

African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*)

Fact sheet

What do they look like?

A multi-branch, perennial shrub, commonly 2-3m tall. Branches are stiff, hairless and end in sturdy thorns. They also occur at right angles along the branches. Leaves are oval shaped, bright green and fleshy and occur in clusters along branchlets and at the base of thorns. Flowers are white to mauve with a tubular base mainly in spring and summer. They are usually five-lobed and about 12mm in diameter. Fruit is smooth and round, 5-12mm long and orange-red in colour.



Why should African boxthorn be controlled?

African boxthorn was originally introduced to Australia from South Africa and planted for fencing and windbreaks. It spread from the initial plantings and by 1904 was proclaimed noxious in parts of Victoria.

Boxthorn produces large numbers of berries that contain 20+ seeds each. These are eaten

by birds and other animals and then passed through their gut and deposited elsewhere.

Boxthorn invades native vegetation, alters habitat and overruns pastures. It forms dense, impenetrable thickets that reduce access for stock, native animals, people and vehicles. It can provide food and shelter for foxes and rabbits. The large thorns can injure livestock and several pest insect species breed in its fruit.



What are my responsibilities?

African boxthorn is a declared weed under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* for the whole of South Australia. Under the *Landscape Act*, landowners along with property owners who rent or lease their properties, have obligations to control any African boxthorn that may be present on their property.

What are the best ways to control African boxthorn?

Physical control

Seedlings can be hand pulled as long as the ground is soft to ensure complete root system removal.

For larger infestations, mechanical removal is recommended. Plants should be stacked and burned when dry. Follow up control in following years is essential to treat regrowth from root systems (chemical treatment).

Chemical control

Plants should be actively growing when applying spray-on herbicides. A dye can be added to aid application.

Foliage spray: Should be used for smaller plants, regrowth and to avoid off target damage to native species. When spraying, all foliage must be covered. Apply at a rate of 100L water + 1L Glyphosate (450g/L) + 10g metsulfuron-methyl (600g/kg).

Granular application: Tebuthiuron herbicide is available in granular form. Granules should be applied in accordance with label directions at 2g per square metre. Rainfall will dissolve the granules into the soil which is then taken up by the plant roots. Not to be used near waterways or desirable vegetation.

Cut stump: Stems are cut no higher than 15cm from the ground and the cut surface treated immediately with herbicide (painted or sprayed on). Apply a 3-5mm thick layer of gel to freshly cut stump.

Basal bark: Treat basal bark on stems up to 5cm in diameter with the following mix of triclopyr (600g/L) at a rate of 2L/60L of biodiesel.



Do you have African boxthorn?

If you think you have African boxthorn on your property, Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board staff can provide advice on control and management.

More information

Email: ep.landscapeboard@sa.gov.au
Phone: 08 8688 3200

www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ep