

Botanical name

Acacia affin. *ancistrophylla*

The taxon described here has affinities to *A. ancistrophylla* but the nature of the relationship needs yet to be assessed.

Common name

None known.

Characteristic features

Branchlets minutely hairy at extremities. *Phyllodes* oblong-elliptic to elliptic or +/- obovate, short and broad, thickly coriaceous, minutely hairy, obscurely multi-nerved on each face, *apices* acute to obtuse, ending in a short but distinct, hard, brown mucro. *Heads* globular, the peduncles distinct and minutely hairy.

Description

Habit. Rigid, obconic *shrubs* about 1.5 m tall with crown about 1 m across, single- or multi-stemmed from ground level, the main branches ascending and slightly crooked, in open sites (e.g. roadverge) it grows as a dense, rounded shrub to 2 m across.

Bark. Dark grey, friable and longitudinally fissured at the base of the main stems, otherwise smooth to branchlet extremities.

Branchlets. Minutely hairy at extremities (the hairs straight and spreading or appressed), soon glabrous.

Phyllodes. Oblong-elliptic to elliptic or +/- obovate, (7-)10-20 mm long, (3-)5-9 mm wide, thickly coriaceous, erect, minutely hairy (hairs as on branchlets), slightly greyish green; *longitudinal nerves* numerous, very fine and close together; *apices* acute to obtuse, ending in a short, hard, brown, innocuous to coarsely pungent mucro.

Flowers. 5-merous; *sepals* free.

Heads. Single or paired (rarely three) within axil of phyllodes, occasionally on rudimentary racemes 0.5-1 mm long, globular, golden; *peduncles* 5-8 mm long, widely spreading, dull red when in very young fruit (probably mostly yellow when in flower), minutely hairy (hairs as on branchlets).

Pods and seeds. Unknown.

Taxonomy

The taxonomic status of this apparently uncommon taxon needs to be assessed in the light of more collections; fruiting material in particular needs to be examined.

Related species. It would seem that this taxon has its closest affinities with *A. ancistrophylla*. Within the Kalannie region *A. affin. ancistrophylla* differs most obviously from *A. ancistrophylla* var. *ancistrophylla* by its wider, minutely hairy phyllodes which are not curved or hooked at their apices and by its longer peduncles.

Variants. The plants within the Kalannie region show little variation. However, these plants differ slightly from the Koorda collection in having an indumentum of straighter, more closely appressed hairs on its branchlets, phyllodes and peduncles.

Distribution

This taxon is seemingly rare being known from only two populations in the northern wheatbelt region of south-west Western Australia, one in the Kalannie region near Petrudor Rocks and the other from near Koorda.

Habitat

In the Kalannie region this species formed a large population grows in hard granitic clay-loam beneath low Mallee eucalypts in association with *Acacia ligustrina* and *A. mackeyana*.

Recorded from the following Kalannie region Land Management Unit. Shallow Soil over Granite.

Conservation status

This taxon has been recommended for inclusion on the *Declared Rare and Priority List* of the Department of Conservation and Land Management as a Priority 1 taxon.

Priority 1 - Poorly Known Taxa. 'Taxa which are known from one or a few (generally <5) populations which are under threat, either due to small population size, or being on lands under immediate threat, e.g. road verges, urban areas, farmland, active mineral leases, etc., or the plants are under threat, e.g. from disease, grazing by feral animals, etc. May include taxa with threatened populations on protected lands. Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in urgent need for further survey.'

Flowering

Because of the paucity of collections it is difficult to accurately assess the flowering period of this species, however, it is likely to extend from June or July to August.

Plants in the Kalannie region were in flower in late July 1996; in early September 1997 they had essentially finished flowering (except for a few persistent heads).

Fruiting

The fruiting period is unknown, however, mature seeds are likely to present in November or December.

Biological features

No information available.

Propagation

No information available.

Revegetation

This rare taxon would appear to have limited potential for use in revegetation programs within the Kalannie region. Under natural conditions it forms rather dense populations beneath Mallee eucalypts and as such offers some scope as a wildlife refuge. It may have some potential for use in soil stabilisation of some granite rocks.

Utilisation

Soil stabilisation. See Revegetation above.

Wildlife refuge. See Revegetation above.