

WATTLE

Acacias of Australia

Acacia adsurgens Maiden & Blakely



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

Common Name

Whipstick Wattle, Sugar Brother

Family

Fabaceae

Distribution

Widespread in W.A., N.T. and Qld between 18°S and 26°S, extending to c. 117°E in the west near Roebourne, and E to central Qld; also occurs in far north-eastern S.A. in the Lake Eyre region.

Description

Spreading, **multi-stemmed shrub** mostly 1–4 m tall. Bark grey to reddish brown, mostly smooth but sometimes rough and somewhat **fibrous** at base of main stems on oldest plants. **Branchlets** angular to flattened towards apices, light brown or reddish, **glabrous**. Phyllodes **linear, straight** or upwardly **curved**, flat, (8–) 10–18 (–20) cm long, (1–) 2–4.5 (–8) mm wide, **coriaceous**, usually pale yellowish green or milky green when dry, **glabrous**; **longitudinal** nerves numerous with central **nerve** more pronounced than the others, the minor nerves obscure and c. 8–10 per mm; **gland** 1, basal, swollen, to 3 mm above **pulvinus**. Peduncles 5–15 mm long, often c. as long as the spikes. Spikes 0.8–2.5 cm long, densely flowered, yellow. Flowers 5-**merous**; **calyx** 0.8–1.25 mm long (exceeding ½ length of **corolla**), dissected by less than 1/10, with densely **scurfy viscid** lobes and **midrib** commonly evident; **corolla** 1.2–1.8 mm long, dissected to c. 1/3 its length, **glabrous**; **ovary glabrous** or apex very finely **tomtense**. Pods **linear**, slightly raised over and constricted between seeds, **straight** or slightly **curved**, 3.5–12 cm long, 2–3.5 mm wide, firmly **chartaceous**

to thinly **crustaceous**, light brown. Seeds **longitudinal, narrowly oblong to oblong-elliptic**, dorsiventrally flattened, 3–4.5 mm long, dark brown to blackish; **areole** small, open with U-shaped **pleurogram**, paler than rest of seed; **aril** rather large, convoluted and bright yellow.

Phenology

Flowers May–Sept., sometimes as early as Feb.

Habitat

Grows in reddish sandy and gravelly soils, on flat plains and hillsides, commonly in spinifex grassland communities, sometimes with eucalypts. Moderately fast-growing but relatively short-lived species that regenerates from seed following fire or other disturbance and can form rather dense, localized thickets, especially where water is not limiting.

Specimens

W.A.: c. 80 km NW of Wittenoom on the road to Roebourne, *B.R.Maslin 5570* (NSW, PERTH). N.T.: 30 miles [48 km] E [of] Connors Well, *N.Forde 950* (DNA, NSW); 26 miles [41.6 km] W of Avon Downs Stn, on the Barkly Hwy, *I.V.Newman 575* (NSW). S.A.: Innaminka Regional Reserve, Innaminka–Cordillo road c. 40 km N of Candradecka Dam, *R.W.Purdie 4547* (AD *s.n.*, CANB *s.n.*). Qld: Brenda Bore, Oban Stn, c. 62 miles [99.8 km] SW of Mount Isa, *S.L.Everist 3372* (BRI).

Notes

Most closely related to *A. tenuissima* (with which it is sometimes sympatric) that is most readily distinguished by having slender, terete phyllodes. Superficially similar to linear phyllode forms of *A. sibirica* from the Pilbara, W.A., which are distinguished by generally shorter phyllodes (mostly 40–90 mm long) that are uniformly finely nerved (the mid-nerve not more pronounced than the rest), less densely flowered spikes (with smaller flowers and calyx shorter relative to the corolla) that are commonly about twice as long as the peduncles, and broader pods. Also related to the Pilbara endemic *Acacia sp. Jimblebar* (S.van Leeuwen 1342). Possibly hybridizes with *A. rhodophloia* in the central Hamersley Ra., W.A. (see *A. adsurgens* × *rhodophloia* for discussion).

Details of ecology, utilisation, etc. of *A. adsurgens* are given in L.A.J.Thomson & N.Hall, *Austral. Acacias* no. 22, CSIRO Division of Forestry & Forest Products (1989). Details of fire impacts on, and Aboriginal use of, *A. adsurgens* are given by P.Latz, *Bushfires & Bushtucker* 86 (1995).

A specimen from the Gibson Desert, W.A., has atypically wide phyllodes (*A.S.George 15658*, BRI, PERTH).

FOA Reference

Data derived from *Flora of Australia* Volumes 11A (2001), 11B (2001) and 12 (1998), products of ABRS, ©Commonwealth of Australia

Author

Edited by B.R.Maslin

Dr M.D.Tindale and Dr P.G.Kodela with the assistance of M.Bedward, S.J.Davies, C.Herscovitch, D.A.Keith and/or D.A.Morrison

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



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