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## Taxonomy

**Scientific Name** **Conophytum ratum**  
**S.A.Hammer**

**Higher Classification**  
 Dicotyledons  
 Family AIZOACEAE

## National Status

**Status and Criteria** **Critically Endangered B1ab(iii,v)+2ab(iii,v)**

**Assessment Date** 2020/02/06

**Assessor(s)** A.J. Young, L. von Staden & P.G. Desmet

**Justification** One small remaining population number fewer than 1000 plants within an extent of occurrence (EOO) of less than 10 km<sup>2</sup> continue to decline due to ongoing habitat loss and degradation due to mining. Furthermore this species is targeted by succulent collectors. It therefore qualifies as Critically Endangered under criterion B.

## Distribution

**Endemism** South African endemic

**Provincial distribution** Northern Cape

**Range** Bushmanland Inselbergs near Aggeneys, in the Northern Cape, South Africa.

## Habitat and Ecology

**Major system** Terrestrial

**Major habitats** Aggeneys Gravel Vygieveld

**Description** Spongy quartz soil.

## Threats

Mining expansion is causing severe, ongoing habitat loss and degradation. This threat is affecting the majority of the remaining population. Despite the cryptic nature of the plants illegal collecting is a potential problem. The species has disappeared from several sites known through historical records, which is suspected to be the result of illegal collecting. One subpopulation is known to have been cleared out by plant collectors. With the significant increase in demand for



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Conophytums coming from Asian countries since March 2019 since species remains highly threatened by collecting.

## Population

The largest known subpopulation of this species consists of about 1000 mature individuals, and this subpopulation is declining due to ongoing habitat loss and degradation. There are a few historical records from other inselbergs in the area, but several recent field surveys failed to relocate the species at any of these sites. These were probably small, unviable subpopulations.

**Population trend** Decreasing

## Assessment History

Taxon assessed	Status and Criteria	Citation/Red List version
Conophytum ratum S.A.Hammer	<b>CR</b> B1ab(iii,v)+2ab(iii,v)	2017.1
Conophytum ratum S.A.Hammer	<b>VU</b> A4acde	Raimondo et al. (2009)

## Bibliography

Hammer, S. 1991. A new sphaeroid from Bushmanland. *Cactus and Succulent Journal (USA)* 63(3):67-69.

Hammer, S. 2002. Dumpling and his wife: New view of the genus *Conophytum*. EAE Creative Colour, Norwich.

Hammer, S.A. 1993. The genus *Conophytum*: A conograph. Succulent Plant Publications, Pretoria.

Raimondo, D., von Staden, L., Foden, W., Victor, J.E., Helme, N.A., Turner, R.C., Kamundi, D.A. and Manyama, P.A. 2009. Red List of South African Plants. *Strelitzia* 25. South African National Biodiversity Institute, Pretoria.

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