

Acacia provincialis

Common name – Swamp Wattle

The swamp wattle; also known as wirilda or water wattle are thin, straight trees typically growing to a height of up to 10 metres. They have a bushy crown and usually a single stem but they can divide into several stems at ground level. These stems have smooth grey coloured bark. The branches are reddish-brown often covered with a white powdery finish. They usually hang down and are angled or flattened.



Typical stature of Swamp Wattle

The trees grow in open-forests in poorly drained soils. They are found inland from the coast and along the margins of swamps and creeks.

Swamp Wattles occur naturally in limited areas including Kangaroo Island, the Fleurieu Peninsula and the Mount Lofty Ranges of South Australia. They are also found in damp areas in much of eastern and central Victoria.

Trees can grow quickly when young, though they are short-lived and grow for 10 - 20 years. They are legumes and have nitrogen fixing nodules on their roots.

Trees can be killed by fire, but can regenerate from seed, stimulated by the heat of the fire.

Leaves

Like most wattles, they have phalloses (flattened stems) that function as leaves. These are blue-green to grey green, smooth and straight or slightly curved. They are longer than wide and with the widest part near the tip. They vary from 7 to 22cm long and 3 to 5 cm wide.



Flowers

The trees produce round, ball-like compound flowers, made up of 18 and 50 golden to pale yellow individual flowers. They flower throughout the year but most heavily between September and January. After flowering the fruits set as straight, brown seed pods that are up to 16 cm long and 5 to 17 mm wide with a firm papery texture. The seeds, within the pods, are dull to slightly shiny and are dark brown to black, oblong to oblong-elliptic and 4 to 6mm wide.



Uses

The trees can be harvested from the wild for local use as a food, medicine and source of materials. They are regarded as having reasonably good prospects as a crop plant for high volume wood production.

The seeds, when cooked, are considered to have potential as a source of human food.

The species is sometimes used for windbreaks and revegetation especially along road verges.