

## Botanical name

*Acacia graniticola* Maslin (to be described in a forthcoming issue of Nuytsia)

The botanical name is derived from the Latin *graniticus* (pertaining to granite) and *-cola* (dweller), and refers to the species habitat preference for granite rocks.

## Common name

Wire-leaf Granite Wattle.

## Characteristic features

*Branchlets* and *bark* with lenticels obvious. *Phyllodes* long, narrow, shallowly curved to sinuous, sessile (i.e. pulvinus absent) and not easily removed from the branchlets, midrib evident. *Heads* globular, arranged racemes which often grow out as a “leafy” shoot before flowering has finished (the subsequent peduncles then appearing within axil of phyllodes). *Granite rock* habitat.

## Description

**Habit.** Mid-dense, much-branched, obconic, spreading, glabrous *shrubs* 1-3 m tall and 1-4 m across, dividing at ground level into 2-4, rather crooked main stems, crown occupying about 30% of the total plant height.

**Bark.** Smooth.

**Branchlets.** Slightly to moderately flexuose, lenticels obvious.

**Stipules.** With hard, persistent bases.

**Phyllodes.** Sessile (i.e. pulvinus absent) but not continuous with the branchlets (however, not easily separated from them), linear, flat to sub-quadrangular in cross-section, (6-)9-15(-28) cm long, 1-3 mm wide, thinly coriaceous, shallowly curved to sinuous, light green; with 1 obvious *longitudinal nerve* (midrib) on each face when flat (4-nerved in all when not flat), the nerves sparingly tuberculate; *apices* acute, not pungent or sometimes almost coarsely pungent.

**Heads.** Arranged in 7-12-branched racemes which are 1-5.5 cm long (the *raceme axis* often growing out as a “leafy” shoot before flowering has finished with the subsequent heads occurring in 2’s or 3’s within the axils of the new phyllodes), globular to widely ellipsoid, 8 mm in diameter when fresh, golden, 35-40-flowered; *peduncles* 6-25 mm long.

**Flowers.** 5-merous; *sepals* free.

**Pods.** Linear, undulate, mostly 6-8(-9.5) cm long, 2.5-4 mm wide, chartaceous to thinly coriaceous, more or less pendulous, brown.

**Seeds.** Longitudinal in the pods, 2.5-3.5 mm long, about 2-3 mm wide, sub-glossy, tan with black mottlings (when fresh) but drying yellowish grey-brown mottled black (often yellow-brown and not or scarcely mottled outside the Kalannie region), commonly dull yellowish near centre; *aril* thick and folded.

## Taxonomy

**Related species.** *Acacia graniticola* has no close relatives in the Kalannie region and is not likely to be confused with any other species occurring in the area. Its closest affinities lie with *A. dentifera* (which occurs primarily from Perth to Bridgetown, with an outlier near Albany).

## Distribution

Has a scattered distribution in southwest Western Australia, occurring in the Kalannie region and from Mt Churchman (about 195 km due northwest of Southern Cross) and Walyahmoning Rock (about 85 km due northwest of Southern Cross) south to Mt Walker (about 35 km east of Narembeen).

*Acacia graniticola* is not common in the Kalannie region but frequent in the places where it occurs.

### **Habitat**

Restricted to granite outcrops where it grows on gritty, light brown sandy loam. It occurs in soil pockets on the rocks and also on the fringing soil apron around the rocks. The species has a scattered distribution over the rocks, often forming small localized colonies of six or more plants; it sometimes forms large, dense populations.

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

### **Conservation status**

Not considered rare or endangered.

### **Flowering**

Over its geographic range *A. graniticola* flowers from August to October.

In the Kalannie region the species was at peak flowering in early September 1997.

### **Fruiting**

Over its geographic range the species produces pods with mature seeds in December.

Many Kalannie region plants examined in December 1996 showed pods containing aborted seeds. This was possibly the result of unfavourable seasonal conditions (perhaps related to the timing and/or intensity of rainfall events). The same thing happened in many other acacias in the region that year.

There are about 120 000 seeds per kilogram. *Note:* This figure is derived from a single sample counted by Angela Waters (Kalannie Tree Supplies) and would most probably have included both viable and non-viable seeds.

### **Biological features**

No information available.

### **Propagation**

Propagate from seed.

Informal germination tests, using various hot water treatments, were conducted by Angela Waters (Kalannie Tree Supplies). Best results were achieved by soaking the seed over night in just-boiled water prior to sowing; boiling the seed for 1 minute prior to soaking reduced the germination response slightly. Untreated seed did not germinate.

### **Revegetation**

Because this species can form dense populations in soil pockets on granite rocks it could prove useful in such habitats where soil stabilisation is required.

### **Utilisation**

**Soil stabilisation.** See Revegetation above.

**Wildlife refuge.** The much-branched crowns offer protection for small birds.