

Botanical name.

Acacia affin. *jennerae*

The taxon described here has affinities to *A. jennerae* but the nature of its relationship to this species and other close relatives needs yet to be resolved.

Common name

None known.

Characteristic features

Somewhat spindly, straggly *shrubs* with openly branched, sparsely foliated crowns. *Bark* generally red to brown or bronze. *Phyllodes* long, widely spreading, with one longitudinal nerve on each face, apices acute to acuminate; *glands* 1 or 2, the lowermost (6-)10-50 mm above the pulvinus. *Heads* globular, arranged in racemes, the raceme axes and peduncles glabrous. *Pods* linear to sub-moniliform, about 5 mm wide. *Funicle* 1/2-3/4 encircling seeds in a single fold and drying light brown.

Description

Habit. Somewhat spindly, straggly *shrubs* 2-3 m tall, crowns openly branched and not densely foliated, single-stemmed or with 2-6 main stems arising from ground level, often suckering and forming open colonies along roadverges.

Bark. Smooth, grey on main stems of mature plants, dark red to light brown or bronze on young plants and upper branches of mature plants.

Branchlets. Glabrous.

Phyllodes. Linear to narrowly elliptic, 7.5-15 cm long, 5-13(-17) mm wide (broadest on young plants), thinly coriaceous, widely spreading, straight to shallowly incurved or shallowly recurved, glabrous, dull, pale green to sub-glaucous, with 1 *longitudinal nerve* (midrib) on each face, finely penninerved; *apices* acute to acuminate, not pungent; *glands* not prominent, 1 or 2 along upper margin of phyllode, lowermost gland mostly situated 10-50 mm above the pulvinus (sometimes interspersed with a few that are only 6 mm above pulvinus).

Heads. Arranged in (3-)5-12(-18)-branched racemes (1-)2-6.5(-9) cm long, globular, 7 mm in diameter when fresh, golden, 20-30-flowered; *bracteole laminae* with minute, rather sparse whitish hairs on the margins; *raceme axes* glabrous; *peduncles* 4-6 mm long, glabrous.

Flowers. 5-merous; *sepals* about 5/6-united.

Pods. Linear to sub-moniliform, mostly 5-8 cm long, 5-6 mm wide, thinly coriaceous to firmly chartaceous, glabrous, dark brown.

Seeds. Longitudinal in the pods, 4-5 mm long, about 3 mm wide, dull, black; *funicle* yellow greenish yellow when fresh but drying light brown or dark red-brown, 1/2-3/4 encircling the seed in a single fold.

Taxonomy

Related species. This taxon is referable to the "*Acacia microbotrya* group" (see Maslin 1995 for discussion). Five members of this group occur in the Kalannie region, namely, *A. brumalis* (incurved phyllode variant and light land variant), *A. daphnifolia* (syn. *microbotrya* var. *borealis*), *A. jennerae* and *A. affin. jennerae*. Considerable work (field and laboratory studies) is still needed to satisfactorily resolve the taxonomy of the Western Australian members of this group and it is therefore inappropriate to formally describe *A. affin. jennerae* in isolation, even though it has a fairly distinctive facies.

Acacia affin. *jennerae* appears to be most closely related to *A. jennerae* (especially on account of its root suckering habit, multiple-gland phyllodes and glabrous raceme axes and peduncles) from which it differs most obviously in having sparser crowns, generally longer, less glaucous phyllodes with the lowermost glands generally further removed from the pulvinus, different bracteole hairs, and narrower pods, smaller seeds with the funicle drying light brown or dark red-brown.

Acacia brumalis (incurved phyllode variant) and *A. daphnifolia* are most readily distinguished from *A. affin. jennerae* by their yellow, appressed-hairy raceme axes and peduncles. It is possible that the light land variant of *A. brumalis* from the Kalannie region is a hybrid involving *A. affin. jennerae* and *A. daphnifolia*.

Distribution

Of scattered occurrence in the north eastern part of the Kalannie region.

Habitat

Recorded from the following Kalannie region Land Management Units.
Colluvial Flat-Earth; Alluvial Sand over Clay; Sandy loam over clay.

Conservation status

Until the taxonomy of this entity is properly resolved it is deemed inappropriate to give it a conservation rating.

Flowering

Existing collections show this taxon as flowering in June and July (it probably also in May but needs confirming).

Fruiting

Pods with mature seeds occur in early December.

Biological features

Growth characteristics. Has the ability to spread by root suckers and form small, localized populations (especially along road verges); however, it does not form dense clonal thickets like *A. daphnifolia* sometimes does.

Propagation

No information available.

Revegetation

On account of its suckering habit this taxon would be useful for soil stabilisation. Although further information is needed regarding its range of salinity tolerance, this taxon would appear suitable for use on loamy soils leading to salt lakes and on sandplain and hillside seepages.

Utilisation

Salinity control. See Revegetation above.

Soil stabilisation. See Revegetation above.

Reference

Maslin, B.R. (1995). *Acacia* miscellany 14. Taxonomy of some Western Australian "Uninerves-Racemosae" species (Leguminosae: Mimosoideae: section Phyllodineae). *Nuytsia* 10(2): 181-203.