

## Conservation status of *Duvaliandra dioscoridis* (Lavranos) M. Gilbert

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*Duvaliandra dioscoridis* seems to be restricted to a single known population in one small area but appears to have a balanced population structure. Based on its restricted distribution *Duvaliandra dioscoridis* should continue to be designated as 'Critically Endangered'.

*Duvaliandra dioscoridis* (Lavranos) M. Gilbert, a small clump forming succulent herb belonging to the Family Apocynaceae (Asclepiadaceae), had been reported only from one locality on the island of Soqatra. This project, carried out in January 2002, set out to examine the status of the population, study some of the ecological factors affecting this species and determine to extent of its distribution.



The previously described population was re-located at an elevation of 900 m in the Haggeher Mountains. The plants were restricted to an open, southeast facing granite outcrop. Plants were growing in meagre pockets of soil and fissures in exposed bedrock, with larger clumps spreading out over solid rock.

Fifty-eight individual plants or clumps were located, ranging from large clumps covering up to half a square metre to small seedlings. Some of the larger clumps, which consisted of several hundred stems, may originate from more than one plant. The population appears to be in a healthy state with a balanced age/size range. The majority of individual plants were in a healthy condition, with some minor yellow aphid infestation. Most healthy adult plants showed evidence of flowering, with all stages from buds to dehisced seedpods present in a single clump. Previous reports had suggested that there were two flower colour variants, however flower colour seemed to exhibit continuous variability between olive brown and deep reddish brown. Careful investigation of apparently similar rocky outcrops in the surrounding area failed to locate any further populations, but it is possible that the species occurs further afield.

Although this population is apparently healthy, the species must continue to be regarded as critically endangered because of its restricted range. Possible threats to the species include: consumption as a local food, habitat destruction due to collection of building stone, predation by invertebrates and plant collection for illegal export.