

WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia tetragonophylla F.Muell.



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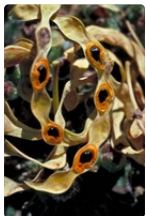
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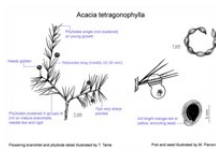
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Acacia tetragonophylla occurrence map.
Occurrence map generated via Atlas of Living
Australia (<https://www.ala.org.au>).

Common Name

Kurara, Curara, Dead Finish

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Widespread in arid and semi-arid areas from Onslow and Dongara, W.A., throughout southern N.T. and most of S.A., E to near Charleville, Qld, and near Brewarrina, N.S.W.

Description

Intricate often straggly **shrub** or **tree** normally 2–5 m high. **Branchlets** usually **glabrous**. Phyllodes **fasciculate** in groups of normally 2–6 on **nodose** dwarf **lateral branchlets**, single on new shoots, **linear-subulate**, usually **terete** to **pentagonal** or **compressed** in section, 1–5 (–7) cm long, (0.3–) 0.5–1.3 (–3) mm wide, **pungent**, with slender 1–2 mm long **cusp**, **rigid**, **glabrous**, rather prominently 5 (–7)-nerved, usually **sulcate** between nerves when dry. Inflorescences **simple**, 1–5 per **axil**; peduncles 1–3 (–4) cm long, **glabrous**; heads **globular**, densely 50–90-flowered, golden. Flowers 5-**merous**; sepals free, **linear-spathulate**. Pods raised over seeds and slightly to markedly constricted between them, **curved** to openly 1 1/2-**coiled**, often twisted following **dehiscence**, normally to 10 cm long and 4–6 (–9) mm wide, subwoody to **coriaceous** or thinly **crustaceous**, **glabrous**. Seeds **longitudinal**, **elliptic**, 4–5.5 mm long; **funicle** encircling seed, orange-red or bright yellow.

Habitat

Grows in a variety of habitats, but often near watercourses or in mulga communities.

Specimens

W.A.: 26 km S of Cue towards Mt Magnet, *B.R.Maslin 4561* (BRI, PERTH). N.T.: 13 km W of Santa Teresa Mission, *M.Lazarides 5733* (K, NSW, PERTH). S.A.: c. 10 km W of Quinyambie HS, Lake Frome, *D.Whibley 3546* (PERTH). Qld: 6.2 km from Thargomindah on main road to Tibooburra, *N.Hall H78/45* (NSW, PERTH). N.S.W.: near Brooksville, c. 32 km due NW of Weilmoringle, *D.J.McGillivray 2967* (K, NSW).

Notes

The phyllodes occur singly on actively growing new shoots but with age additional phyllodes develop to form a fascicle which is ultimately borne on nodose, dwarf lateral branchlets. This phyllode arrangement is uncommon in subg. *Phyllodineae* but, according to J.H.Ross, *Mem. Bot. Surv. S. Africa* 44: 12 (1979), is common in subg. *Acacia* (infrequent in subg. *Aculeiferum*). Specimens with single phyllodes resemble *A. quadrisulcata* and the acicular phyllode variant of *A. maitlandii*.

Specimens with unusually broad, flat phyllodes occur near North West Cape, W.A. These phyllodes reach 3 mm wide, are 1- (rarely 2-) nerved on each face and have a thickened, 2-nerved adaxial margin (e.g. c. 5 km due N of Learmonth airport, *B.R.Maslin 4763*, BRI, PERTH). A variant from near Adavale, Qld, is recorded by M.Simmons, *Acacias Australia* 48 (1981). It is reported to be a tree to 6 m high with pendulous branches and phyllodes which are less sharp and less brittle than normal.

Phyllodes and the bark of the root are used traditionally by N.T. aborigines for superficial skin lesions, for bandaging of fractures of the limbs and to remove warts, while in W.A. the bark is used for coughs, *vide*, Aboriginal Communities of the Northern Territory, *Traditional Aboriginal Medicines N. Territory Austral.* 42–45 (1993) (Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory of Australia, Darwin).

Affinities unknown but sometimes possibly confused with *A. walkeri*.

Acacia tetragonophylla is a hardy, drought- and frost-resistant species that regenerates from a basal root stock following fire; it is thought to have a life span of between 50 and 100 years. See K.A.O'Connell & J.E.D.Fox, *Mulga Research Centre Journal* 12: 57–64 (1995), for summary of biological and ecological characteristics. This species is of poor to moderate nutritive value but regarded as a drought standby fodder in W.A. and central Australia. Further details on foliage value and range condition indicator value are provided by A.A.Mitchell & D.G.Wilcox, *Arid Shrubland Pl. W. Australia* 288 (1988).

FOA Reference

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

Author

Minor edits by B.R.Maslin, J.Reid & J.Rogers

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