



## Declared Plant Policy

*This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.*

### false caper (*Euphorbia terracina*)

False caper (*Euphorbia terracina*) is a perennial native to the coastal sand dunes bordering the Mediterranean, now widespread in South Australia on sandy and coastal soils. Its low palatability makes it a weed of pasture.

### Management Plan for False Caper

#### Outcomes

- Minimise further spread of false caper to land where it has impacts as a weed.

#### Objectives

- Prevent dispersal of false caper seed from infested areas to suitable environments for its establishment.

#### Best Practice Implementation

- Regional landscape boards and Green Adelaide to ensure high priority infestations with potential as sources of spread in areas generally free of false caper are controlled.

#### Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

Region	Objectives
Alinytjara Wilurara	Protect sites
Eyre Peninsula	Limited action
Green Adelaide	Monitor
Hills and Fleurieu	Monitor
Kangaroo Island	Limited action
Limestone Coast	Protect sites
Murraylands and Riverland	Limited action
Northern and Yorke	Limited action
South Australian Arid Lands	Limited action

## Declaration

To implement this policy, false caper is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia so that movement of seed in hay can be prevented. Its movement or transport on a public road, by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant are prohibited.

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board may require land owners to control false caper plants growing on their land. This regional landscape board is required to control plants on road reserves, and may recover costs from the adjoining land owners.

False caper is declared in category 3 under the Act for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its road transport or sale can only be issued by the regional Landscape Board or Green Adelaide pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying false caper on public roads. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying false caper. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water.

The following sections of the Act apply to false caper throughout each of the regions noted below:

Sections of Act	Region								
	AW	EP	GA	HF	KI	LC	MR	NY	SAAL
186(1) Prohibiting entry to area									
186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
190 Requiring notification of presence									
192(1) Landowners to destroy the plant on their properties									
192(2) Landowners to control the plant on their properties						X			
194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves						X			

## Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025, or in the event of a change in one or more regional management plans for false caper.

## Weed Risk

### Invasiveness

False caper invasion into pasture and native vegetation is favoured by disturbances including grazing, fire and soil movement. It has rapid growth and prolific seed production in the first season. Seed may germinate at any time of the year if rainfall is adequate.

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The mechanisms for dispersal of false caper are unclear. Some local spread may be due to movement of soil and road building material contaminated with seed. Seed may be spread in fodder, especially lucerne hay. Although livestock avoid the plant, sheep sometimes ingest seed and this may have been a major pathway in its spread to its present distribution.

False caper frequently establishes on disturbed roadsides, especially on shallow soils with high levels of calcium carbonate. It is most abundant on abandoned pastures, stock routes, roadsides and deep sands, but does not invade uncleared native vegetation.

### Impacts

False caper is avoided by grazing livestock, and is probably unpalatable due to the irritant latex it contains. Selective grazing allows it to dominate in poorly managed pastures, and in areas of stony soils or deep sands that make pasture renovation difficult.

It forms a dense ground cover and competes with pasture and native vegetation for space, light and nutrients, as well as having allelopathic effects on some species. It does not appear to persist on frequently cultivated land and is of no significance as a crop weed, although it is a common weed in old lucerne stands in parts of the South East and Murray Mallee.

### Potential distribution

False caper can grow well in shade or open conditions, and is tolerant of waterlogging and drought. It is most abundant on sandy, nutrient-poor, calcareous soils close to the coast, but also extends into fertile inland soils, ephemeral wetlands and saline depressions across the agricultural zone of South Australian and the southern margin of the pastoral zone.

## **Feasibility of Containment**

### Control costs

Large infestations may be sprayed with relatively cheap herbicides but must be followed up with spot spraying or hand removal for at least five years until the seed bank and regrowth from roots are exhausted. Such a program may be uneconomic in the low-productivity pastures that are most susceptible to invasion by false caper.

### Persistence

False caper has high seed production and forms a seed bank in soil with seed longevity believed to be at least 3-5 years.

Mature false caper plants have a deep root system and are able to re-sprout readily when cut, grazed or burnt. Similarly, seedlings are not easily killed through slashing or any physical means that do not remove the entire plant. Re-sprouting plants are often more robust and have greater seed output.

False caper is highly tolerant of salinity, waterlogging and of drought. Its irritant latex deters grazing by native herbivores and rabbits.

Current distribution

False caper is widespread on Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, the Mid North, Riverland, Murray Mallee and the South East, and is established in most areas suitable for its growth.

**State Level Risk Assessment**

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

Land use	Weed Risk	Feasibility of control	Response at State Level
Grazing - southern	high 101	low 109	manage weed
Grazing - rangeland	low 28	very high 14	monitor
Forestry	negligible 0	medium 51	limited action
Native vegetation	negligible 11	low 97	limited action

**Considerations**

Risk assessment at State level indicates managing the weed in southern grazing lands, monitoring to prevent spread into the southern edge of the rangelands, and limited action in other land uses. Regional management plans vary according to regional habitats and presence of the weed.

In the Green Adelaide, and Hills and Fleurieu regions, infestations are monitored to assess impacts. In the Limestone Coast region, and in the Alinytjara Wilurara region, where false caper is not yet established, vulnerable sites are protected. Only limited action is required in the other regions.

**Synonymy**

*Euphorbia terracina* L., Sp. Pl. edn 2, 1: 654 (1762)

Nomenclatural synonyms:

*Esula terracina* (L.) Fourr., Ann. Soc. Linn. Lyon sér. 2, 17: 150 (1869)

*Tithymalus terracinus* (L.) Klotzsch & Garcke, Abh. Königl. Akad. Wiss. Berlin 1859: 90 (1860)

Taxonomic synonyms:

*Euphorbia affinis* DC., Fl. Franc. (DC. & Lamarck), ed. 3. 6: 363 (1815)

*Euphorbia diversifolia* Poir., Encycl. Suppl. 2. 618 (1812)

*Euphorbia italica* Lam., Encycl. 2(2): 434 (1788)

*Euphorbia modesta* Boiss., Cent. Euphorb. 34 (1860)

*Euphorbia neapolitana* Ten., Fl. Napol. 1: 266 (1811)

*Euphorbia obtusifolia* Lam., Encycl. 2(2): 430 (1788)

*Euphorbia provincialis* Willd., Sp. Pl., ed. 4 2(2): 914 (1799)

*Euphorbia ramosissima* Loisel., Mém. Soc. Linn. Paris 6: 415 (1827)

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*Euphorbia seticornis* Poir., Voy. Barbarie 2: 173 (1789)

Other common names include carnation spurge, Geraldton carnation weed and terracina spurge.

Hon David Speirs MP

**Minister for Environment and Water**

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