



Acacia pubescens

Conservation Status

Listed as a vulnerable species under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Description

Acacia pubescens is a spreading shrub that grows to around 4 m high and often suckers forming dense patches. It can be long-lived (up to 40 years).

The branches and finely divided leaves have fine, short white hairs. Flowers are bright yellow in round heads and arranged in racemes. Flowers are seen from August to October, with seeds maturing in October to December. It does not flower and set seed until around 3-5 years old and seed set is low although seed can be viable in the soil for up to 50 years. Pollinators include Insects (bees, wasps and beetles) and birds.

Acacia pubescens can survive fire or other disturbances by suckering from underground roots. A fire-free period of at least 5-7 years is required to allow sufficient build-up of seed in the soil.

Habitat

Acacia pubescens is primarily found in open forest and woodland in the Bankstown - Fairfield- Rookwood and Pitt Town areas with outlier populations at Oakdale, Menai and Mountain Lagoon. It occurs on a range of soil types including Wianamatta Shale and older (Tertiary) and recent alluvium. Soils often contain conspicuous gravel or iron. Rarely *Acacia pubescens* has been found on transitional soils in Shale Sandstone Transition Forest.





Threats in Fairfield

Acacia pubescens is threatened by habitat loss from urbanisation and to a lesser degree farming. Management practices such as mowing within reserves and too frequent fires (planned and accidental) also threaten the viability of populations. In urban areas hybridization between *Acacia pubescens* and other bi-pinnate wattles, particularly the popular Cootamundra Wattle, is a threat to the genetic integrity of the species. Degradation of habitat through weed invasion is an ongoing threat.

Acacia pubescens is poorly conserved within the formal reserve system. It is known to occur in Scheyville National Park and Windsor Downs Nature Reserve. It has also been recorded from Wollemi National Park but these are small, isolated populations.

Locations in Fairfield

Acacia pubescens occurs in a range of plant communities within Fairfield including the endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest, Shale Gravel Transition Forest, River-flat Eucalypt Forest and Cumberland Plain Woodland. Sites include Bossley Bushland Reserve, Western Sydney Parklands, Fairfield Indigenous Flora Park, Villawood Railway Station, Smithfield Cemetery and Prospect Reservoir. At Lalich Reserve, *Acacia pubescens* has regenerated naturally after mowing ceased.

References:

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Environment Australia (2003) National Recovery Plan for the Downy Wattle (*Acacia pubescens*), accessed on 21/1/2016.

NSW Environment and Heritage (2016) Downy Wattle Profile

James T (2015) Rare and Threatened flora of Fairfield Local Government area.

James, T (2016) Native Flora on Shale Soils of the Cumberland Plain, western Sydney—An Identification Guide



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