



Camerons Cave Troglobitic Community

Summary description

The community is known from Camerons Cave on the Cape Range peninsula. It comprises a unique assemblage of species, at least eight of which are known only from this location. The threatened species *Stygiochiropus peculiaris* (Camerons Cave millipede; critically endangered) and *Indohya damocles* (Camerons Cave pseudoscorpion; critically endangered) (previously *Hyella* sp. BES 1154.2525, 1546, 2554) are endemic to Camerons Cave. *Milyeringa veritas* (blind gudgeon; vulnerable) and *Draculoides bramstokeri* (Barrow Island draculoides; vulnerable) also occur in the cave.



Photo – Douglas Elford/WA Museum

Distribution

The single known occurrence of Camerons Cave troglobitic community occurs within Camerons Cave (karst index C-452), located on the Cape Range peninsula.

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) Region: Pilbara
DBCA District: Exmouth

Local Government Authority: Shire of Exmouth

Habitat requirements

The assemblage relies on particulate and dissolved sources of organic carbon for food. This food source comes in from outside the cave at the surface. The community is also reliant on the humid conditions in Camerons Cave, which are created through contact with the water table and specific surface conditions.

Indigenous interests

Traditional Owner groups: Baiyungu, Thalanyji, Yinggarda

The North West Cape Exmouth Aboriginal Corporation is represented on the North West Cape Karst Management Advisory Committee who assisted in the drafting and implementation of the recovery plan for Camerons Cave. The community occurs on the Warnangura (Cape Range) Cultural Precinct, which encompasses Cape Range Peninsula and is recognised as an area of significance in a register of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites kept by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

The Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation represents the Traditional Owners and is the native title representative body for the Pilbara region.

Conservation status

State: Listed as a critically endangered ecological community under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Threatened ecological communities are declared environmentally sensitive areas under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Threatening processes

The main threats to the community include uncontrolled access to the cave and its surrounds, altered water levels or quality, pollution, and dumping of waste in the cave.

Recovery plan

An interim recovery plan has been produced for this community, outlining the recovery actions that are required to reduce threats and maintain or improve its overall condition. Recommended actions include implementing a monitoring plan and using results to guide management, determining an appropriate buffer for the cave, developing a hydrological model and managing groundwater quality and levels, ensuring land use planning and development controls protect the community, and surveying for other occurrences.

Key references

Adams, M. & Humphreys, W. F. (1993). Patterns of genetic diversity within selected subterranean fauna of the Cape Range peninsula, Western Australia: systematic and biogeographic implications. *Records of the Western Australian Museum*, Supplement 45, 145–164.

Department of Environment and Conservation. (2012). *Camerons Cave Troglobitic Community, Camerons Cave Millipede and Camerons Cave Pseudoscorpion: Interim Recovery Plan 2012–2017* (Interim Recovery Plan No. 324).

Humphreys, W. F. (1999). Relict stygofaunas living in sea salt, karst and calcrete habitats in arid northwestern Australia contain many ancient lineages. In W. Ponder & D. Lunney (Eds.), *The Other 99%: The Conservation and Biodiversity of Invertebrates* (pp. 219–227). Transactions of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales.

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