



SECURING THE FUTURE PROJECT

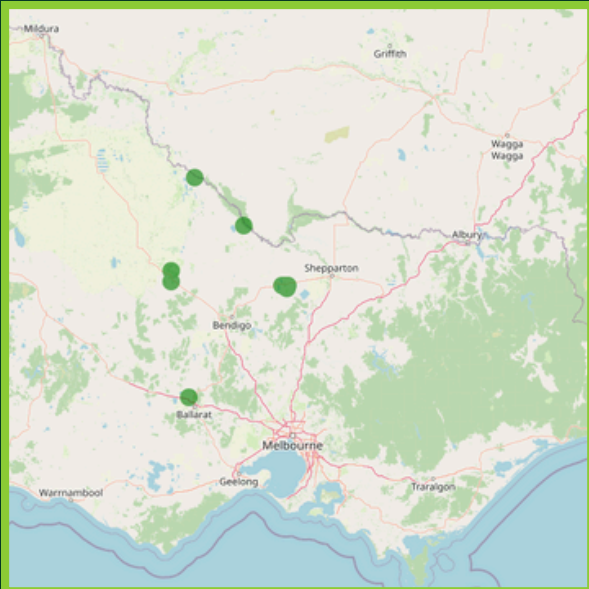
Preventing extinction of 10 threatened plants from SA, Vic & WA through seed collecting, germination trials, research, propagation & translocations

An initiative of the



Australian
Seed Bank
Partnership

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SPECIES PROFILE

SENECIO BEHRIANUS

The Stiff Groundsel is a spreading herb or small shrub that grows up to 1 meter tall, extending through underground rhizomes. Its young shoots are covered in whitish hairs, which mostly disappear as the plant matures, though the narrow leaves often retain hairs on their undersides. The plant produces bright yellow, daisy-like flower clusters with about six petal-like ray florets. Reproduction occurs via tiny, ribbed, single-seeded fruits topped with parachute-like hairs that aid wind dispersal.

This species prefers swampy wetlands or wooded areas near rivers and streams that experience regular flooding. Once believed to be widespread, Stiff Groundsel now survives in small, isolated clumps, reflecting its significant decline.

KEY FACTS

Common name: Stiff Groundsel,

Conservation status: Endangered (EPBC),
Endangered (SA), Critically Endangered (VIC)

Historical notes: Previously was found in NSW
but believed extinct there

Flowering season: March -June

Lifespan: Perennial - long lived

This profile was produced in collaboration with **Plant Conservation Australia** (formerly the ANPC)



Senecio behrianus
(Image: South Australian
Seed Conservation Centre)



THREATENING PROCESSES

The most significant threats to Stiff Groundsel are habitat loss and drying, driven by artificial weirs and drainage channels that reduce water availability in its preferred wetland environments. Clearing for infrastructure and agricultural development further fragments and diminishes suitable habitat, particularly along fence lines and road corridors. Invasive weeds also compete for space and resources in the same swampy areas, adding to the pressure on this species.

To protect Stiff Groundsel, priority actions include fencing known populations to prevent grazing by livestock, improving habitat quality through weed control and revegetation, and ensuring adequate water availability in the landscape. Conservation efforts also focus on maintaining a secure ex situ collection of seeds and propagated plants to safeguard against further decline.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

As part of the **Securing the Future project**, the Victorian Conservation Seedbank (Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria) demonstrated great adaptability in safeguarding the Stiff Groundsel, despite challenging seasonal conditions. With wildflower timing heavily influenced by weather, a hot, dry year in 2025 meant only two of six wild population sites produced seed, yielding just 150 viable seeds.



Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Fortunately, earlier work by the Wetland Revival Trust and Newstead Natives Nursery ensured cultivated plants were thriving in controlled settings, providing an additional 1,088 seeds to boost the seedbank collection. To further secure the species, 120 cuttings were taken to establish a living conservation collection at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. This insurance population will serve as a future source of seed for restoration and research, supporting long-term recovery efforts for this daisy.

REFERENCES

- Images: Senecio behrianus plant (Rebecca Miller), seed (Damian Cook), seed collection (David Roberts), flower side profile (Damien Cook)
- <https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://id.biodiversity.org.au/node/apni/2898428>
- <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/action-plan/priority-plants/stiff-groundsel>
- <https://vicflora.rbg.vic.gov.au/flora/taxon/656923c0-edb3-4b52-b092-45c35370cf8b>



Australian Government

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