

## PLOMLEY'S TRAPDOOR SPIDER

Migas plomleyi



Plomley's Trapdoor Spider, *Migas plomleyi* that was thought to live in the Cataract Gorge area had not been seen since found and identified by the late entomologist Brian Plomley during the mid-20th century.

This spider is endangered under the Tasmanian criteria and Critically Endangered under the IUCN 1994 criteria at the Commonwealth level. The female spiders are stout, with a body length of 6.4mm. A thin parchment-like sac is used for shelter (up to 2cm long), and is similar in colour to the surrounding moss or soil, where it is located at the interface on dolerite boulders. The population density is probably less than 3 per 100sq.metre in suitable habitat. The spider is are subject to predation by wasps, loss of suitable habitat due to weed invasion, and also prone to flooding of burrows, burrow dislodgment and fire.

In a partnership agreement with Aurora Energy and the Department of Primary Industries Water and Environment, a study by the Launceston Environment Centre was initiated. An attempt was made during August/September 2001 to locate some additional specimens, both in the Cataract Gorge and nearby ravines at Corra Lynn and Notley Gorge. The contractor, Sandy Leighton, and several volunteers from the Launceston Environment Centre at Cataract Gorge located two individual spiders, but none were located elsewhere.

Given the sensitivity of the find and the rarity of the species, it was decided that no additional museum specimens would be taken. A report was prepared on the finds made, with additional funding sort and received for interpretation of the species by the World Wildlife Fund.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

LEC -Launceston Environment Centre  
34 Cameron Street  
Launceston TAS 7250  
**p:** 03 6331 8558  
**f:** 03 6352 6509  
**e:** [info@lec.org.au](mailto:info@lec.org.au)

PO Box 392  
Launceston TAS 7250.