

Australia's Threatened Species Index

Winter Update

2022



Dear *Friend of the TSX*,

We are delighted to provide you with an update on the **Threatened Species Index (TSX)** and to invite you to contribute to our data call.

Breaking news – the data call for TSX22 is underway!

Let's start with the big-ticket item – it's time to update the index! For the next 8 weeks, the TSX team will be pursuing new monitoring data for Australia's threatened plants, birds and mammals. This is the first data call since the transition of the TSX to TERN. It's a crucial opportunity to update our data on threatened species trajectories, including updating existing datasets and gathering data for new species and locations.

Since our last data call, a great deal of survey and monitoring has occurred across Australia, in part the result of significant environmental disturbances, such as the Black Summer fires. Likewise, numerous species have been uplisted to a threatened or near threatened category since 2020. We are committed to integrating as much new data as possible into the TSX, to ensure it remains the key source of information on abundance trends for Australia's threatened species.

Over the coming weeks, the TSX team will be contacting all individuals who have contributed to the index previously. If that's you, we'll be in touch soon.

If you haven't contributed data previously, but believe you or a colleague may have **suitable data**, please get in touch with the TSX team at tsx@uq.edu.au. We would love to hear from you!

Upgrades to the TSX Data Management Interface

To support the data call for TSX22, the TSX team — in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and James Watmuff from Planticle — has been busy updating the data management interface for the TSX. We have important new functionality for uploading and downloading datasets, and for generating trend estimates dataset-by-dataset. Soon, data providers will be able to generate bespoke trend estimates for their particular study sites and/or particular species or groups of species on which they work.

The end result will be an interface that makes it easier to update and manage datasets, and provides TSX data custodians with greater functionality to assess how the species they work on are tracking.

RLP Workshop

Part of the motivation for upgrading our data management interface is to support the Commonwealth Government's 'Regional Land Partnerships' program. RLP funds over 200 projects that target the recovery of threatened species or communities, with monitoring being a key component of these projects. Improving the ability for RLP service providers to interact with the TSX will not only mean the data is captured in an enduring way, but also accelerate the speed with which programs can evaluate their impact.

As part of this program of work, the TSX team held a workshop with RLP service providers on the 16th February 2022. Engagement was excellent, with registrations from 106 individuals right across the country. Participants were introduced to the TSX, its objectives and history. In turn, participants provided the TSX team with

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significant feedback on the training materials required for our upgraded interface functionality — material we will be putting together over the next few months.

A small introductory video to the TSX was produced in the lead up to the workshop, which can be found [here](#). If you would like to view the workshop itself, you can find it [here](#).

TSX features in the ANAO report on the EPBC Act

In March, the Australian National Audit Office released their review of the management of threatened species and ecological communities under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Encouragingly, the review identified the TSX as a valuable element of Australia’s infrastructure for the measuring, monitoring and reporting on threatened species trends, and recommended its expansion. For more, you can find the report [here](#) (see pages 69-70 & 76-78 for TSX related content).

Threatened Species Spotlight

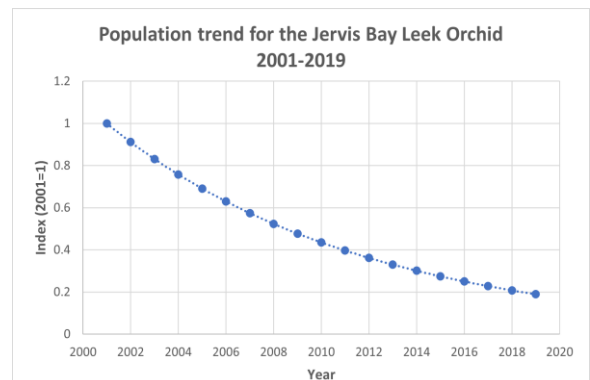


A new initiative for 2022 — each of our updates will feature a species included in the TSX. Our inaugural species is the stunning Jervis Bay Leek Orchid.

Never heard of the Jervis Bay Leek Orchid? Well then, let us introduce you. The Jervis Bay Leek Orchid has a tiny range between Nowra and Bateman’s Bay in NSW, known from only three locations on poorly drained clay soils that support low heathland and sedgeland communities. The species has specialised relationships with two wasp species that act as pollinators. The scent of its flowers mimics the pheromones of female wasps, fooling males into attempting to mate with the flower-head, during which it gets a liberal covering of pollen. Pollination occurs when it flies off in a huff and stumbles across the next “female”, aka flower-head. A fascinating ecological deception.

Concerningly, the trend data contributed to the TSX suggest the Jervis Bay Leek Orchid has been in steep decline (see the accompany graph, generated with our new functionality). However, it is also now the focus of a dedicated management project under the NSW ‘Saving our Species’ program. Let’s hope this effort secures the species, and it is around to frustrate over-exuberant wasps of the male variety for many years to come.

For more, see the Jervis Bay Leek Orchid page of the SoS program [here](#). Photo credit: Alan Stephenson



That’s a wrap

Until our next update, the TSX team wishes you all the best. As always, please reach out to us at any time at tsx@uq.edu.au. Perhaps you’ve come across some magnificent archival monitoring data on a threatened species, or wish to make use of the index for your work, or simply want to chat threatened species? Whatever the case, we’d love to hear from you.

Regards,

Geoff Heard (TSX Project Manager) and Tayla Lawrie (TSX Data Analyst)