



Epacris hamiltonii

Recovery Plan



Draft for Public Comment
June 2000



Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Helping Australia

**NSW
NATIONAL
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Cover illustration: *Epacris hamiltonii*

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This plan should be cited as following

NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (2000), Draft *Epacris hamiltonii* Recovery Plan.

ISBN 0 7313 6134 2

Epacris hamiltonii Recovery Plan

Prepared in accordance with the New South Wales
Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995

June 2000

Acknowledgments

The NPWS would like to thank the following people who have contributed to efforts to recover *Epacris hamiltonii*:

Janet Cohn (NPWS) for preparing the original recovery plan in 1993 for the former Australian Nature Conservation Agency (ANCA).

Ben Correy (NPWS) for his dedication to field monitoring and surveys.

The members of the *Epacris hamiltonii* species recovery team - Dr Tony Auld, Maria Matthes and Greg Wellham (all of NPWS), Rob Smith (Mt Tomah Botanic gardens), Margaret Turton, (Blue Mountains Rare and Endangered Species Group) and Katrina Jenz (Environment Australia).

Wyn Jones (NPWS) for his early work on this species and continuing advice.

NPWS research scientists Dr Tony Auld and Dr David Keith for sharing their expertise and continuous support.

Dave Noble (NPWS) for his assistance in field searches.

Rachael Taylor (NSW Agriculture) for genetic analysis.

Simon Nally (NPWS) for renitent logistical arrangements and his sophomonic deblateration.

Mt Tomah Botanic Garden, for their assistance in smoke germination trials, seed storage and advice.

Sydney Catchment Authority for access to restricted areas and discussing protection and management of *E. hamiltonii*.

Stuart James from the Rural Fire Service for advice on protection and management.

Mike Eades, Melissa Watkins, Mark Williams, Virginia Bear from Blue Mountains City Council for discussing protection and management of *E. hamiltonii*.

Environment Australia, formerly known as ANCA for funding the original recovery plan and its implementation through the Endangered Species Program.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Mr A.A. Hamilton, a gardener at Centennial Park, Sydney, first discovered *Epacris hamiltonii*, at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains, in January 1900. The species was described by Maiden and Betche and named in his honour (Maiden and Betche, 1900).

Epacris hamiltonii is a spreading shrub that grows on the cliff edges lining moist gullies in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. Until 1994, only one population was known to exist within a gully in the Blue Mountains National Park. Approximately four thousand plants are now known to occur over a range of five kilometres in three creek catchments of the upper Blue Mountains.

This revised recovery plan describes our current understanding of *Epacris hamiltonii*, documents the research and management actions undertaken to date, and identifies the actions required and parties responsible to ensure the ongoing viability of the species in the wild.

Legislative context

The *Threatened Species Conservation Act* 1995 (TSC Act) is NSW's legislative framework to protect and encourage the recovery of threatened species, populations and communities. Under the TSC Act, the Director-General of National Parks and Wildlife has certain responsibilities including the preparation of recovery plans for threatened species, populations and ecological communities. This Recovery Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the TSC Act.

Preparation of Plan

This Recovery Plan has been prepared with the assistance of a recovery team, a non-statutory group of interested parties with relevant expertise, established to discuss and resolve issues relating to the plan. Components within the plan do not necessarily represent the views nor the official positions of all the individuals or agencies represented on the recovery team. The information in this Recovery Plan was accurate to the best of the NPWS' knowledge on the date it was approved for draft exhibition.

The plan will be reviewed and updated 5 years from the date of publication.

Implementation of Plan

The TSC Act requires that a public authority must not undertake actions inconsistent with a recovery plan. The public authorities relevant to this plan are the NPWS, City of Blue Mountains Council, Rural Fire Services and Sydney Catchment Authority. Consequently, these agencies must, as the relevant land managers, manage *Epacris hamiltonii* within their areas in accordance with this plan. Relevant

land management issues include the management of threatening processes such as inappropriate fire regimes, urban runoff, weed invasion and visitor access.

Recovery Objectives

The overall recovery objective is to protect populations of *Epacris hamiltonii* from decline and develop a management regime, based on current knowledge, designed to promote the species conservation and evolutionary potential in nature.

Specific recovery objectives are to:

1. protect and maintain known populations of *E. hamiltonii* from declining in the long term by the implementation of *in situ* habitat conservation tools;
2. enhance management of *E. hamiltonii* and its habitat based on an increased understanding of key aspects of the biology and ecology of the taxon;
3. increase knowledge of the distribution of *E. hamiltonii* and undertake an assessment of new populations;
4. raise awareness in the community about *E. hamiltonii*; and
5. determine the true conservation status of *E. hamiltonii*.

Performance Criteria

Performance criteria of this recovery plan are that:

1. populations of *E. hamiltonii* do not decline in the long term and appropriate management recommendations are discussed with land holders and managers;
2. key aspects of the biology and ecology of *E. hamiltonii* are further understood so as to guide the management of the species and its habitat;
3. a greater knowledge of *E. hamiltonii* distribution is achieved and applied to management;
4. a community awareness program is implemented targeting habitat protection through Total Catchment Management principles; and
5. conservation status has been re-evaluated and if appropriate, a recommendation has been made to downlist the species from Endangered to Vulnerable.

Recovery Actions

Recovery actions will be directed towards:

1. habitat management to ameliorate threatening processes and informed assessment of activities which may impact on *E. hamiltonii*;
2. continue investigations into key aspects of the biology and ecology of *E. hamiltonii*.

