

WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia arida Benth.



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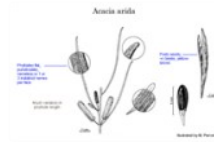
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Acacia arida occurrence map.
Occurrence map generated via Atlas of Living
Australia (<https://www.ala.org.au>).

Common Name

False Melaleuca, Arid Wattle

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Occurs in tropical W.A., in the Kimberleys and adjacent coast to the north and in the Roebourne–Exmouth Gulf–Mt Newman–Paterson Ra. area.

Description

Obconic, multi-stemmed, glabrous shrub 0.5–2 (–3) m high, crown **dense** with soft, delicate foliage. **Branchlets** light brown but reddish brown or yellowish at extremities, often with a thin \pm waxy finely cracked **resinous** coating, obscurely ribbed. Phyllodes **linear** to **narrowly oblong** or **linear-oblongate**, **erect**, flat, \pm **straight**, (2–) 2.5–6 (–8) cm long, 1–4 (–6) mm wide, **coriaceous**, **punctulate** by evident ($\times 10$ mag.) **stomata**, light green (at least when young) to distinctly **sub-glaucous** or grey-green, with a sweet fragrant smell when young; nerveless or with an obscure central **nerve**, occasionally with 1 or 2 less prominent additional **longitudinal** nerves; **gland** 1, inconspicuous, 0.2–2 mm above **pulvinus**. Spikes 1–2.4 cm long, golden. Flowers **5-merous**; **calyx gamosepalous**, dissected to 1/4–5/6. Pods **erect**, **linear-oblongate**, **terete** to flat or \pm **quadrangular**, (3–) 4–6.5 (–8) cm long, **woody**, obscurely longitudinally **striate**, **resinous**, opening elastically from apex (dehiscid valves shallowly to strongly **recurved**); margins inconspicuous; seed-partitions distinct but narrow. Seeds retained in pods following **dehiscence**, **oblique** and seated in distinct chambers, **narrowly oblong-elliptic**, 4.5–7 mm long, brownish black; **funicle-aril** narrowly **turbinate**.

Phenology

Flowers (often sporadically) Feb.–Nov., main flush May–Aug.

Habitat

Grows in red sandy loam or coarse, gravelly, skeletal sand on laterite or sandstone, in low, open eucalypt forest.

Specimens

W.A.: Wittenoom Gorge, *B.Maloney* 19/69 (NSW); 3.5 km W of Whim Ck on NW Coastal Hwy to Roebourne, *B.R.Maslin* 5797 (NSW, PERTH); Cape Ra. Natl Park, *R.Pullen* 10953 (CANB, NSW); 65 miles [104 km] S of Kalumburu Mission, North Kimberleys, *N.H.Speck* 4972 (CANB, NSW).

Notes

Acacia arida is very closely related to *A. orthocarpa* which is most readily, and perhaps arbitrarily, distinguished by its terete to subterete phyllodes: the relationship between these two species requires further study. A specimen collected by *M.Lazarides* 6392 (CANB, NSW), 19.2 km NNW of Elgie Cliffs Stn, Kimberleys, is intermediate between the two. In the Pilbara region, W.A., *A. arida* is generally a low, multi-stemmed shrub with a dense crown and appears to spread vegetatively by subterranean runners and regenerates from a basal root stock following fire. *Acacia orthocarpa* on the other hand is commonly a taller, single or few-stemmed plant with an open wispy crown and is normally killed by fire, regenerating from seed. *Acacia arida* probably also has affinities to *A. arrecta*. A possible hybrid between *A. arida* and *A. stellaticeps* has been collected in the Roebourne–Wickham area of W.A. (*K.Glennon* 196, PERTH). A rare hybrid between *A. arida* and *A. ancistrocarpa* has been recorded from near Roebourne (*B.R.Maslin* 8629, PERTH).

FOA Reference

Data derived from *Flora of Australia* Volumes 11A (2001), 11B (2001) and 12 (1998), products of ABRS, ©Commonwealth of Australia

Author

Dr M.D.Tindale and Dr P.G.Kodela with the assistance of M.Bedward, S.J.Davies, C.Herscovitch, D.A.Keith and/or D.A.Morrison

Edited by B.R.Maslin

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



Australian Government
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Department of
Biodiversity, Conservation
and Attractions
Western Australian Herbarium



**Australian
Biological
Resources
Study**



URL: <https://keys.lucidcentral.org/keys/v3/wattle>
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