However, there is one population in the West MacDonnell Ranges National Park in the Simpsons Gap area. The total area occupied by this species is expected to be less than 400 ha<sup>3</sup>. The latitudinal range is 20 km and the longitudinal range is 81 km.



Caption: Known locations of the Glory of the Centre in the NT ([nrmaps.nt.gov.au](http://nrmaps.nt.gov.au))

NT conservation reserves where reported:  
N'Dhala Gorge Nature Park, Trephina Gorge  
Nature Park and West MacDonnell/Tjoritja  
National Park.

## Ecology and life-history

*Ricinocarpos gloria-medii* occurs in deep gullies and well-shaded areas on south facing slopes of quartzite or sandstone hills. Sites often contain a large amount of rock outcropping which provides protection from fire.

This species has a patchy distribution within most of the identified localities. In the most favoured sites (e.g. sheltered rock gullies and the base of steep cliffs) it can be the dominant species or understorey species. On mid to lower scree slopes, it occurs as scattered individuals<sup>4</sup>.

Field observation suggests that adult plants are able to withstand low-intensity fire. Presently, it is unknown whether or not this species has the capacity to withstand high severity/short-interval fire<sup>5</sup>.

## Threatening processes

Fire is not currently a severe threat to this species. Notably though, increased fire due to climate change and Buffel grass incursion could elevate the fire risk<sup>5</sup>. Hotter temperatures and more frequent prolonged drought associated with climate change may elevate mortality rates in this species.

## Conservation objectives and management

The entire known population has been mapped<sup>3</sup>; with four stands having been done so at high resolution<sup>4</sup>.

The species has been grown from cuttings but not from seeds at the Alice Springs Desert Park.

The national recovery plan for this species has now expired<sup>5</sup>. Populations should be monitored to assess trends in population size, habitat quality and threat severity. Fire management should aim to minimise the occurrence of severe wildfire in

the habitat of this species and Buffel grass incursions should be controlled where possible.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Kalotis, A. 1981. *Ricinocarpos*. In: *Flora of Central Australia*. (ed. J.Jessop), p. 190. (Reed, Sydney.)
- <sup>2</sup> White, M., Albrecht, D., Duguid, A., Latz, P., and Hamilton, M. 2000. *Plant species and sites of botanical significance in the southern bioregions of the Northern Territory. Volume 1: significant vascular plants*. A report to the Australian Heritage Commission. (Arid Lands Environment Centre, Alice Springs.)
- <sup>3</sup> Soos, A. Latz, P.K., and Kube, P.D. 1987. *Occurrence of two rare plant populations in the eastern MacDonnell Ranges*. Technical Memorandum 87/11. (Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory, Alice Springs.)
- <sup>4</sup> Leitch, E. 2005. *Ricinocarpos gloria medii: A Survey of populations in the East MacDonnell Ranges and Simpsons Gap*. Unpublished report to Parks and Wildlife Service of the Northern Territory. (Adelaide University, Adelaide.)
- <sup>5</sup> Nano, C., Harris, M., and Pavey, C. R. 2006. *Recovery plan for threatened Acacias and Ricinocarpos gloria-medii in central Australia, 2006-2011*. (NT Department of Natural Resources Environment and the Arts, Alice Springs.)