

Australia

Eng: *Black wattle*

Ecology: Native to Australia where it grows from hot Queensland to cool Tasmania. In Eritrea, it was introduced in the 1940's at Adi-sheka dam site and in Asmara, 2,000-2,300 m.

Uses: **Firewood**, charcoal, **poles**, posts, medicine, bee forage, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, ornamental, windbreak, fibre, tannin.

Description: An unarmed shrub or tree, 2-15 m, the trunk providing straight poles in close-planted plantations. Sometimes leans over due to the shallow root system. **BARK:** Smooth, green at first, later **black**, fissured **with resinous gum** when cut. **LEAVES:** Compound, feathery **dull green**, leaf stalk to 12 cm and up to 21 pairs pinnae, **leaflets tiny**. **FLOWERS:** Many **pale yellow** rounded flower heads on a **branched stalk, very fragrant**. **FRUIT:** Numerous dull brown pods with 3-12 **joints**, straight or bent. **Sections break up** and contain the small black seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, direct sowing.

Seed: No. of seeds per kg: 50,000-85,000; germination 50-80 %.

treatment: Immerse in boiling water and cool for 24 hours.

storage: Seed can be stored for long periods.

Management: Thin if established by direct sowing.

Remarks: This species has recently been renamed *Racosperma mearnsii*. It is the most widely used tree crop for high-quality tannin. Fast growing but short lived; a tree for woodlots. Potentially a weed on farmland and can be difficult to eradicate. It should not be intercropped because it competes for nutrients.

