**Limonium australe var. australe**

**Family:** Plumbaginaceae

**Botanical Name:** Limonium australe (R.Br.) Kuntze var. australi, Revis. Gen. Pl. 2: 395 (1891)

**Common Name:** Yellow sea-lavender

**Commonwealth Status** (EPBC Act): Not listed

**Tasmanian Status** (TSP Act): rare

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**Description**

*Limonium australe* is a glabrous perennial herb with a stout, erect, woody rootstock. The leaves form a basal rosette, are oblanceolate to spatulate in shape, 5 to 15 cm long by 8 to 25 mm wide; the leaf margins are entire but often undulate. Flowering stems are erect, 20 to 45 cm high, green and angular, much-branched and forming corymbose panicles that bear numerous subsessile spikelets towards the end of the branches. The white to pink calyx is 6 to 8 mm long, with a 5-ridged tube 4 to 5 mm long, each ridge having a row of short inclined hairs. The petals are slightly longer than the calyx, with small oblong yellow lobes. The fruit is a five-angled capsule, with a solitary flattened-fusiform brown seed 3 to 3.5 mm long. Flowering occurs mainly in the period January to April. (Curtis 1967, Walsh & Entwisle 1996, pers. obs.).

**Confusing species:** *Limonium australe* var. baudinii is very similar, the key distinguishing feature being the lack of hairs on the calyx (Linczevski 1986, Walsh & Entwisle 1996, Gray & Duretto 2011).

**Distribution and Habitat**

On mainland Australia *Limonium australe* occurs in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland (Walsh & Entwisle 1996). In Tasmania the species has been recorded from the north coast (west of and including the Tamar Estuary) and the southeast, where it is restricted to saltmarshes. Associated species may include Sarcocornia spp., Suaeda australis, Tecticornia arbuscula, Austrostipa stipoides and Distichlis distichophylla.

**Key Sites and Populations**

Short Island, Harcus Island, Stony Point, Port Sorell, Swan Point, Barilla Bay.
Known Reserves

Plates 1 & 2. *Limonium australe*: saltmarsh habitat at Harcus Island (left) & East Inlet (right)

Ecology and Management
Members of the Plumbaginaceae family have leaves with chalk-glands that allow them to cope with extremely saline conditions. The glands excrete calcareous salts that are dissolved in the water of the plant's tissues … excretion moves the salts out of the plant where they may crystallise and be washed away (University of California 2003).

Threats to the species’ saltmarsh habitat in Tasmania are manifold (Kirkpatrick & Glasby, Schahinger 2004 & 2009, Mount et al. 2010, Prahalad & Pearson 2013):
- drainage and land reclamation;
- changes to sediment supplies due to coastal engineering or catchment modifications (through vegetation clearance, dam construction, etc);
- stock grazing and trampling;
- physical disturbance by vehicles;
- invasion by the introduced rice grass (*Spartina anglica*);
- rising sea levels associated with climate change, habitat being at risk from erosion due to increased wave action during storm events, or inundation (the latter being compounded by the presence of barriers to ‘migration’ inland).

In August 2013 the habitat of *Limonium australe*, the ecological community ‘Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh’ was listed as Vulnerable on the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Conservation Status Assessment
There is no immediate need for a reassessment of *Limonium australe*. 
Further Information

- Schahinger, R. (2009). *Limonium australe in the Cradle Coast NRM Region: a rare salt marsh species at risk from climate change?* A report to the Cradle Coast NRM Region Committee, Threatened Species Section, Department of Primary Industries and Water, Hobart.
Limonium australe var. australae

Tasmanian Distribution
(As per Threatened Species Section records, September 2013)

1:25 000 Map Sheets
Beaconsfield, Bell Bay, Carlton, Devonport, Exeter, Grim, Harford, Hobart, Montagu, Port Sorell, Richmond, Smithton, Stanley, Studland, Taroona, Ulverstone.

Date last modified: 1/10/2013

View

Contact details
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Permit
It is an offence to collect, disturb, damage or destroy this species unless under permit.

Threatened Flora of Tasmania