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Colocynth

Citrullus colocynthis

Scientific Name
Citrullus colocynthis (L.) Schrad.

Synonyms
Cucumis colocynthis L.

Common Names
bitter apple, bitter paddy melon, colocynth, colocynth melon, [vine](#) -of-Sodom, wild gourd

Family
Cucurbitaceae

Origin
Native to northern Africa (i.e. from Morocco to Egypt) and Asia (i.e. from Israel eastward to Iran, India and parts of tropical Asia).

Naturalised Distribution
Widely naturalised in the inland parts of Australia (i.e. in northern and western Queensland, western New South Wales, throughout much of Western Australia and South Australia, in the southern and central parts of the Northern Territory, and in north-western Victoria).
Also naturalised in other parts of the world, including southern USA (i.e. Texas).

Notes
Colocynth (*Citrullus colocynthis*) is an environmental weed in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Victoria. this species is common in disturbed inland areas, particularly on floodplains in semi-arid regions. In Western Australia it can be found it a wide variety of habitats including open woodlands, grasslands, river beds and banks, flood plains, on bare areas and road verges and in disturbed and undisturbed natural vegetation.



habit (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)



habit (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)



deeply-lobed leaves (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)



close-up of hairy stem (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)



close-up of leaves (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)

close-up of flower and roughly hairy upper leaf surface (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)

immature fruit (Photo: Rob and Fiona Richardson)

close-up of seeds (Photo: Carole Ritchie at USDA PLANTS Database)



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