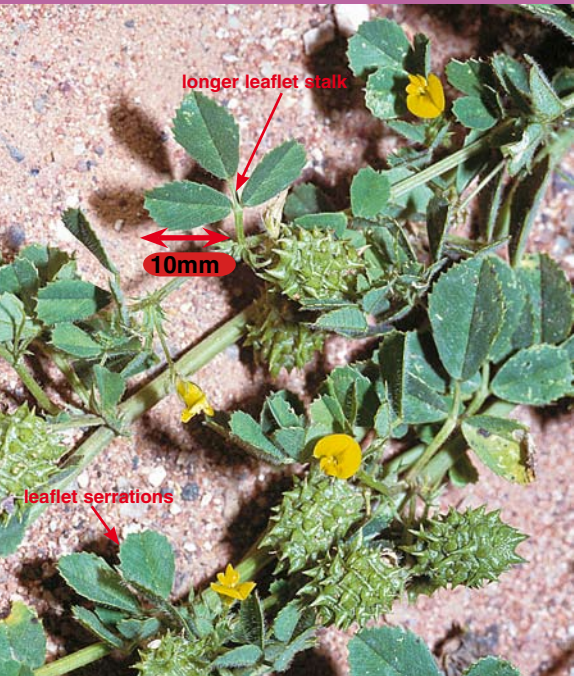


BARREL MEDIC

Medicago truncatula

L2
LEGUME



BARREL MEDIC

Medicago truncatula

Sustainable
Grazing on
Saline Land



SALTdeck Series

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L2

Family: Fabaceae.

Description: A semi prostrate annual with ascending stems to about 50 cm high. Plants branch from the base and produce a large number of runners. Vegetative parts variably covered with hairs. Leaves alternate, trifoliolate (3 leaflets), with sharp serrations on the upper half (see photo). Stipules with long teeth (see photo). Flowers creamy to yellow in clusters of 6–12. Mature seed pods spiny with 2–8 coils, light yellow to dark grey. Seeds kidney shaped light yellow to brownish, carried in a cylindrical coil. Flowers September to December.

Key features: The central leaflet has a longer stalk than those of the other two leaflets (see photo). Barrel-shaped, variably spiny seed pods (see photo).

Value: Provides high quality grazing in crop and pasture rotations. More productive and persistent in low rainfall areas than subclover. Produces many hard seeds that improve persistence during cropping and drought phases.

Salinity and waterlogging tolerance: Does not tolerate waterlogging. Low to moderate tolerance to salinity.

Notes: Native of Mediterranean region, now spread over the world. A variable species that now constitutes a valuable part of pasture stands in Australia. Three varieties of Barrel Medic, based on pod coil and spines, have been recognised but Lesins and Lesins (1979) doubt this division is soundly based.

References: *Pasture Legumes for Temperate Farming Systems (Ute Guide)*, Primary Industries and Resources SA, 2004. *Genus Medicago (Leguminosae)*, Lesins and Lesins, 1979. *Flora of Victoria*, Walsh and Entwisle (eds), Vol. 3, 1996.

