

## African Plants

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### Taxonomy

**Scientific Name** **Conophytum youngii**  
**Rodgerson**

**Higher Classification**  
**Family** Dicotyledons  
AIZOACEAE

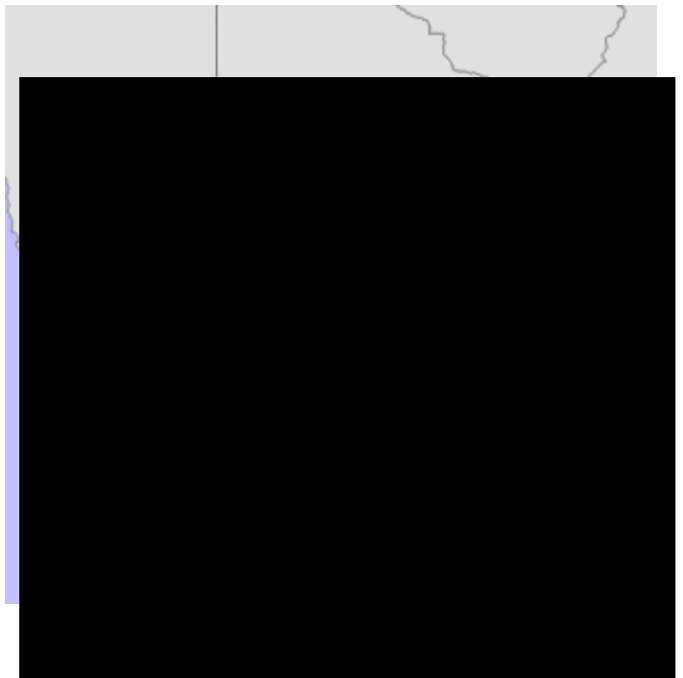
### National Status

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

**Assessment Date** 2020/02/05

**Assessor(s)** A.J. Young & D. Raimondo

**Justification** A highly restricted range and recently discovered species known from a single location in Namaqualand South Africa. It occupies an area of less than 2 km<sup>2</sup> and has an extent of occurrence (EOO) and an area of occupancy (AOO) of 4 km<sup>2</sup>. There are severe and rapid declines to this species taking place as a result of illegal harvesting for the succulent trade. Individual plants fetch high prices. Collecting pressure has dramatically increased since March 2019 as a result of demand for Conophytum species coming from Asian countries. This species therefore



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qualifies as  
Critically  
Endangered under  
criterion B.

## Distribution

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**Endemism** South African  
endemic  
**Provincial  
distribution** Northern Cape  
**Range** Namaqualand near  
Garies.

## Habitat and Ecology

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**Major system** Terrestrial  
**Major  
habitats** Namaqualand  
Klipkoppe  
Shrubland  
**Description** Lichen and moss-  
filled cracks on  
south-facing sides  
of granite domes.

## Threats

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This is a highly sought after species in cultivation, with plants currently fetching high prices. Illegal collection is a major extinction threat to the single small, localised, population of plants. Furthermore there are active granite quarries in the vicinity of the type locality, and the population is at further risk from habitat loss, should there be expansion of quarrying activities to the granite dome where it occurs.

## Population

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This recently discovered species is known from a single, large subpopulation consisting of several thousand individuals. It belongs to a small group of spring-flowering Conophytums (most species flower in autumn), which may explain why it has been overlooked until now, despite its habitat being well-explored. Its quite likely occurs on other similar granite domes in the area, but thus far, no more subpopulations have been found. Plants are extremely cryptic when not in flower, and may be easily overlooked. The population is currently stable, but is highly vulnerable due to its extremely localized distribution.

**Population  
trend** Decreasing

## Assessment History

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<b>Taxon assessed</b>	<b>Status and Criteria</b>	<b>Citation/Red List version</b>
Conophytum youngii Rodgerson	VU D2	2017.1

## Bibliography

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Rodgerson, C. 2012. The National Road and another new Conophytum. CactusWorld 30(4):239-244.

## Citation

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