

# FACT SHEET

## Salt Bush

### Coast or Grey Salt Bush: *Atriplex cinerea*

There are over 250 species of Saltbush worldwide and around 60 in Australia. 22 species grow in Victoria. Our *A. cinerea* grows in all Australian states and is a shrub, 1-2 meters high with branches and leaves covered in dense short hairs that give the plant its grey appearance.



While once Saltbush was seen by farmers as cheap stock feed it is now a bit of a wonderful delicacy!

A huge number of seeds come from the flowering after Spring and Autumn and they are like salty popcorn kernels, but were also ground and mixed with water to make dough cooked in coals. The leaves have a good salty taste and can be used as a savoury herb.

Like Sage leaves, young Salt bush stems and leaves can be deep fried for a fabulous crispy appetiser. Like Kale crisps the edible saltbush leaves can be seasoned with different combinations of salt and spice and baked for a crunchy snack. Saltbush ground and added to soda bread dough, with saltbush seeds sprinkled on before baking can give great flavour and texture to a rustic loaf. (Ref: Damien Coulthard and Rebecca Sullivan, Warndu Mai – good Food 2019)

**Growing notes:** Saltbush grows in primary dune scrub and exposed coastal shorelines, particularly in sheltered bays. It is a fast-growing shrub which can tolerate dryness and salt winds, making it an ideal screening plant for coastal gardens. It can be grown from seed.

The plant has both male flowers being reddish-purple global clusters on one plant and creamy white female flowers appearing on separate plants from October to January.

(Ref: Kathie and Peter Strickland, Foothills to Foreshore. A field guide to selected Indigenous Plants of Southern Victoria suitable for cultivation 2003)

Small Footprint Produce

From Down's Estate Community Project - Seaford

