

## Plants

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### Taxonomy

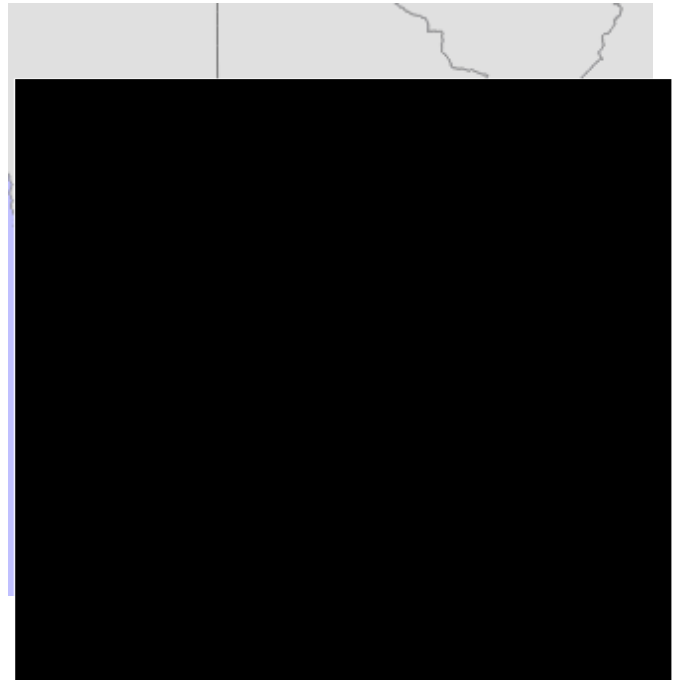
<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Conophytum turrigerum (N.E.Br.) N.E.Br.</b>
<b>Higher Classification</b>	Dicotyledons
<b>Family</b>	AIZOACEAE
<b>Synonyms</b>	Mesembryanthemum turrigerum N.E.Br.

### National Status

<b>Status and Criteria</b>	<b>Vulnerable B1ab(v)+2ab(v)</b>
<b>Assessment Date</b>	2020/02/05
<b>Assessor(s)</b>	A.J. Young, J.E. Victor, S.A. Hammer & D. Raimondo
<b>Justification</b>	A rare and highly localized specialist occurring in the Swartland region of the Western Cape South Africa. It is known from between eight and ten locations and has an extent of occurrence (EOO) of 1106 km <sup>2</sup> and an area of occupancy (AOO) of 64 km <sup>2</sup> . There is ongoing decline in the number of mature individuals taking place as a result of illegal harvesting to serve the large demand for Conophytums from Asian countries. It therefore qualifies as Vulnerable under criterion B.

### Distribution

<b>Endemism</b>	South African endemic
<b>Provincial distribution</b>	Western Cape
<b>Range</b>	Swartland between Malmesbury and Paarl.



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## Habitat and Ecology

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**Major system** Terrestrial

**Major habitats** Fynbos

**Description** Moss and lichen-covered cracks and depressions where rainwater collects on exposed granite rocks.

## Threats

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Some subpopulations are threatened by illegal collection for the succulent trade, there has been a marked increase in demand for *Conophytum* since March 2019. In the past one subpopulation is known to have been lost to quarrying, but there are no quarries nearby most of the remaining extant subpopulations, and no current indication of rapid expansion of granite extraction. Fynbos and renosterveld surrounding some of the subpopulations is infested with alien invasive plants, but alien plants are unlikely to establish in the shallow soil pockets on exposed granite rocks where this species grows.

## Population

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*Conophytum turrigerum* is a highly localized habitat specialist. It most often occurs in small clumps of fewer than 200 plants within suitable habitat, which is often limited in extent, and many subpopulations are isolated. It is somewhat more common on larger granite outcrops such as Paarl Mountain and the Paardeberg, where recent field surveys recorded a number of previously undocumented subpopulations. The population size is estimated to be at least 2000 mature individuals. The population is declining due to illegal harvesting.

**Population trend** Decreasing

## Assessment History

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Taxon assessed	Status and Criteria	Citation/Red List version
<i>Conophytum turrigerum</i> (N.E.Br.)	Rare	Raimondo et al. (2009)
<i>Conophytum turrigerum</i> (N.E.Br.)	Not Threatened	Hilton-Taylor (1996)

## Bibliography

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

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## Citation

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