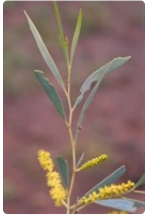


WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia subcontorta Maslin



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See illustration.



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

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Occurs in the Pilbara region, S to Lorna Glen Stn and E to the Gibson Desert, W.A., extending E into south-western N.T. and north-western S.A.

Description

Multistemmed **shrub** or **tree** (1–) 2–6 (–8) m high, with rather crooked trunks, the main branches somewhat **contorted** and \pm horizontally spreading. **Branchlets** mostly **glabrous**. New shoots **sericeous**; hairs pale yellow aging silvery white. Phyllodes **linear** to very narrowly **elliptic**, **straight** to shallowly **recurved**, **acute** to **acuminate** with **curved** to **uncinate** tips, 6–11 cm long, (2–) 3–5 (–8) mm wide, **coriaceous** to **sub-rigid**, **appressed-hairy** to **glabrescent**, grey-green to bluish with silvery sheen, aging green; finely multistriate with numerous nonanastomosing nerves; margins **resinous**, red-brown or sometimes yellowish; **gland** inconspicuous. Inflorescences **simple** or sometimes **rudimentary** racemes to 2 mm long; peduncles 2–6 (–8) mm long, sparsely to densely **appressed puberulous**, sometimes **glabrous** when in fruit; spikes 2–3.5 cm long, densely flowered, golden; **receptacle** with sparse to moderately **dense** spreading white or pale yellow (rarely light golden) hairs but often **glabrous** when in fruit. Flowers 5-**merous**; **calyx** dissected to c. $\frac{1}{2}$ its length. Pods **narrowly oblong** to **linear**, **turgid** to \pm subterete, 1–7 cm long, usually 6–9 mm wide, **coriaceous-crustaceous** to **woody**, **turgid** to \pm subterete, **glabrous** or with **appressed** (W.A.) or \pm **patent** (N.T. & S.A.) white hairs. Seeds **longitudinal**, **oblong** to **elliptic**, 5–7 x 4–5 mm (W.A.) or 4–5 x 3–3.5 mm (N.T. & S.A.), dark brown to \pm black; **aril** terminal.

Phenology

Flowers May–July.

Habitat

Often grows on hardpan plains in loam or sand, between mulga groves with limited spinifex.

Specimens

W.A.: between Thryptomene Hill and Mt Samuel on Gunbarrel Hwy, *D.J.Edinger 106* (PERTH); Hamersley Range, ca 10 km due W of Giles point on Giles Rd, *B.R.Maslin 8698* (DNA, MEL, NSW, PERTH). N.T.: 1 km E of Kulgera, *P.K.Latz 5843* (BRI, DNA, NSW, PERTH). S.A.: Musgrave Ra., 12 July 1969, *F.T.Turvey s.n.* (AD, NSW, PERTH).

Notes

In good sites (i.e. along drainage lines) this species may attain arborescent stature 6 (–8) m high, but on drier sites it is more shrubby and 1–3 m high. These habit differences are probably related to the depth of the underlying hardpan.

One specimen from the Gibson Desert has atypically narrow pods c.4 mm wide (*Desert Dreaming Expedition 174*, PERTH).

Plants from N.T. and S.A. which were noted in *Fl. Australia* 11B: 307 (2001) under *A. olgana* are now provisionally referred to *A. subcontorta* but require further study. They differ most obviously from W.A. plants in some carpological characters (see description above). *Acacia olgana* differs most obviously in its green phyllodes with yellow, non-resinous margins, generally shorter peduncles and narrower, more thinly textured pods with smaller seeds. *Acacia subcontorta* is related to *A. citrinoviridis* which is most readily distinguished by its broader pods (10–15 mm) that are densely velvety or sericeous with often citron-green hairs, and normally wider phyllodes (mostly 7–13 mm) with yellow (never red) marginal nerves; there are also differences in growth form (see B.R.Maslin & S.van Leeuwen, *Nuytsia* 18: 173 (2008) for discussion). It is also related to *A. xanthocarpa* and may superficially resemble narrow phyllode forms of *A. catenulata* subsp. *occidentalis* which is readily distinguished by its deeply constricted pods, generally shorter spikes, free sepals and phyllodes lacking resinous margins.

FOA Reference

Flora of Australia Project

Author

J.Reid, 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
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Western Australian Herbarium



Australian
Biological
Resources
Study



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