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| NOT EVALUATED | DATA DEFICIENT | LEAST CONCERN | NEAR THREATENED | VULNERABLE | ENDANGERED | < CRITICALLY ENDANGERED > | EXTINCT IN THE WILD | EXTINCT |
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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Lord Howe Island Stick Insect

The **Lord Howe Island Stick Insect**, *Dryococelus australis*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is known only from Lord Howe Island and Ball's Pyramid, a volcanic outcrop in the Tasman Sea just 200 m wide at the base. Young nymphs are bright green in colour and become darker as they grow, eventually turning a dark glossy brown or even black. Females are larger than males and can reach 13 cm in length.

The introduction of predatory black rats to the island by the trading vessel SS Makambo in 1918 led to the extinction of the species on Lord Howe Island, possibly as early as 1920. The Lord Howe Island Stick Insect was considered extinct in 1986; however, a small number of this species had survived on Ball's Pyramid. Following research in the early 2000s, a pair was taken to begin a captive breeding programme.

This species is being reared successfully in captivity, and there are plans for a reintroduction to Lord Howe Island if the eradication of the rats is successful.

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