

WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia rhodophloia Maslin x *Acacia sibirica* S.Moore



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B.R. Maslin



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See illustration.

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Confined to the Pilbara region of north-western W.A. where it occurs at a few localities in the Hamersley Ra. between Newman and the general vicinity of Tom Price; also occurs on Balfour Downs Stn (c. 150 km NE of Newman).

Description

Shrub or small **tree** 1.5–4 (–5) m high. Bark grey, flakey or exfoliating in a pseudo 'Minni Ritchi' fashion (i.e. peeling in strips that are often slightly **recurved** at the ends), longitudinally **fissured** towards base of oldest plants, smooth on upper branches. **Branchlets glabrous**. Phyllodes **linear** to **narrowly oblong** or **narrowly elliptic**, ending in a hard, **innocuous** point, **sub-rigid**, **ascending** to **erect**, **straight** to shallowly **incurved**, (3–) 4–8 (–9) cm long, usually 2–4 (–6) mm wide, **glabrous**; **longitudinal** nerves numerous, fine, close together and of uniform prominence. Inflorescences **simple**; peduncles 3–8 (–10) mm long, mostly **glabrous**; spikes 10–30 mm long, light golden, the flowers **sub-densely** arranged. Flowers **5-merous**; **calyx** 1/3–1/2 length of **corolla**, very shortly dissected into **triangular** lobes. Pods **linear** to **narrowly oblong**, flat, scarcely raised over seeds, **straight-edged** or slightly constricted between the seeds, 4–6 cm long, (4–) 5–6 (–8) mm wide, thinly **coriaceous-crustaceous**, **glabrous**, light brown. Seeds **longitudinal** to longitudinally **oblique**, 4–5 mm long, dark brown to black; **aril** presumably white when fresh but drying dull yellow.

Phenology

Flowers sporadically May–Aug.

Habitat

Grows on low hilly country in skeletal red-brown loam.

Specimens

W.A.: Immediately S of Marandoo Mining camp, c. 3 km S of Mt Bruce, C.G.Dawe 216 (BRI, CANB, K, NSW, PERTH); Balfour Downs Stn, NE of Newman, B.R.Maslin 8861 (PERTH).

Notes

The hybrid status of this entity is based on field observations and morphology, especially the bark. Indeed, in the absence of knowing bark characteristics it is often extremely difficult to recognize. This putative hybrid is always found in association with *A. rhodophloia* but only rarely is *A. sibirica* also present in these populations (although it is common in the general area where the hybrid grows). *Acacia rhodophloia* is most readily recognized by its red 'Minni Ritchi' bark which often extends to the upper branchlets, and also its often broad phyllodes (mostly 4–10 mm wide). However, distinguishing the putative hybrid from *A. sibirica* is more difficult, the most reliable feature being the absence of 'Minni Ritchi' bark. See B.R.Maslin *et al.*, *Wattles of the Pilbara* CD-ROM (2010) for further details. Most collections of the putative hybrid are from the Hamersley Ra. where its phyllodes measure 2–4 (–6) mm wide (suggesting that it is the narrow phyllodes form of *A. sibirica* that are implicated in the hybridity in that region) but on Balfour Downs Station the putative hybrids have phyllodes 8–10 (–13) mm wide, suggesting that it is the normal form of *A. sibirica* involved there.

Specimens with linear phyllodes might be confused with *A. adsurgens* x *rhodophloia* but are distinguished by peduncles c. equal in length to the spikes (peduncles clearly shorter than the spikes in *A. rhodophloia* x *sibirica*) and narrower pods. Some of the plants referred to *A. sibirica* variant 2 by B.R.Maslin, *Nuytsia* 4: 99 (1982), belong to *A. rhodophloia* x *sibirica*.

FOA Reference

Flora of Australia Project

Author

B.R.Maslin

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



Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Energy



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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