

Aleppo pine (*Pinus halepensis*)

Fact sheet

What do they look like?

The Aleppo pine is a fast growing tree introduced from the Mediterranean. They are evergreen coniferous trees and can grow up to 20 metres tall. Aleppo pines have a single trunk with spreading branches and have paired needle-like green leaves 5-11 cm long, by 1 mm in diameter.

The bark on an Aleppo pine is scaly, dark grey on the outside and red-brown on the inside. They grow rapidly and can reproduce from four years of age. Trees contain male & female cones: male cones are small, scaly and clustered; female cones are woody and contain seeds. One tree can release thousands of seeds and up to 90% of seeds can germinate.

The female cones ripen during summer and release the seeds. Seeds are about 6 mm long and contain a 25 mm long wing that assists with seed dispersal via wind. Seeds can travel up to several-hundreds of metres from the parent plant and can remain in the cone for several years before being released.



Why should Aleppo pine be controlled?

The Aleppo pine is common throughout South Australia as it was traditionally planted for windbreaks. The species has spread from plantings into cleared pastures and bushland areas in many parts of South Australia. It is adapted to dry, rocky limestone soils, is drought tolerant and will grow just about anywhere. Consequently, the Aleppo pine is an aggressive invader of roadsides and native vegetation on the Eyre Peninsula.

It competes with native vegetation and if left uncontrolled, will eventually dominate the area. Pine oil in the leaves and their dominant canopy also inhibits the growth of a native understory.



What are my responsibilities?

Aleppo pine is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* on the Eyre Peninsula. This means it is illegal to transport or sell this plant and all property owners have a responsibility to control Aleppo pines on their property. Residents who rent their properties also have obligations to control any weeds present. This also includes anyone who is leasing property unless other arrangements have been made.

What are the best ways to control Aleppo pine?

Successful control of Aleppo pines requires the removal of large mature plants and seedlings. If controlling large areas of Aleppo pines, begin in the least infested areas with small and outlier plants, and then work your way towards more dense areas and onto larger trees.

Control methods

Fell/cut/lop: This can be done with a chainsaw, axe, handsaw or loppers. Trees need to be cut as close to ground level as possible (or below the lowest branch or needles) to prevent re-shooting. All appropriate safety equipment should be worn and care taken to ensure the tree does not fall in the wrong direction.

Hand-pull: Small seedlings can be hand-pulled from the ground, ideally when the soil is moist.

Wipper-snip/brush-cut: Small seedlings can be controlled using a wipper-snipper or brush-cutter. In areas where there are hundreds of small seedlings, a mechanical form of snipping at ground level will save time.

Slash: A mechanical slasher towed behind a tractor will work best in cleared and level open spaces for relatively dense seedling infestations.

Ring-bark: Removing the bark from around the base of the tree is useful to control isolated Aleppo pines. A band of bark should be removed with an axe. The band needs to be at least 30 cm wide in order to kill the tree and prevent the sap from re-sealing.

Mechanical removal: In situations where no other native vegetation is present, bulldozing pines can be effective and will also remove the stumps from the soil. Caution needs to be taken to minimise soil erosion.

Graze seedlings: Small seedlings (< 30 cm) can be grazed by sheep which can suppress seedling re-growth.

Disposal

Mulch: Felled trees may be mulched but cones should be removed from the trees beforehand if the mulch is to be spread. If cones are left on the trees and mulched, the mulch should remain in a pile to decompose.

Pile: Plants which are felled should be piled where possible to contain any seed cones and seedling germination.

Burn: Piles of pines may be burnt to destroy remaining seeds, seedlings and dead plant matter. Ensure fire safety is followed.

NOTE: Aleppo pine seeds can remain viable for a long time, so control of seedlings will be needed annually.

Do you have Aleppo pine?

If you think you have Aleppo pine on your property, the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board can provide advice on control and management.



More information

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