

USING
NATIVE PLANTS



TAKING SPECIMENS
IN THE WILD FOR
IDENTIFICATION
AND STUDY



**Queensland
Government**
Queensland Parks
and Wildlife Service

Important

All native plants are now listed as protected. All taking and use of protected plants must be done under a licence, authorisation or an exemption specified in the *Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Conservation Plan 2000* and the *Nature Conservation Regulation 1994*. This legislation is supported by three non-statutory documents — the *Management program for protected whole plants in Queensland 2001–2005*, the *Management program for protected plant parts in Queensland 2001–2005* and the *Code of practice for the taking and use of protected plants*.

A whole plant includes a seedling (but not an ungerminated seed) and, if a person divides a plant, each resulting viable plant.

Plant parts include stems, phyllodes, foliage, buds, flowers, spores, seeds, fruit, bark, oils, roots, rhizomes, resins, gums, exudates, galls, genetic material, chemicals and other structural component or constituent of a plant.



Black wattle

A specimen label is a sheet of paper or cardboard kept with a specimen that includes:

- the name of the person who took the specimen;
- the place and date of taking; and
- any information required under a harvest period notice.

State land is:

- unallocated State land, a reserve for community purposes, or land subject to a lease or licence under the *Land Act 1994*;
- a State forest or timber reserve under the *Forestry Act 1959*;
- a forest reserve under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*;
- and
- a State-controlled or local government controlled road.

The provisions described here apply only to plants taken in the wild.

From 1 January 2001:

- New provisions apply to taking specimens for personal identification and study without a permit
- Specimens can be taken for personal use or scientific or educational purposes without a permit.

What is a specimen?

A specimen is a part of a plant, including leaves, flowers or fruit, that when taken fits on a single standard sheet of herbarium paper and will not cause the plant to die. A standard herbarium sheet is a piece of card or paper measuring 270mm x 450mm. A specimen must not be used for a commercial purpose. A specimen taken for an environmental impact assessment study is deemed not to be taken for a commercial purpose even though someone may be paid to conduct the study.

When can a specimen be taken?

A specimen can be taken when it is necessary to have a plant identified before a licence, permit or authority for protected plants is granted. Specimens cannot be taken on national parks.

Example

A person proposes to harvest plant parts from a fern in the wild on private land for the foliage and flower trade. The plant must be identified before a commercial wildlife harvesting licence is granted. The person may take a specimen for a positive identification by the Queensland Herbarium.

Also a specimen can be taken if a person:

- finds a plant at a place, other than on State land; and
- reasonably believes the plant is a vulnerable, rare or common plant and is an important record for the species at the place; and
- does not have a licence, permit or authority for taking the plant; and
- reasonably believes it is not practicable for the person to return to the place after obtaining a licence, permit or authority for taking the plant.

How much can I take?

Subject to the general sustainability requirement, a person can take more of the plant than will fit on a standard sheet of herbarium paper if:

- the person reasonably believes the plant exhibits special life forms and might not be correctly identified if a smaller part of the plant were taken; and
- the taking will not cause the plant to die.



A person can also take another specimen from the same plant or the same species of plant at the same place for personal use ('the duplicate'). A specimen label for the plant part must be completed before leaving the land where the plant part is taken and the plant part (other than the duplicate) given to the Queensland Herbarium.



Sydney blue gum
Eucalyptus saligna

This enables the person to maintain a personal reference collection while also contributing valuable information about the distribution of protected plants to the Queensland Herbarium.

What is the general sustainability requirement?

The general sustainability requirement only applies to the taking of plants in the wild. Under this requirement anyone who takes plants must do so in a way that ensures the harvesting is ecologically sustainable and minimises damage to soil and other wildlife. The requirement normally will be satisfied if the harvester complies with the *Code of practice for the taking and use of protected plants* and any relevant provisions of the harvest period notice and the management program.



Acacia ammophila

Taking specimens for scientific or educational purposes

A permit is not needed to take plant parts from a common plant in the wild (other than a common plant listed in Schedule I of the conservation plan) for an educational or scientific purpose. However the number of plant parts taken must be reasonable for the educational or scientific purpose.

Examples

A university lecturer who teaches botany may take a specimen from three common species in the wild for each of the 60 students in a practical class.

A university researcher has been engaged by a pharmaceutical company to survey plants that might contain biologically active alkaloids. The researcher must apply for a commercial wildlife harvesting licence as the proposed harvesting is a bioprospecting activity.

Also a scientific or educational purposes permit is not required to take up to two plant parts from a rare or vulnerable plant on private land if:

- the plants are to be used for an educational or scientific purpose; or
- a person is required to carry out an environmental impact assessment study; and
- the person completes a specimen label.

If more than two plant parts are required from a rare or vulnerable species the person should apply for a scientific or educational purposes permit.

Taking of whole plants

A whole common plant (other than a Type A restricted plant or a plant listed in schedule I of the conservation plan) may be taken without a permit for an educational or scientific purpose.

Up to five plants of the same species in a month but no more than 50 whole plants in a year may be taken.

How do I obtain a wildlife harvesting licence or a scientific permit?

You should read the *Nature Conservation Regulation 1994* Chapters 1 and 3 and contact your nearest wildlife licensing centre for an application form and information kit. You should also read the *Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Conservation Plan 2000* and the *Code of practice for the taking and use of protected plants*.

QPWS licensing centres for protected plants

2nd floor,
17–19 Sheridan Street
PO Box 2066
CAIRNS QLD 4870
(07) 4046 6717

cnr Lennox and
Alice Streets
PO Box 101
MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650
(07) 4121 1800

Marlow Street
Pallarenda
PO Box 5597
TOWNSVILLE MC
QLD 4810
(07) 4722 5388

55 Priors Pocket Road
Moggill
PO Box 42
KENMORE QLD 4069
(07) 3202 0200

cnr Wood and River Streets
PO Box 623
MACKAY QLD 4740
(07) 4944 7800

2nd floor, 158 Hume Street
PO Box 731
TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350
(07) 4639 8339

cnr Yeppoon and
Norman Roads
North Rockhampton
PO Box 3130
ROCKHAMPTON
SHOPPING FAIR
QLD 4701
(07) 4936 0511

Park Street
PO Box 149
CHARLEVILLE QLD 4470
(07) 4654 1255

Kabool Road
West Burleigh
PO Box 3454
BURLEIGHTOWN LPO
QLD 4220
(07) 5520 9602

Disclaimer

This brochure contains only advisory information and is not a substitute for the legislation, providing only an introduction to the regulatory and administrative scheme. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any decisions or any actions taken on the basis of this document. All involved in taking and using native plants should familiarise themselves with the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the relevant subordinate legislation under the Act and the legislation of other States or the Commonwealth in relation to the movement of native plants into or out of Queensland or Australia.

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