



SNR FACT SHEET

SATYRIUM PRINCEPS

During October the beautiful terrestrial orchid *Satyrium princeps* (Rooi-trewwa) can be seen flowering in the Kingfisher Creek area of the Reserve.

This orchid was once fairly common and grew on south-facing coastal dunes between Wilderness and Port Alfred. However, it is now listed in the SANBI Red List as 'vulnerable', and faces a high rate of extinction in the wild. This is largely a result of urbanisation and the orchid's habitat being infested with invasive acacias.



Its name '*princeps*' means 'first man or chief' in Latin, and probably alludes to the regal appearance of this attractive species with its striking rose pink to deep carmine flowers.

Satyrium princeps is not dependent on fire to stimulate its growth, and is pollinated by birds. Amethyst Sunbirds and Southern Double-collared Sunbirds have been found carrying the pollinaria on their bills after sipping nectar from the unscented flowers.



Careful clearing of the dense Kingfisher Creek coastal bush in the last few years has resulted in a spectacular increase in the number of blooms from about 20 in 2009 to over 100 in 2011.

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Photographs by Trevor Hardaker and Margaret Richards.