

# Threatened species of the Northern Territory

## Birds nest wattle

### *Acacia pickardii*

#### Conservation status

##### Australia: Vulnerable

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

##### Northern Territory: Near Threatened

Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976

#### Description

*Acacia pickardii* is a shrub or small tree 3-5 m high. The stipules are spinose and the inflorescence globular. It is distinguishable from other species of the *A. victoriae* group by its sharp cylindrical foliage (phyllodes)<sup>1</sup>. Galls, produced by thrips, are common on the leaves of this species. These can be confused as fruit by inexperienced observers.

Flowering: August-November.

Fruiting is very rare and the species reproduces mainly by root suckering.



Caption: *Acacia pickardii* (whole plant and habitat)

Credit: C. Spencer

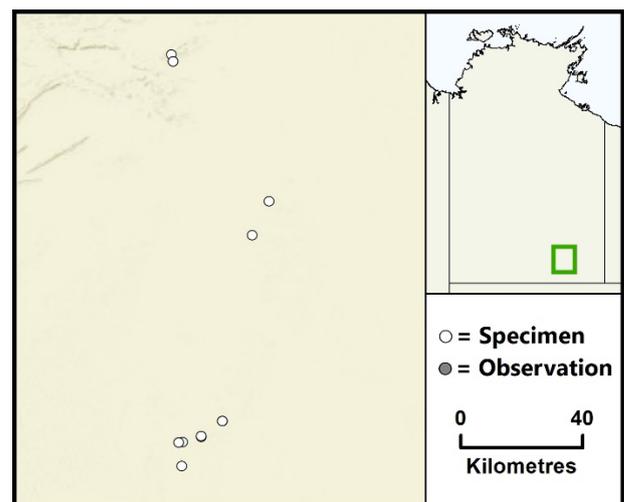


Credit: C. Spencer

#### Distribution

In the Northern Territory (NT), *Acacia pickardii* is known from two small, and one larger, populations on the edge of the Simpson Desert<sup>2</sup>. One of these is just outside, the Mac Clark (*Acacia peuce*) reserve. In South Australia, the species is known from three places; two in the vicinity of Mt Gason and the third north of Lake Etamunbanie (Pandie Pandie Pastoral Lease)<sup>3</sup>. The western and northern limits of this species' known range are within the NT.

NT conservation reserves where reported: None



Caption: Known locations of the Birds Nest Wattle in the NT ([nrmmaps.nt.gov.au](http://nrmmaps.nt.gov.au))

## Ecology and life-history

*Acacia pickardii* typically grows on gibber-covered sandplains and stony rises and low hills, including mesas and tablelands, and adjacent flats<sup>1</sup>. The species usually forms a shrubland or low open-woodland with an understorey of sparse chenopod subshrubs or tussock grasses.

## Threatening processes

There are no clear threatening processes operating on this species in the NT. Climate change may pose a threat if hotter summers and changed rainfall increases adult mortality rates.

## Conservation objectives and management

The national recovery plan for threatened arid zone Acacias<sup>4</sup> has expired and a Conservation advice document is in preparation for this species.

Targeted surveys have increased the known extent of this species and the NT populations have been mapped<sup>5</sup>. An established monitoring programme is tracking the health of the population and the threat levels. Indigenous ecological knowledge has been documented and Indigenous people have expressed a strong desire to be involved in the conservation of this species.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Maslin, B.R. 2001. *Acacia pickardii*. In: Flora of Australia Volume 11A, Mimosaceae, Acacia part 1. (eds A.E. Orchard and A.J.G. Wilson), p. 383. (ABRS/CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.)
- <sup>2</sup> White, M., Albrecht, D., Duguid, A., Latz, P., and Hamilton, M. 2000. Plant species and sites of botanical significance in the southern bioregions of the Northern Territory. Volume 1: significant vascular plants. A report to the Australian Heritage Commission. (Arid Lands Environment Centre, Alice Springs.)
- <sup>3</sup> Davies, R.P.J. 1995. *Threatened Plant Species Management in the Arid Pastoral Zone of South Australia*. (Pastoral Management Branch, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Adelaide.)
- <sup>4</sup> Nano, C., Harris, M., and Pavey, C. R. 2006. *Recovery plan for threatened Acacias and Ricinocarpos gloria-medii in central*

*Australia, 2006-2011*. (NT Department of Natural Resources Environment and the Arts, Alice Springs.)

<sup>5</sup> Nano C., Nano T., Gibson J. and Pavey C. 2008. Recovery action implementation for threatened arid acacias: distribution, monitoring and Indigenous ecological knowledge of *A. peuce*, *A. undoolyana*, *A. pickardii* and *A. latzii*.