

# Acacia auriculiformis

Mimosoideae

Queensland, Australia; New Guinea and Torres Strait

Common names: **Eng:** coast wattle; **Swah:** mkesia.

Ecology:

An Australian tree which is now grown in many tropical lowlands on a variety of soils. It thrives on poor coastal sands, sandy loams and coral rag. It is one of the main fuelwood species in Zanzibar and Pemba.

Uses:

Firewood, charcoal, tool handles, pulp, bee forage, shade, ornamental, nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, soil improvement, windbreak, dye (bark).

**Description:**

An evergreen tree up to 30 m with dense foliage and an open, spreading crown, but usually smaller, appearing rather like a small gum tree, often low branched with *i* crooked trunk. **BARK:** grey, smooth at first then rough with vertical fissures and cracks when old and exuding red gum **LEAVES:** **up to 10 cm long and 2 cm wide with 3-*i* parallel nerves**, thick, leathery and **sickle-shaped (curved)** Leaves are phyllodes—developed from the leaf stalk **FLOWERS:** **cream-pale yellow** on flowering stalks between leaves and branchlets or at tips of branchlets **sweet-scented, to 8 cm long**, in pairs. **FRUIT:** **thin coiled pods** containing 10-20 small shiny black seeds which ripen at the end of the dry season.

**Propagation:**

Seedlings, direct sowing, suckers.

**Seed info.:**

Seeds are hard. No. of seeds per kg: 55,000-75,000  
Germination rate 40-80%.

**treatment:**

immerse in hot water and allow to cool and soak for 2< hours.

**storage:**

store seeds in a dry place free of insects. Seeds retain viability for four years.

**Management:**

Pruning, coppicing, weeding, fire protection. A fast-growing tree.

**Remarks:**

*Acacia auriculiformis* grows on difficult sites, including seasonally waterlogged soils, where very few other tree species can grow. In Asia it has been widely planted for fuel, erosion control, shade and ornament. The shallow spreading root system stabilizes eroded soil.

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