

Camelthorn Fact Sheet

Alhagi Maurorum

Fabaceae Family



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Distinguishing Features:

- ❶ **Flowers:** The small, pea-like flowers extend from the spines located along the rigid branches. These flowers are brown to maroon in color.
- ❷ **Seeds:** Seed pods are constricted between the individual seeds and are tipped with a small beak.
- ❸ **Leaves:** The leaves are alternate, ovate to lanceolate from 0.25-1.25 in. (0.6-3.2 cm) long with smooth margins.
- ❹ **Flowering Time:** Camelthorn starts growth in early to mid-spring with flowers blooming from June to August.
- ❺ **Life cycle:** Camelthorn is a perennial shrub that spreads primarily through its extensive rhizomatous root system. This root system often travels in excess of 25 lateral feet from the parent plant.

Impacts:

- Camelthorn readily outcompetes many other plants for nutrients and water due to its' extensive root system.
- Camelthorn spines can puncture vehicle tires along roadways and cause injury to humans and some other animals.
- Oil from Camelthorn leaves can be used as a treatment for rheumatism. The flowers can also be used to treat Piles (hemorrhoids).

Control:

- Mechanical control methods (pulling, cultivation, etc.) are largely ineffective due to Camelthorn's extensive root system.
- Camelthorn can be somewhat controlled through grazing by animals such as sheep and camels. There are currently no traditional biocontrol agents approved for use on Camelthorn in the US (fs.usda.gov).
- Camelthorn can be effectively controlled via chemical means only with continued treatment for a minimum of 3 years.



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