

Agriculture Protection Board  
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# APPLE of SODOM



1. Mature bush 2. Flower and fruit

(continued overleaf)

# APPLE of SODOM

**A**PPLE of Sodom (*Solanum sodomeum* L.) is a member of the Solonaceae family which also includes the potato and tomato. Apple of Sodom is a native of the Mediterranean and North Africa. In Western Australia it has mainly been found on coastal limestone soils from the Perth metropolitan area to Augusta and occasionally further inland.

The plant forms dense thickets providing cover for vermin and shading out pasture species. The whole of the plant is poisonous but is seldom eaten due to its bitter taste and prickles.

Apple of Sodom is a declared plant (noxious weed) in Western Australia.

**Ecology:**

Apple of Sodom is a woody

perennial which spreads by seed. Flowering takes place from October to April. Seeds usually fall close to the parent plant but may be dispersed in mud, on animals and machinery or in hay, silage and chaff.

Most of the seed germinates in spring and late summer. New plants rapidly establish on grazing land, parkland and vacant town blocks and other cleared land.

Some dormant seed may remain in the soil for several years.

**Description:**

Apple of Sodom is an erect branching woody shrub which usually grows to about one metre high, but occasionally to five metres. Stems are green-purple to brown with 1 cm long prickles.

The leaves are long with deep irregular lobes. The flowers are purple-white with five petals joined in a bell shape.

The round, tomato-like fruit is green and white at first, turning yellow as it ripens. The fruit is about 40 mm in diameter containing numerous round flattened seeds about 3 mm across.

Action is necessary to control Apple of Sodom infestations and prevent the weed spreading to new areas.

*For identification of suspect plants and information on Apple of Sodom control contact the Agriculture Protection Board, telephone Perth (09) 367 0111 or any country officer of the Agriculture Protection Board or the Department of Agriculture.*