

WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia trachycarpa E.Pritz.



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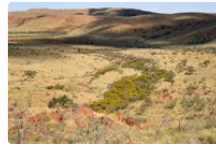
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Acacia trachycarpa occurrence map.
Occurrence map generated via Atlas of Living Australia (<https://www.ala.org.au>).

Common Name

Pilbara Minni Ritchi

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Mostly confined to the Pilbara region of NW W.A. where it is widespread and common, usually along creeks and rivers, mostly to the N and W of the Hamersley Ra.; an outlier occurs in the Kimberley region.

Description

Resinous shrub or small **tree** 1–5 m high, with spreading and sometimes flat-topped crowns, ultimate **branchlets** sometimes \pm **pendulous**. Bark 'Minni Ritchi', burgundy red to red-brown. **Branchlets** sparsely **appressed-hairy**, sometimes **glabrous**. New shoots slightly **viscid**, light green. **Stipules persistent**, 0.5–1 mm long. Phyllodes usually **linear**, (1.5–) 4–10 (–15) cm long, 0.8–2 (–5) mm wide, **innocuous** or \pm **pungent-pointed**, usually soft, delicate and not **rigid**, subglabrous or more commonly with often sparse **appressed** \pm **silky** hairs on nerves and margins; multinerved but normally only the central **nerve** evident, the upper margin slightly thickened and broader than lower margin; **gland** 1, basal, to 7 mm above **pulvinus**. Peduncles 5–15 mm long; spikes mostly mostly 10–20 x 3–5 mm (when dry), golden. Bracteoles less than 1 mm long. Bracteoles less than 1 mm long. Flowers **5-merous**; **calyx gamosepalous**, dissected to 1/5–2/3 or more, golden-hairy; petals 1.2–1.7 mm long, 1-nerved. Pods mostly **straight-sided** to scarcely constricted between seeds, **curved** to **circinnate** (but often irregularly so), \pm flat, 3–11 cm long, 7–12 mm wide, **coriaceous**, **resinous** and **viscid**, finely reticulately nerved, golden **sericeous** when young, later \pm **glabrescent**. Seeds \pm **oblique**, round to **oblong**, flattened, 5–8 x 4–7 mm, **depressed** at centre, brown to black, pitted; **pleurogram** with yellowish grey halo; **areole** round or **oblong**, closed, greyish brown.

Phenology

Flowers April.–Aug., sometimes Oct.

Habitat

Grows mainly in sandy clay loam derived from alluvium, in a variety of habitats (see notes).

Specimens

W.A.: 42 miles [67.2 km] E of Dampier, *F.Lullfitz 6156* (CANB, K, MEL, NSW); Port Hedland, *I.V.Newman 674* (NSW); Fortescue R., Millstream, *M.I.H.Brooker 2056* (MEL, NSW, PERTH); Nullagine, *F.Lullfitz 6185* (CANB, K, NSW).

Notes

Acacia trachycarpa has affinities with *A. chisholmii*, *A. cyclocarpa*, *A. effusa*, *A. gracillima*, *A. minniritchi* and *A. lysiphloia*. It hybridizes with *A. tumida* (see *A. trachycarpa* × *tumida* var. *pilbarensis*) and rarely with *A. eriopoda* (see *A. eriopoda* × *trachycarpa*) and *A. monticola* (see *A. monticola* × *trachycarpa*); see also *A. sp.* Nullagine (*B.R. Maslin 4955*) and *A. sp.* Marble Bar (*J.G. and M.H.Simmons 3499*). A rare possible hybrid between *A. trachycarpa* and *A. stellaticeps* is recorded from near Roebourne but as the plant has not been relocated this entity remains ambiguous. Plants described by B.R.Maslin, *Nuytsia* 4: 405–407 (1983) as *A. ancistrocarpa* × *trachycarpa* and subsequently included in *Fl. Australia* 11B: 246 (2001) are now referable to *A. trachycarpa* × *tumida* var. *pilbarensis*.

Acacia trachycarpa is a polymorphic species. Typical *A. trachycarpa* is a spreading, obconic tree or shrub about 2–5 m high with phyllodes mostly 4–10 cm long, 1–2 mm wide and not rigid; these plants are normally found along rivers and creeks. An apparent ecotype of *A. trachycarpa* occurs sporadically throughout much of the species' geographic range in areas away from water courses. It has phyllodes (1.5–) 2–4 cm long, occasionally 3–5 mm wide, and generally more erect and sometimes more rigid than those of the typical variant; it grows as a spreading shrub up to 1 m high. It has been recorded from a range of sites which include: coastal dunes (Finucane Is., *Anon. 273*, PERTH), gravelly, spinifex plains (5.1 km E of Nullagine, *L.Thomson 1149*, PERTH), road verges (11.5 km E of Wittenoom on road to Port Hedland, *B.R.Maslin 4645*, PERTH) and rocky ranges (Barlee Range Nature Reserve, 19.2 km SE Mt Florrie, *S.van Leeuwen 1583*, PERTH).

A reasonably fast-growing species that is reported to be frost sensitive and not very drought tolerant. Plants are killed by intense fires but have the ability to resprout after cool fires or mechanical clearing. It is used in amenity plantings in places in the Pilbara (e.g. Karratha) and has also been introduced into West Africa for firewood and stock fodder. Further details on its utilisation are given in J.C.Doran & J.W.Turnbull (eds), *Australian Trees & Shrubs: Species for Land Rehabilitation & Farm Planting in the Tropics* 134–135 (1997). Indigenous people in the west and central Pilbara used this species for a variety of purposes, see B.R.Maslin *et al.*, *Wattles of the Pilbara* CD-ROM (2010).

An undescribed variant of *A. trachycarpa* occurs in the Great Sandy Desert–Lake Mackay region of central Australia, see *Acacia sp. Lake Mackay* (P.K.Latz 12836).

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

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



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