

Rhagodia baccata

BERRY SALTBUUSH

(Labill.) Moq.

Flowering period: February–May and again in October–December.

Description: Spreading, much branched low shrub to 1 m high, 2 m wide along the Perth coast. Leaves fleshy, more so in areas exposed to high winds and salt spray, 10–40 mm long, 3–8 mm wide with a mealy undersurface. Flowers small and insignificant in broad, cone-shaped panicles to 15 cm long, 10 cm wide. Fruit a berry, ripening claret-red, flattened globular with a single black seed within. Fruit sweet and often eaten and dispersed by birds.

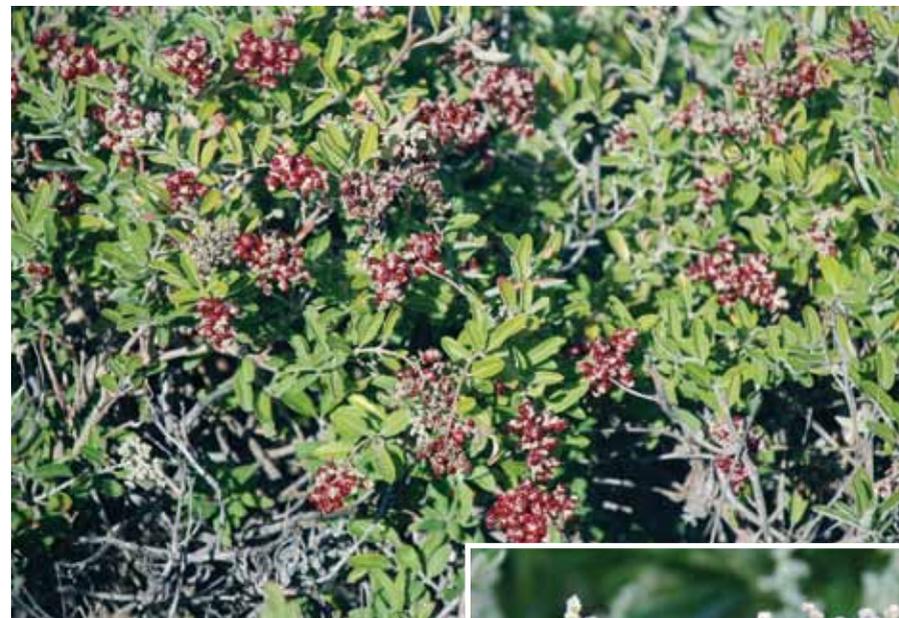
Pollination: Most likely open pollinated by a variety of insect visitors.

Distribution: Widespread and common along the Perth coastline in primary and secondary dunes usually in sites with high impact by wind and sand drift. Found in coastal areas from Jurien Bay to Cape Arid.

Propagation: Readily and easily propagated from cuttings taken at any time of the year. Cuttings root easily if taken during warmer conditions.

Uses in restoration: An important pioneer species in dune rehabilitation with rapid growth, high survival rate and resistance to wind impacts and sand movement. Being succulent the species copes with limited moisture over summer, responding to winter rainfall with rapid growth and flowering over an extended period. Ensure that propagated plants have been grown in full sun and time propagation so that plants are not over-sized. Generally 3–4 months will result in good-sized plants for restoration planting. If plants are over-sized cut back to 15 cm high with hedge clippers before planting. An excellent species for attracting fruit-eating birds to restored dunes; however, is attractive to rabbits and requires protection from grazing.

Notes: A vigorous species in the home garden particularly if watered and requires regular pruning and shaping. Useful for attracting fruit-eating birds with the clusters of decorative, currant-like red berries.



Habit



Flowers



Fruit



Distribution