

Botanical name

Acacia sibina Maslin, Nuytsia 2: 155, figs 5 & 7 (1977)

The botanical name is derived from the Latin *sibyna* (a kind of spear) and refers to the long, terete, rigid phyllodes with sharp points.

Common name

Spear Wattle.

Characteristic features

Phyllodes terete, rigid, straight to shallowly incurved, erect, milky green to sub-glaucous, very finely multi-nerved, tapered to rather sharp apical point; *pulvinus* +/- smooth, orange, slightly flared at its base, densely hairy on its upper surface. *Spikes* on very short peduncles (often appearing sessile). *Pods* linear, constricted between seeds. *Aril* yellow.

Description

Habit. Rounded, multi-stemmed *shrubs* 1-3 m tall and up to about 3 m wide.

Bark. Grey.

Branchlets. Glabrous except minutely hairy within the axil of the phyllodes.

Phyllodes. Terete, mostly 6-14 cm long, 1-2 mm in diameter, rigid, erect, straight to shallowly incurved, milky green to sub-glaucous, glabrous (except minutely hairy at extreme base); *longitudinal nerves* numerous, indistinct, close together; *apices* tapered to rather pungent, short, straight, brown points; *pulvinus* orange, sub-smooth and slightly flared at the base, densely minutely hairy on the upper surface.

Spikes. Paired within axil of phyllodes, 7-26 mm long and 5-8 mm in diameter when fresh, golden; *peduncles* 1.5-4 mm long (often obscured by anthers at anthesis so appearing sessile), glabrous or sometimes sparsely hairy at the base.

Flowers. 5-merous; *sepals* 3/4-5/6-united.

Pods. Linear, raised over and constricted between the seeds, 4-12 cm long, 4-6 mm wide, firmly chartaceous, glabrous.

Seeds. Longitudinal in the pods, 3.5-4 mm long, 1.5-2 mm wide, glossy, dark brown, paler around areole in centre of seed, *aril* yellow.

Taxonomy

Related species. *Acacia sibina* is related to *A. stereophylla* which has a similarly smooth, flared pulvinus but which differs most obviously from *A. sibina* by its non-pungent phyllodes. Furthermore, var. *stereophylla*, which occurs in the Kalannie region, has flat phyllodes.

Distribution

Widespread in Western Australia from Mullewa southeast to Kalannie, also scattered eastwards to Warburton and near Queen Victoria Spring.

Acacia sibina is rare in Kalannie region.

Habitat

Over its geographic range *A. sibina* occurs mostly on plains and has been recorded as growing in sand, gravelly sand and loam.

In the Kalannie region it occurs on red-brown sand over clay in a low lying (non-saline) area.

Recorded from the following Kalannie region Land Management Unit. Colluvial Flat-Earth.

Conservation status

Although *A. sibina* is rare within the Kalannie region in the broader context is not considered rare or endangered.

Flowering

Over its rather wide geographic *A. sibina* flowers from August to October.

In the Kalannie region plants of this species were in mature bud (almost at anthesis) in late September 1994.

Fruiting

Over the wide geographic range of this species pods with mature seeds have been collected in December. However, given the rather long flowering period it is likely that further sampling will show pods occurring over a range of months.

Plants from the Kalannie region had pods with both mature and immature seeds in early December 1996.

Biological features

Toxicity. The phyllodes of *A. sibina* contain variable concentrations of cyanogenic glucoside (ranging from relatively high to low, depending upon samples tested); however, they do not appear to possess an endogenous enzyme that is needed to hydrolyse this into hydrogen cyanide (Maslin *et al.* 1987). There are no reported cases of stock losses involving this species.

Propagation

Propagate from seed.

Revegetation

Although *A. sibina* is rare in the Kalannie region it could be considered for inclusion in seed mixes for soil stabilisation on non-saline or slightly saline, medium-textured soils. In some places over its wide geographic range the species is known to form large regenerating populations following disturbance.

Utilisation

Soil stabilisation. See Revegetation above.

Ornamental. Not known in cultivation but an attractive shrub when in full flower and could be useful in semi-arid areas as an ornamental.

Reference

Maslin, B.R., Conn, E.E. and Dunn, J.E. (1987). Cyanogenic Australian species of *Acacia*: A preliminary account of their toxic potential. pp. 107-111. In: Turnbull, J.W. (ed.) 'Australian *Acacias* in Developing Countries'. Proceedings of an international workshop held at the Forestry Training Centre, Gympie, Qld, Australia, 4-7 August 1986.