SIGNIFICANT FLORA
FACT SHEET

MENZELS WATTLE, TALLEBUNG WATTLE

Acacia menzelii

This attractive shrub is extremely rare in the region being known from only two localities.

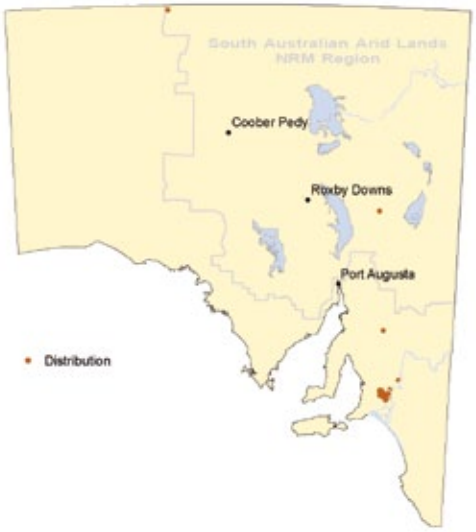
Menzels Wattle is typically a low spreading shrub up to three metres in diameter and two metres high. It has many stems branching from near ground level, supporting a canopy of attractive fine bright-green waxy phyllodes ('leaves').

It is susceptible to the grazing pressure of stock, goats and rabbits. However, under favourable conditions it has a moderately fast growth rate, and can be successfully direct-seeded in harsh, rocky, semi-arid sites in suitably prepared ground.

IDENTIFICATION

Menzels Wattle is distinguished from other wattles in the arid lands by its very fine foliage and compact spreading growth habit. The phyllodes ('leaves') are 1-4cm long and 1mm wide. Flowers are globular and produced singly or in twins in the axils of all leaves over the entire canopy. They provide a spectacular display in spring. Seed pods are 3-5cm long and 3mm wide, with only slight constrictions between the seeds. Mature seeds are elongated and 3-4mm long with a large white seed-stalk.

Menzels Wattle is distinguished from the superficially similar wattles Dwarf Nealie (*Acacia wilhelmiana*) and Needle Wattle (*A. havilandii*) by the compact habit, much finer foliage and the distinctive seed pods.



DISTRIBUTION

This attractive shrub is extremely rare in the region being known from only two localities: close to Mt Hack in the northern Flinders Ranges and north of Wilpena Pound in the Flinders Ranges National Park.

At the Mt Hack locality on Warraweena Station, it is found over 20-30 hectares of steep stony hillside with mallee and other *Senna* and *Acacia* species. Annual rainfall is likely to be less than 250mm.

In this area, and also where found on the Flinders Ranges National Park, the soils are calcareous loams, thinly covering shaley subsoils and with outcrops of quartzite in the bedrock. These soils are neutral to alkaline, and well drained. Associated plant species are Flinders Ranges Mallee (*Eucalyptus flindersii*) and various *Dodonaea*, *Senna* and *Eremophila* species.

The main occurrence of Menzels Wattle is over about 500 square kilometres in the southern Mt Lofty Ranges near Monarto, where soils are alkaline, rocky and skeletal, and annual rainfall is from 275-400mm with a pronounced winter maximum.


Mt Hack, Warraweena
R. Davies

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THREATS

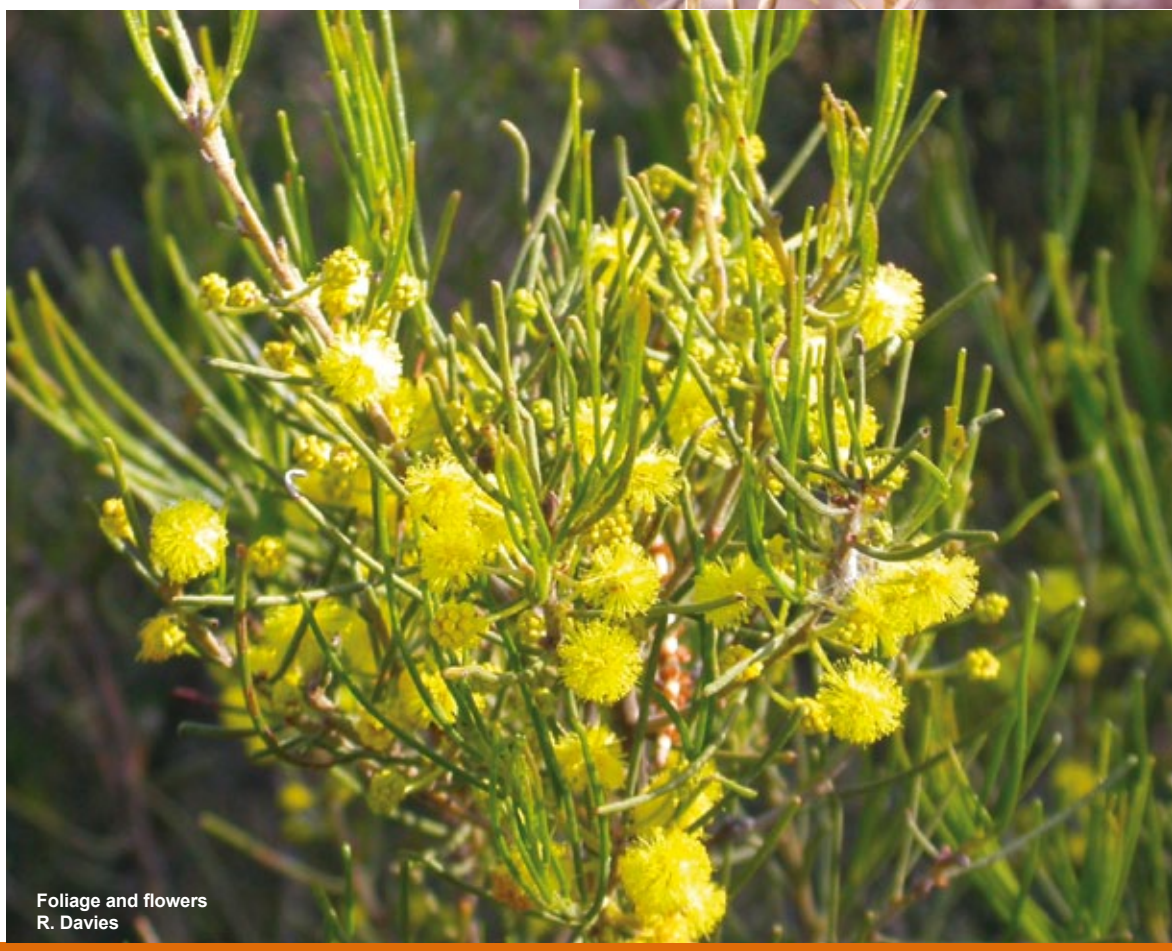
Observations in the Flinders Ranges populations and also in the agricultural area indicate that Menzels Wattle is susceptible to any significant grazing pressure particularly by sheep and goats. It is likely that rabbits also limit or prevent regeneration from occurring.

As with most wattles, the lifespan of Menzels Wattle appears limited to a maximum of about 30-50 years, less in higher rainfall areas.

It is therefore possible for the plant to be eliminated from any one of the fragmented occurrences if, for example, the adult plants were destroyed by a wildfire and on-going grazing pressures prevented re-establishment.

Typical habitat with *A. menzelii* understorey
R. Davies

Leaves and pods
B. Lay



Foliage and flowers
R. Davies