



## WEED OF THE MONTH: FEBRUARY

### Olive (*Olea europaea*)



Olive oil, olives on pizza, olive tapenade, olives just to nibble on...many of us love these Mediterranean fruits and their by-products. It's just a pity that what has been good commercially has become such a menace in our dry woodlands and adjacent, cleared land. Olive trees are long-lived, growing to 10m tall. Small white flowers in spring are followed by the fleshy seeds which darken from green to black over summer. Birds and foxes eat the fruit, spreading the seeds widely. Our dry summers, and the fact that olives grow well in most soil types, mean these seeds germinate prolifically. Tiny seedlings can be pulled by hand, but once the seedlings mature, the trees are hard to kill: just chopping them down is not sufficient, since they reshoot easily. You'll see olives on the reserve off Fleurieu Ave, and along the coastline to Fishery's Beach.

See the following NRM website for a fact sheet and a You Tube video on control of these pests:  
<http://www.amlnrm.sa.gov.au/Publicationsandresources/Factsheetspublications/Pestplants.aspx>