

Tamarix species – how to tell the difference

There are three species of Tamarisk in Australia - Athel Pine (*Tamarix aphylla*), *T ramosissima* and *T parviflora*. The three species have some distinctive characteristics.

Tamarix aphylla (Athel pine)

- **Evergreen not deciduous**
- **Five flower petals**
- **Up to 18m tall**
- Flower colour whitish–pink, small & stalkless
- Flower spikes 3-4 cm long growing at the end of the previous year's branches
- Strong woody roots that penetrate & spread deeply throughout the soil
- Pendulous, jointed branches
- Minute leaves are a dull grey-green & form a sheath around the fine branchlets giving them the appearance of pine-needles
- Needle segments are uniform & 1-2 mm long
- Surface of leaf whitish due to salt secretion
- Surface of leaf has prominent puncti or 'pores'
- Immature trees have light grey trunks & stems
- Mature trees have thick, rough dark grey to black bark and grey-brown stems
- Naturalised along Finke River, Walker Creek & Karinga Creek NT; Kings Creek Mt Isa, Flinders River Hughenden, Gemfields and Cracow QLD; Gascoyne River, Carnarvon and Laverton WA; Kenmore Park, Mt Fitton, Mt Searle, Frome Downs & Quinyambie Stations SA.



Athel pine - leaves
Photo: Les Tanner



Athel pine - flowers
Photo: Les Tanner



Athel pine - seedlings
Photo: Sandy Leighton



Athel Pine - bark
Photo: Sandy Leighton



Severe Athel pine infestation along the Finke River, Northern Territory
Photo: NT DNRETA



Athel pine - mature tree
Photo: NT DNRETA

For more information please contact:
National WoNS Coordinator for *Mimosa pigra* & Athel Pine
www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/athelpine/

T ramosissima

- **Deciduous to semi deciduous**
 - **Five flower petals**
 - **Up to 5m tall and wide**
 - Flower colour whitish-pink to purple, small & stalkless
 - Flower spikes 2-5 cm long growing at the end of the current year's branches
 - Loosely branched shrub or small to medium tree
 - Generally bushy in appearance
 - Leaves are rhombic to ovate, sharply pointed to gradually tapering, 0.5-3.0 mm long and evenly thick from base to tip
 - Surface of leaf is more or less smooth with scattered puncti or 'pores'
 - Bark is reddish brown
-
- Easily confused with *T parviflora*
 - Naturalised around Imperial Lakes Broken Hill, Lake Cargelligo and Deniliquin NSW; creek-lines near Yunta & Mannahill SA; Lake Boonderoo & Norseman dam near Kalgoorlie WA.



Severe infestation of *T ramosissima* at Lake Boonderoo, Western Australia
Photo: Sandy Leighton



T ramosissima - flowers
Photo: Sandy Leighton



T ramosissima bark
Photo: Sandy Leighton



T ramosissima - leaves
Photo: Sandy Leighton



T ramosissima
mature shrub
Photo: Sandy Leighton

T parviflora

- **Deciduous to semi deciduous**
- **Four flower petals**
- **Up to 6m tall and wide**
- Flower colour whitish pink to purple?
- Loosely branched shrub or small to medium tree
- Leaves lanceolate acuminate & distinctly thickened towards base,
- Bark is dark brown to deep purple
- Naturalised along the Avon River WA (Toodyay, Northam, York area) from salinity & amenity plantings



T parviflora along the Avon River, WA
Photo: Sandy Leighton



T parviflora leaves
Photo: Sandy Leighton



T parviflora flower
Photo: Barry A Rice



T parviflora bark
Photo: Sandy Leighton