

Impact Assessment Record

Scientific name: *Schinus molle* L.

Common name: Peppercorn Tree

QUESTION	COMMENTS	RATING	CONFIDENCE
Social			
1. Restrict human access?	It is described as freely coppicing and as forming extensive species poor stands (Weber 2003), and although not specifically documented, it has some potential to restrict human access.	M	M
2. Reduce tourism?	No information was found to suggest it reduces tourism, but as a large tree to 10m tall (Blood 2001) it is likely to be obvious to the 'average' visitor and may affect the aesthetics of an area.	ML	MH
3. Injurious to people?	Fruit are allergenic, especially toxic to children, causing vomiting, gastro-enteritis, irritation of mucous membranes, allergic dermatitis, hay fever, asthma and breathing difficulties (Shepherd 2004). Major component in allergies, hay fever and asthma.	MH	MH
4. Damage to cultural sites?	Older trees grow top heavy, can blow down in storms and are consequently no longer planted on public streets in Riverside, California for fear of law suits (Howard & Minnich 1989). Has potential to cause damage to property, though this appears not directly as a result of its growth habit. Its gum is also documented as causing damage to car duco (Landcare 2007).	M	M
Abiotic			
5. Impact flow?	Terrestrial species, not likely to impact water flow.	L	M
6. Impact water quality?	Terrestrial species, not likely to impact water quality.	L	M
7. Increase soil erosion?	'Since the soil under the canopy can remain bare and lacks an herbaceous ground flora, erosion can be accelerated in stands growing on slopes or near streams (Weber 2003)'. Moderate probability of large scale soil movement.	ML	MH
8. Reduce biomass?	Grows as a 'tree in a shrubland' (Howard & Minnich 1989). Could increase the biomass of a community.	L	MH
9. Change fire regime?	It is described growing as a 'tree in a shrubland' capable of shading out all native vegetation (Weber 2003) and there is suggestion that it could turn scrublands into savannahs (Howard & Minnich 1989). It is also described as fire retardant (Zanthorea 2007) so there is potential for it to decrease fire intensity in some communities and also have a moderate affect on fire frequency.	MH	M
Community Habitat			
10. Impact on composition (a) high value EVC	EVC= Riparian scrub (BCS= E); CMA= Wimmera; Bioreg= Wimmera; CLIMATE potential=VH. 'It is freely coppicing and forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation (Weber 2003)'. Grows as a 'tree in a shrubland' (Howard & Minnich 1989). Major displacement of dominant species.	MH	MH
(b) medium value EVC	EVC= Low Chenopod shrubland (BCS= D); CMA= Mallee; Bioreg= Murray Scroll Belt; CLIMATE potential=VH. 'It is freely coppicing and forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation	MH	MH

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	(Weber 2003)'. Grows as a 'tree in a shrubland' (Howard & Minnich 1989). Major displacement of dominant species.		
(c) low value EVC	EVC= Shrubby Riverine Woodland (BCS= LC); CMA= Mallee; Bioreg= Murray Mallee; CLIMATE potential=VH. 'It is freely coppicing and forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation (Weber 2003)'. Grows as a 'tree in a shrubland' (Howard & Minnich 1989). Major displacement of dominant species.	MH	MH
11. Impact on structure?	'S. molle potentially alters structure and composition in grasslands, woodlands and coastal scrub areas (Morisawa 2000)'. Forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation (Weber 2003). Not described as forming monocultures.	MH	MH
12. Effect on threatened flora?	Forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation (Weber 2003). 'S. molle potentially alters structure and composition in grasslands, woodlands and coastal scrub areas (Morisawa 2000)'. Likely to impact on threatened flora species but not specifically documented.	MH	L
Fauna			
13. Effect on threatened fauna?	Forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation (Weber 2003). Likely to alter habitat by eliminating native vegetation but its specific impact on fauna was not found documented.	MH	L
14. Effect on non-threatened fauna?	Forms extensive species poor stands that shade out all native vegetation (Weber 2003)'. Likely to alter habitat by eliminating native vegetation but its specific impact on fauna was not found documented.	M	L
15. Benefits fauna?	In degraded locations mature trees may provide food and shelter to native animals including birds, bats and possums (Muys 2001). Leaves consumed by the native Emperor Gum moth (French 1945). Berries fed on by the threatened Spotted Bower bird (Walker & Christian 2003). Provides some assistance in food and shelter to desirable species.	MH	MH
16. Injurious to fauna?	Fruit and leaves cause poisoning or death in poultry, pigs and possibly calves (Blood 2001). It could be toxic to some fauna but no information was found documented.	M	M
Pest Animal			
17. Food source to pests?	'Seed is possibly dispersed by foxes (Muys 2001)'. Fruits are eaten in large quantities by the 'Patagonian Fox' in South America (Silva et al 2005). Because it fruits year round it has the potential to provide food throughout the year to one serious pest.	MH	M
18. Provides harbor?	Not described as providing harbour for any serious pest animals, e.g. foxes or rabbits, and as a tree (Howard & Minnich 1989) is unlikely to, but most likely to provide harbour for minor pest species such as exotic birds.	ML	MH
Agriculture			
19. Impact yield?	A pest in orange groves and other sites of irrigation (Howard & Minnich 1989) but not documented as impacting on yield.	L	M

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20. Impact quality?	There is no information to suggest it impacts on agricultural quality.	L	M
21. Affect land value?	There is no information to suggest it affects land value.	L	M
22. Change land use?	There is no information to suggest it would cause a change in land use.	L	M
23. Increase harvest costs?	Described as a pest in orange groves and sites of irrigation (Howard & Minnich 1989) but it is not clear from the information available whether it may increase harvest costs, for example due to increased irrigation requirements.	M	L
24. Disease host/vector?	'Host of fruit fly (Blood 2001)'. Host of a major agricultural pest.	H	MH