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Plants

Cyrtandra halawensis

SPECIES STATUS:

Genetic Safety Net Species

Hawai'i Natural Heritage Ranking – Critically Imperiled (G1)

Endemism – Moloka'i

SPECIES INFORMATION: *Cyrtandra halawensis*, a member of the bellflower family (Gesneriaceae), is a shrub 1.5 - 3 m tall; stems few branched. Leaves opposite or in whorls of 4 per node, usually closely spaced, borne on upper 4 - 8 nodes, those at a node unequal, symmetrical or nearly so, thick, chartaceous, elliptic to elliptic obovate, (11 -)18 40 cm long, (4 -)5 - 14 cm wide, upper surface sparsely bullate hirsute to bullate hirtellous, lower surface densely appressed velvety brown pilose, margins serrulate or occasionally serrate dentate, apex acuminate, base broadly to narrowly cuneate, petioles 1.8 - 5(- 11) cm long. Flowers three (sometimes fewer maturing) in cymes arising in the leaf axils, rarely of 1 - 4 cymes arising at a single node, densely or rarely moderately appressed brown pilose throughout, peduncles stout, 15 - 25 mm long, pedicels stout, unequal, 5 - 24 mm long, bracts narrowly lanceolate, 5 - 12 mm long; calyx nearly actinomorphic, white when fresh, somewhat thickened, 16 - 20 mm long, cleft nearly to base, the lobes linear, densely appressed brown pilose, glabrous within, apex acute to attenuate; corolla white, tube narrowly funnellform, curved, ca. 18 - 19 mm long, ca. 6 - 8 mm in diameter medially, pilose, upper lobes broadly ovate, ca. 7 - 8 mm long, ca. 8 - 9 mm wide, lower lobes broadly elliptic, 10 - 14 mm long, 9.5 - 10 mm wide; ovary glabrous; style ca. 9 mm long, glabrous. Berries white, ovoid ellipsoid, ca. 1.5 cm long. Seeds unknown.

DISTRIBUTION: *Cyrtandra halawensis* is known only from a few collections from scattered localities in mesic valleys and mesic to wet forest, 100 - 1,220 m elevations on eastern Moloka'i.

ABUNDANCE: Information on the abundance of this species is incomplete. Although apparently rare over most of its range, it has been observed along a stream in the Halawa region (for which this species is named, at the eastern tip of Moloka'i) to be perhaps the most common of the several *Cyrtandra* species seen there.

LOCATION AND CONDITION OF KEY HABITAT: Moist to wet forests. Usually found along stream banks in gulch bottoms or on lower gulch slopes.

THREATS:

- Feral pigs;

- Goats;
- Deer;
- Cattle;
- Invasive alien plants.

CONSERVATION ACTIONS: The goals of conservation actions are not only to protect current populations, but also to establish new populations to reduce the risk of extinction. In addition to common statewide and island conservation actions, specific actions include:

- Survey historic range for surviving populations;
- Establish secure *ex-situ* stocks with complete representation of remaining individuals;
- Augment wild population and establish new populations in safe harbors.

MONITORING:

- Continue surveys of population and distribution in known and likely habitats;
- Monitor plants for insect damage and plant diseases.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES:

- Develop proper horticultural protocols and pest management;
- Survey *ex-situ* holdings and conduct molecular fingerprinting;
- Conduct pollination biology and seed dispersal studies;
- Map genetic diversity in the surviving populations to guide future re-introduction and augmentation efforts.

References:

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