

Plants of South Eastern New South Wales



Flowers. Australian Plant Image Index, photographers RG & FJ Richardson, Eldorado, Vic



Flower on stem. Photographer Don Wood, Carnarvon Station Bush Heritage Reserve via Augathella, Qld



Fruit on stem. Australian Plant Image Index, photographers RG & FJ Richardson, Eldorado, Vic



Fruiting plant. Photographer Mary Keim, Florida, USA

Common name

Common prickly pear, Smooth pest pear

Family

Cactaceae

Where found

Woodland, grassy areas, disturbed sites, gardens, roadsides, along streams, and coastal environs. Widespread, mainly Canberra and Queanbeayn, and north of Berry.

Notes

Introduced shrub-like **perennial** herb to 2 m tall. Fruit fleshy. Stem **segments** and fruit fleshy. Stem segments, bases of the flowers, and fruit have hooked bristles that irritate the skin, and the stem segments occasionally have spines 1-5 cm long as well. Stem segments otherwise hairless, flattened. Leaves shed early, spirally arranged, 0.2-0.6 cm long, cylindrical or **cone** shaped. Flowers 50-80 mm in diameter, with many yellow '**petals**', single. Fruit purple, edible if the bristles are removed.

A Weed of National Significance. General Biosecurity Duty with additional restrictions all NSW. Pest plant ACT. Noxious weed Vic.

PlantNET description: <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lv=sp&name=Opuntia~stricta> (accessed 3 April 2021)

The PlantNET description includes varieties. *Opuntia stricta* var. *stricta* is now *Opuntia stricta*, and *Opuntia stricta* var. *dillenii* is now *Opuntia dillenii* (accessed 3 April 2021)

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This identification key and fact sheets are available as a free mobile application:



Android edition



iOS edition