



SIGNIFICANT FLORA FACT SHEET

Goat and rabbit grazing may be preventing regenerating plants and regrowth from reaching maturity, despite the spiny nature of the suckers.

DESERT LIME, WILD LIME

Citrus glauca (syn. *Eremocitrus glauca*)

Desert Lime is a dense, tangled spiny shrub or long-lived small tree that typically grows to about three to five metres tall.

It occurs in a variety of soil types including heavy brown clays, desert loams, red earths and also on the sandy loam soils found on the Western Myall (*Acacia papyrocarpa*) plains north of Port Augusta.

Associated vegetation is often chenopod shrublands such as Bluebush (*Maireana sedifolia*) or Blackbush (*M. pyramidata*), but may also include other small trees such as Blackoak (*Casuarina pauper*) or Bullock Bush (*Alectryon oleifolius*), and various *Senna* or *Eremophila* species.

Regeneration appears to be mainly from spiny suckers, vegetative shoots sent out from the roots of mature plants. These are quite often seen after good rainfalls or when damage occurs to adult trees.

IDENTIFICATION

The leaves of Desert Lime are narrow-oblong about 1-4mm wide, 1.5cm long and are grey-green in colour. Flowers are white to greenish white, nearly the same size as lemon flowers and are similarly sweetly scented. Spines appear to occur only on regrowth, young plants and suckers.

The yellow, miniature 'lime' fruits average about 1-2cm in diameter, but can be larger. They appear in summer provided spring rainfalls have been reasonable.

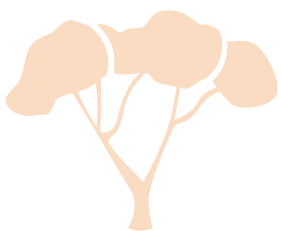
DISTRIBUTION

Desert Lime occurs in scattered disjunct localities over a wide area in South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland, with the majority of recorded populations found in Queensland where it is regarded as somewhat weedy.

In South Australia it is known to occur in the Gairdner-Torrens, Flinders Ranges and Eyre Peninsula botanic regions.

Known populations include:

- » Port Augusta area (Corraberra Station) – probably the largest population in South Australia
- » Hawker area (Wallerberdina) and Horseshoe Range (near Carrieton)
- » Pernatty and Kootaberra Stations
- » Mambray Creek
- » Nundroo (west of Ceduna), presumed to be an 'outlier' occurrence.



DID YOU KNOW?

Desert Lime fruits, though small, often dry, and somewhat woody, have intense flavour and can be used in jams, chutney and homemade chocolate, or sliced and dropped in cold water as a refreshing drink.

Jill Michael, Carriewerloo Station



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Produced June 2010



Large tree
 P. Lang



Large tree
 P. Barron



Fruits
 P. Barron

THREATS

Adult plants are very long-lived so the main threat to Desert Lime may be a bushfire, wind or hailstorm which damages or destroys the adult population in any of the small disjunct populations of this plant.

Goat and rabbit grazing may also be preventing regenerating plants and regrowth from reaching maturity, despite the spiny nature of the suckers.

As available forage conditions deteriorate (due to drought or poor vegetation condition) the impacts from goats and rabbits are presumed to increase, further impacting the ability of the suckers to survive.

Improved control of goats and rabbits, and close monitoring of pressures from grazing stock are considered to be the most effective action points.

Existing populations of Desert Lime should also be actively conserved for their potential economic value as this species may have some potential as a grafting rootstock to improve drought tolerance of commercial citrus.

