

## SPECIES MANAGEMENT PROFILE

*Hibbertia rufa* brown guineaflower

**Group:** Magnoliophyta (flowering plants), Magnoliopsida (dicots), Dilleniales, Dilleniaceae

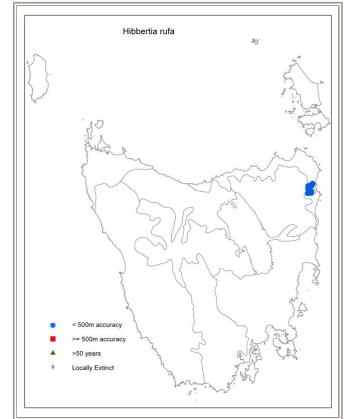
**Status:** *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995:* rare  
*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999:* Not listed

**Endemic:** Found in Tasmania and elsewhere

**Status:**



*Hibbertia rufa* (brown guineaflower) is a prostrate to scrambling woody plant with often tangled slender, wiry and reddish stems that trail loosely along the ground. The species is known to be locally common at a relatively high number of sites from a restricted area between St Helens and inland of The Gardens. The species flowers in spring-summer. While the flowers are bright yellow, they are small and inconspicuous. Brown guineaflower occurs mainly in wet heathland but also extends through to buttongrass moorland and occasionally sedgy-scrubby *Eucalyptus ovata*-*E. amygdalina* forest/woodland. The main threat to brown guineaflower is lack of disturbance in its heathland habitat (it appears to benefit from fire or other disturbance to create gaps in otherwise dense vegetation), land clearing (mainly historical), and it may be susceptible to *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (root-rot fungus).



### Key Points

- **Important:** Is this species in your area? Do you need a permit? Ensure you've covered all the issues by checking the Planning Ahead page.
- **Important:** Different threatened species may have different requirements. For any activity you are considering, read the Activity Advice pages for background information and important advice about managing around the needs of multiple threatened species.

### Habitat

- 'Habitat' refers to both known habitat for the species (i.e. in or near habitat where the species has been recorded) and potential habitat (i.e. areas of habitat with appropriate characteristics for the species and within the species potential range which have not yet been adequately surveyed).
- If in doubt about whether a site represents potential habitat for this species, contact the Threatened Species Section for further advice.
- The known range of brown guineaflower is a small area (about 53 square km) between Priory (north of St Helens) and inland of The Gardens over a distance of about 14 km. The potential range is probably not much greater because extensive surveys of heathland habitats have failed to detect the species. The species occupies only about 5-20 ha within its known range.
- Habitat for brown guineaflower includes the following elements: mainly in wet heathland but also extends through to buttongrass moorland and occasionally sedgy-scrubby *Eucalyptus ovata*-*E. amygdalina* forest/woodland; occurs in the transition zone between dry heathy woodland and denser wet heathland and is almost wholly restricted to very gentle slopes in the low-lying areas.

### What to avoid

- Clearing of habitat
- Ensure habitat is subjected to an appropriate disturbance regime (e.g. fires between 5-20 years apart)

### Surveying

Key	Survey reliability more info
M	Best time to survey
M	Potential time to survey
M	Poor time to survey
M	Non-survey period

To ensure you follow the law - check whether your survey requires a permit. Always report any new records to the Natural Values Atlas, or send the information direct to the Threatened Species Section. Refer to the Activity Advice: Surveying page for background information.

<i>Hibbertia rufa</i>	Spring			Summer				Autumn				Winter												
brown guineaflower	S	S	O	O	N	N	D	D	J	J	F	F	M	M	A	A	M	M	J	J	J	J	A	A

- Flowers are required to confirm the identity of this prostrate to scrambling woody plant which flowers in spring to summer.

However, as the flowers are relatively inconspicuous, detection of the species is only marginally enhanced during the peak flowering season. Detection may be aided by the presence of obvious brown capsules from late summer and sunny weather to better see the reddish branchlets.

- In Tasmania, *Hibbertia rufa* occurs in the north east between Priory and Thomas Creek, mainly in wet heathland but also extending through to buttongrass moorland and occasionally sedgy-scrubby *Eucalyptus ovata*/*Eucalyptus amygdalina* forest or woodland. It occurs in the transition zone between dry heathy woodland and denser wet heathland, and is almost wholly restricted to very gentle slopes in the low-lying areas. Most sites are dominated by low sclerophyllous shrubs and a dense ground layer of sedges and rushes.

## Helping the species

- Learn to identify brown guineaflower so as to recognise the species if it occurs on your property. If in doubt about what it is, seek expert assistance with identification.
- If you live or work in the area where the species occurs (see distribution map, above), look out for and record any observations of the species. All records of this species can provide important information on distribution and abundance
- If you are interested in knowing for certain whether the species occurs on your land, organise a formal survey. You may need to employ an ecological consultant to do this. Your local Bushcare or Field Naturalist club may be able to assist you with a survey.
- Important! Always report any observations of the species to the DPIPWE Natural Values Atlas, or else provide the data direct to the Threatened Species Section. Records stored on the NVA are a permanent record and are accessible to other people interested in this species.
- Consider the needs of the whole habitat. Preserving a threatened species' habitat is the best way to manage both the species and the environment in which it lives.
- For long-term protection of localities on private land – consider protection of habitat through a vegetation management agreement or conservation covenant.
- See the 'What is Needed' section in the brown guineaflower Listing Statement for a full list of conservation management actions for this species.

## Cutting or clearing trees or vegetation

- Clearing of heathland and heathy woodland are minor historical and contemporary threats to brown guineaflower.
- To protect known localities – retain a buffer of undisturbed native vegetation around known sites to maintain the integrity of habitat.
- To prevent loss of habitat – avoid clearing of heathland and heathy woodland habitat.

## Burning

- The absence of brown guineaflower in some long unburnt densely shrubby heathland suggests that leaving heathlands unburnt for too long may be detrimental.
- It is likely that the species would benefit from fuel reduction burning to maintain a mosaic of different density heathlands.
- To maintain long-term viability of habitat – undertake mosaic patch-burning of heathlands and heathy woodlands every 5-15 years.

## Construction

- Several other species of guineaflower are known to be susceptible to the rootrot pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which can cause death of individual plants or alter the viability of habitat through affecting other species. It is not known if brown guineaflower is susceptible but evidence suggests there is a low likelihood of this.
- To prevent the introduction or spread of disease – adhere to strict machinery hygiene protocols during any construction works.

## Further information

Check also for listing statement or notesheet pdf above (below the species image).

**Cite as:** Threatened Species Section (2025). *brown guineaflower (Hibbertia rufa): Species Management Profile for Tasmania's Threatened Species Link*. <https://www.threatenedspecieslink.tas.gov.au/Pages/Hibbertia-rufa.aspx> Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania. Accessed on 19/5/2025.

**Contact details:** Threatened Species Section, Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 7001. Phone (1300 368 550).

**Permit:** A permit is required under the Tasmanian *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* to 'take' (which includes kill, injure, catch, damage, destroy and collect), keep, trade in or process any specimen or products of a listed species. Additional permits may also be required under other Acts or regulations to take, disturb or interfere with any form of wildlife or its products, (e.g. dens, nests, bones). This may also depend on the tenure of the land and other agreements relating to its management.