

Ranunculus acaulis



Ranunculus acaulis
R. Schahinger

FAMILY: RANUNCULACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Ranunculus acaulis*
Banks & Soland. ex DC., *Syst. Nat.* 1: 270
(1817)

COMMON NAME: Dune buttercup

COMMONWEALTH STATUS: (*EPBC Act*)
Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS: (*TSP Act*) rare

Description

A small, hairless, perennial herb, somewhat fleshy with long slender aerial shoots, often forming matted patches. **Leaves:** The leaves are stalked and arise from the base of the plant. They are thick and shining, and are divided into 3 deep blunt lobes: the median one is entire or 3-toothed, while the lateral ones are entire or unequally divided. **Flowers:** The flowers are 7–10 mm in diameter and are solitary on stems that are scarcely as long as the leaves. Each flower has 5–8 narrow greenish-yellow petals about 5 mm long, and a dense cluster of stamens. **Fruit:** Consists of 5–10 achenes: an achene is a dry one-seeded fruit that has a leathery wall, with the persistent style forming a short ‘beak’ (description from Curtis & Morris 1975 and Menadue & Crowden 1989).

Distribution and Habitat

Apart from Tasmania, *Ranunculus acaulis* occurs in New Zealand and southern Chile (Curtis & Morris 1975). Within Tasmania the species is restricted to the west and northwest coast, where it grows in seepage areas on the seaward sides of dunes (Menadue & Crowden 1989).

Key Sites and Populations

Key sites include Greenes Point, Italian River, Ocean Beach near Strahan, Trial Harbour, Wallaby Bay (Port Davey), Wilson Bight and New River Lagoon.

Known Reserves

Reserved in the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area, Southwest Conservation Area and Southwest National Park.

Ecology and Management

The species' habitat in areas to the north of the Pieman River is threatened by off-road vehicle activities and sea spurge (*Euphorbia paralias*).

Insects are the most likely pollination vectors for this species (A. Hingston, pers. comm.).

Conservation Status Assessment

Targeted surveys are required to determine the status of populations to the south of the Pieman River, especially with respect to sea spurge. A reassessment of the species' status may be warranted after such surveys.

Further Information

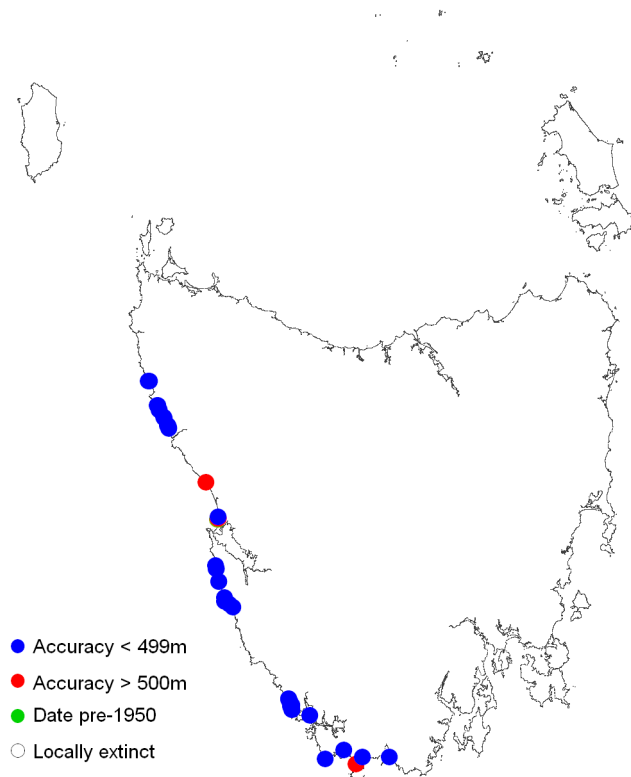
- Curtis, WM & Morris, DI 1975, *The Student's Flora of Tasmania, Part 1*, Government Printer, Hobart.
- Menadue, Y & Crowden, RK 1989, Tasmanian species of *Ranunculus* – a new key. *Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania* 123: 87–96.



Ranunculus acaulis in the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area: sea spurge in foreground (R. Schahinger).

Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Section records, February 2008)



1:25 000 Map Sheets

Albina, Bellinger, Breaksea, Cox, De Witt, Endeavour, Hibbs, Interview, Johnsons Bay, Ordnance, Prion, Settlement, Telopea, Trial, Varna.

Date last modified: 22/02/2008

View

<http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/threatenedspecieslists>

Contact details

Threatened Species Section, Department of Primary Industries and Water, GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 7001. Phone (03) 6233 6556; fax (03) 6233 3477.

Permit

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