



SIGNIFICANT FLORA FACT SHEET

This species is listed as vulnerable in South Australia due to its restricted distribution with existing populations in the Flinders and Olary Ranges threatened by goats and rabbits.

SLENDER BELLFRUIT

Codonocarpus pyramidalis

Slender Bellfruit is an erect short-lived shrub or small tree up to eight metres in height. Like other bellfruit species this plant grows very rapidly under good growing conditions, and produces an abundance of bell-shaped fruits. From these fruits, many light winged seeds are readily dispersed by the wind.

Slender Bellfruit tends to be short-lived. It is readily damaged by strong winds or grazing animals although it is reported to be unpalatable and poisonous to many herbivores.

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IDENTIFICATION

Slender Bellfruit is readily identified by its unique growth habit with one to several long stems often leaning and supporting dense clusters of fruits. Foliage is bright green, even during dry periods. Plants often tower above and contrast with the blue or grey-green of the low drought-adapted shrublands in which they often grow.

Leaves are drooping, up to 70cm long and generally only 2-3mm diameter. Flowers are small and greenish-yellow with many tiny petals, and occur in clusters. They are produced mainly in late spring or summer, or sometimes after significant rainfall.

Fruits are 9-15mm long, green when immature and becoming brown when ready to release their seeds. Seed is often of low viability and difficult to germinate so this species is not often seen in cultivation. Wood is soft and pithy.

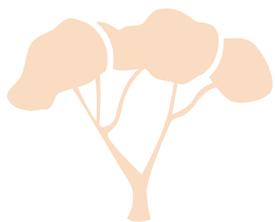
Slender Bellfruit is closely related to the much more widespread Desert Poplar (*Codonocarpus cotinifolius*).

DISTRIBUTION

This species occurs in odd scattered locations in the northern Flinders Ranges and the Olary Ranges near the Barrier Highway.

Being wind-dispersed it is often observed as just one individual in a range of habitats and vegetation types, but shows a preference for shaley hill slopes and crests, or anywhere in skeletal soil types where physical soil or landscape disturbance has occurred (eg from erosion or road construction).

Associated plant communities are shrublands of *Senna*, *Eremophila* or *Dodonaea*, or of Prickly Wattle (*Acacia victoriae*) and Dead Finish (*Acacia tetragonophylla*). However Slender Bellfruit is sometimes the only tree or shrub in localised patches.





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THREATS

Slender Bellfruit is listed as endangered under South Australia's *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* and nationally under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, due to its rarity and grazing impacts on young plants.

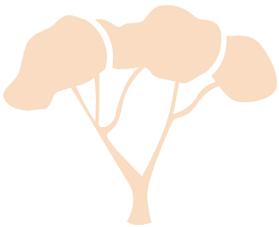
Even where grazing was excluded within experimental exclosures on Angepena Station over more than 10 years, its short life-span and lack of regeneration has resulted in a rapid decline in plant numbers.



Photopoint of exclosure on Maynards Well in 1995 and, below, the same area 10 years later
 R. Davies



Mature tree
 P. Ainslie



Drying fruit
 P. Ainslie



Young fruits
 A. Robinson