

WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia sericophylla F.Muell.



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B.R. Maslin

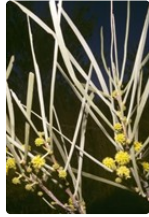


Image courtesy of Northern Territory Herbarium



Source: Australian Plant Image Index (dig.43610).

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See illustration.



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

Common Name

Desert Dogwood, Desert Oak, Dogwood, Wirewood

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Widespread across northern central arid zone from W.A. through N.T. and S.A. to Qld and N.S.W. In N.S.W. it is restricted to the Cumborah and New Angledool areas.

Description

Tree 3–10 m high, shrubby, normally somewhat gnarled. Bark thick and corky, yellow and spongy, internally. Branchlets not pendulous, silvery sericeous. New shoots sericeous, pale yellow. Phyllodes linear, often pendent, flat or \pm terete, (12–) 15–30 (–35) cm long, 1–4 (–7) mm wide, silvery grey-green to \pm glaucous or sometimes green, densely and minutely sericeous when young but sub-glabrous with age; finely multistriate; gland not prominent, (0–) 2–8 (–10) mm above pulvinus. Inflorescences mostly simple and in pairs, sometimes 1- or 2-headed rudimentary racemes 0.5–4 (–10) mm long; peduncles (8–) 10–20 (–30) mm long, sericeous; heads globular, 15–50-flowered, pale lemon yellow. Flowers 5-merous; sepals $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ -united. Pods moniliform, straight to shallowly or strongly curved before dehiscence, not markedly twisted or coiled, to 34 cm long, 5–12 mm wide, coriaceous to \pm woody, longitudinally nerved, densely silvery sericeous but indumentum sparser on oldest pods. Seeds longitudinal, broadly elliptic, 4–8 mm long, glossy, black; aril large, partially sheathing seed, yellow or orange.

Habitat

Grows in red sand and sandy or pebbly loam, mostly in open shrubland over spinifex.

Specimens

W.A.: Cape Keraudren, B.R.Maslin 4864 (CANB, PERTH); 45 km NE of Whim Ck on North West Coastal Hwy, B.R.Maslin 5255 (PERTH). N.T.: 29 km N of Tanami, J.R.Maconochie 1729 (DNA, PERTH). S.A.: N side of Mt Lindsay, D.J.E.Whibley 6629A (AD); Lake Eyre region, Marqualpie Paddock, Innamincka Stn, J.Reid 1635 (AD). Qld: 32 km E of Hughenden Township, N.H.Speck 4527 (NSW, PERTH); Barcardine, Mitchell District, C.T.White 12348 (BRI). N.S.W.: E of Cumborah, P.L.Milthorpe 3827 & G.M.Cunningham (NSW).

Notes

This species was treated as *A. coriacea* subsp. *sericophylla* by R.S.Cowan & B.R.Maslin in *Fl. Australia* 11B: 105-106 (2001) but is now reinstated to species status, fide B.R.Maslin & S.vanLeeuwen, *Nuytsia* 18: 149 (2008).

A drought-tolerant, long-lived species with seemingly a slow or moderate growth rate. The thick bark and ability to coppice from the base (and to regenerate by root suckers) make this a very fire-tolerant species. Although the phyllodes and pods are sometimes eaten by stock in Central Australia and Queensland, they are relatively unpalatable and of only moderate nutritional value. As reported by P.Latz, *Pocket Bushtucker: a field guide to the plants of Central Australia and their traditional uses* 154 (1999) the seeds of this species are an important source of food for traditional Aborigines of Central Australia.

Closely related to *A. coriacea* which differs most obviously in having thin, fibrous and longitudinally fissured bark, generally shorter peduncles and pods (prior to dehiscence) markedly and often irregularly curved, twisted and/or openly coiled. Furthermore, subsp. *coriacea* commonly grows on coastal dunes, subsp. *pendens* grows inland from the coast, normally along water courses, while *A. sericophylla* prefers 'spinifex' sandplains. Also has affinities to *A. sibilans* and has sometimes been confused in some regions with *A. calcicola*.

Sterile plants of *A. sericophylla* can be confused with *Hakea lorea* subsp. *lorea* ('Cork Tree' which has thick corky bark) or *Grevillea striata* ('Beefwood'); these species can have a superficially similar growth form and long foliage, and all three occur in the Pilbara region. *Acacia sericophylla* is most reliably distinguished by its phyllodes which possess a pulvinus and a small gland on the upper margin.

FOA Reference

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

Author

Revised by B.R.Maslin & J.Reid

R.S.Cowan, 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
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Australian
Biological
Resources
Study



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