Persian Clover
Trifolium resupinatum

Persian Clover
Trifolium resupinatum

Trifolium resupinatum
ssp. resupinatum

Trifolium resupinatum
ssp. majus

© photos G. Sainty, J. R. Hosking & H. Norman
SALTdeck

LEGUME

L5

2cm

1.5cm

mature white woolly head

smaller solid stem

pointed stipule

larger hollow stem

Trifolium resupinatum
ssp. majus
**Persian Clover**  
*Trifolium resupinatum*

**Alternative name:** Shaftal Clover.  
**Family:** Fabaceae.

**Description:** Erect or semi-erect branched annual forming dense swards to about 40 cm tall. Leaves trifoliate, leaflets with a toothed margin (see photo), leaflets from less than 2 cm to more than 3 cm in different sub species. Flowerheads on long stalks, pink to violet maturing to white woolly seedheads 1–1.5 cm wide. Seeds about 1 mm wide, mostly brownish and vary in colour depending on the cultivar, with 1–2 million seeds/kg. Flowers mostly spring.

**Key features:** Pointed stipule (see photo). There are two sub species. Sub species *majus* has thick, hollow stems to 80 cm long (see photo), is soft seeded, and is generally larger than subspecies *resupinatum* which has solid (not hollow) stems mostly less than 40 cm long and is hard seeded.

**Value:** Highly palatable and digestible. Suitable for hay and silage production, but this varies with subspecies and cultivars.

**Salinity and waterlogging tolerance:** High tolerance to waterlogging. Low to moderate tolerance to salinity, but this varies with the subspecies and the cultivar.

**Notes:** Native of Europe, Middle East, western Asia and northern Africa. Tolerates a pH range of 5.0–8. Best suited to clay soils but will grow in most soil types. When seasonal conditions permit, late maturing cultivars extend pasture growth further into late spring. The soft seeded cultivars require re-sowing annually.

**References:** *Pasture Legumes for Temperate Farming*, Primary Industries and Resources of South Australia and GRDC, 2004.  