

Managing threats, developing knowledge and mobilising community support for globally-significant *Utricularia* habitat near Darwin, Australia

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The carnivorous plant genus *Utricularia* is reported to have its globally highest diversity in the sandsheet heath near Darwin, Australia, including species that are threatened. Of the approximately 239 known species of *Utricularia*, 66 occur in Australia, where they are found in all states and territories. In Australia, the highest number of species is found in the Northern Territory (NT) (41 species) and 26 species have herbarium records from the 264 km² area Howard Sand Plains Site of Conservation Significance 30 km east of Darwin. Indeed much of the site is *Eucalyptus* woodland (105 km²), cleared or disturbed (25 km²) or residential (84 km²) such that remaining suitable *Utricularia* habitat is 34 km² with just 10.6 km² containing high diversity habitat (> 3 *Utricularia* species per 20 m x 20 m plot). This small area of sand sheet is threatened by urban development, fire, weeds, recreational activity and, as it is the closest source of sand to Darwin, by sand extraction for construction. The aim of this project was to manage threats, engage the community and to gather quantitative data on the recovery of the *Utricularia* community after sand extraction. This joint project by Greening Australia, NT Government, Charles Darwin University and the NT Extractive Industry Association involved engaging with stakeholders such as Power and Water Corporation, Bushfires NT, conservation groups, indigenous groups, community groups, schools and the general community. Activities included setting up experimental rehabilitation trials, monitoring *Utricularia* habitat, mapping weeds, managing fire, field days, development of educational activities for schools and even an art exhibition. Considerable knowledge and community interest were generated by the three year project. However to protect this globally significant, diverse and unique community there is a need for research and for ongoing management.