

Old Man Saltbush

Atriplex nummularia · *Chenopodiaceae*, native to Australia

DIFFICULTY Easy

TYPE Perennial shrub, native to Australia

MATURITY 1–2 years to good production



SUN
Full sun



WATER
Low, drought-tolerant once established



SOIL PH
6.0–9.0



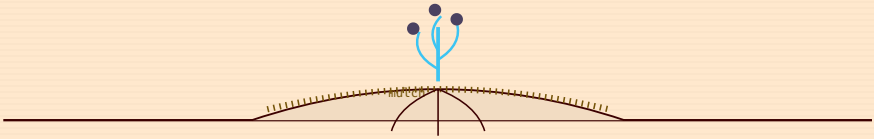
SPACING
2–3m



DEPTH
as per pot

01 Edible leaves, not just fodder

Long used as stock fodder, Old Man Saltbush's silvery leaves are also good eating for people — naturally salty, high in protein, and usable fresh or dried as a seasoning. It's also one of the most climate-flexible plants on this site, tolerating everything from cool temperate to arid conditions.



mulched bed, deep taproot

02 Planting

METHOD	Plant from a nursery pot; also strikes reasonably well from cuttings.
SOIL	Tolerates almost any soil, including clay, sand, and saline ground.
TIMING	Plant in spring or autumn, avoiding the hottest part of summer while establishing.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

04 Problems

- **Very few pests** — a hardy, trouble-free native.
- **Waterlogging** — the main risk; ensure sharp drainage.
- **Leggy growth** — prune to keep it dense rather than sparse and woody.
- **High humidity** — the one climate this plant dislikes.

03 Growing care

- Water regularly while establishing; after that, happy on rainfall alone in most areas.
- Prune lightly after flowering to keep a dense, productive shrub shape.
- No feeding needed — this native thrives in poor, lean soil.
- Harvest leaves regularly; picking encourages fresh new growth.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Leaves are ready any time once the plant is established — pick young, silvery-grey leaves for the best flavour.
METHOD	Pick leaves by hand as needed; regular picking keeps new growth coming.
CURING	None needed fresh; can be dried for a long-life seasoning.
STORAGE	Fridge a few days fresh; dried leaves keep for months in an airtight container.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying for long-term storage) or Freezing Produce (freezing a harvest surplus) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Other salt-tolerant natives	Poorly drained, wet spots	Not applicable — long-lived perennial shrub.