

Leucopogon insularis SPINY COASTAL BEARD-HEATH DC.

Flowering period: March–May.

Description: Much branched, low, woody shrub to 50 cm high, often forming small, bright green, rounded plants in coastal heath. Leaves narrow, 8–12 mm long, 2–3 mm wide with a spiny terminal point and recurved margins. Flowers one or two in the axils of the leaves, 6 mm across and distinctly bearded. Fruit fleshy with a hard inner fruit containing up to five fused seed segments.

Pollination: Likely to be pollinated by a variety of nectar-seeking insects.

Distribution: Widespread on limestone soils and secondary dunes from Geraldton to Perth and also on offshore islands. Grows in sites protected from direct exposure among other heathland species or in protected areas on limestone.

Propagation: Difficult to propagate from both seed and cuttings. Cuttings can be struck from semi-hardwood. Seeds are deeply dormant and research is underway to resolve the complex dormancy mechanisms in the seed. Native soil seed banks responds to application of smoke products or physical disturbance.

Uses in restoration: Unknown in restoration programs due to the difficulty in propagating the species. However, it would be a highly useful species for rocky areas with its early flowering habit providing a useful nectar source.

Notes: One of the members of the blueberry family (Ericaceae) comprising a large number of species in the south-west of Western Australia. Many members are late autumn to early winter flowering, a feature that would make plants useful in the home garden.



Habit



Habit



Flowers



Distribution