

Black-wattle acacia

Acacia mearnsii De Wild.

Legume family (Leguminosae)

Post-Cook introduction

Small handsome evergreen introduced tree with thin spreading crown of finely divided leaves, flowers in small light yellow balls, and narrow flattened beadlike pods. To 40 ft (12 m) tall and 10 inches (25 cm) in trunk diameter. Bark brown to gray, smooth to finely fissured. Inner bark light yellow with brown steaks, bitter. Twigs brownish, finely angled, with tiny hairs. Mimosa subfamily (Mimosoideae).

Leaves alternate, finely divided, twice pinnate (bipinnate), 3–6 inches (7.5–15 cm) long, with tiny hairs and slender angled axis. Side axes 4–15 pairs, very slender, with dotlike gland at base of each pair. Leaflets very numerous, 30–80 crowded featherlike on each axis, not paired, stalkless, very narrow (linear), $\frac{3}{16}$ – $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (5–10 mm) long, gray green to dark green.

Flower clusters of light yellow balls (heads) $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) in diameter, several on short stalks at leaf bases and shorter than leaves. Flowers fragrant, tiny, numerous stalkless in balls, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) long, with tiny five-toothed calyx and corolla and many spreading threadlike separate stamens ending in dot anther.

Fruits (pods) several clustered, 2–4 inches (5–10 cm) long, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) wide, flattened, gray brown to blackish, finely hairy, slightly narrowed between seeds, splitting open. Seeds several, beanlike, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) long, elliptical, dull black.

The wood is light brown with reddish streaks resembling pale koa. It is heavy (sp. gr. 0.55), hard, and relatively difficult to work. It is not resistant to decay. Elsewhere, the wood is used in turnery and for fuel, and the bark for tannin. It is not used in Hawaii.

Considered a noxious weed in most places in Hawaii, particularly in Kula, Maui, where it is very prolific. Propagated from seeds and easily established. Shortlived, but new sprouts are produced by roots. The Division of Forestry has planted 65,000 trees in the Forest Reserves, primarily at Mokuleia, Oahu and Kula, Maui. The trees at the Kula Forest Reserve were mostly planted in 1938 and 1939 and may be the progenitors of the escapes. Also at Kamuela, Hawaii. Introduced as an ornamental in southern California and other subtropical regions.

Special areas

Kokee, Kula, Tantalus

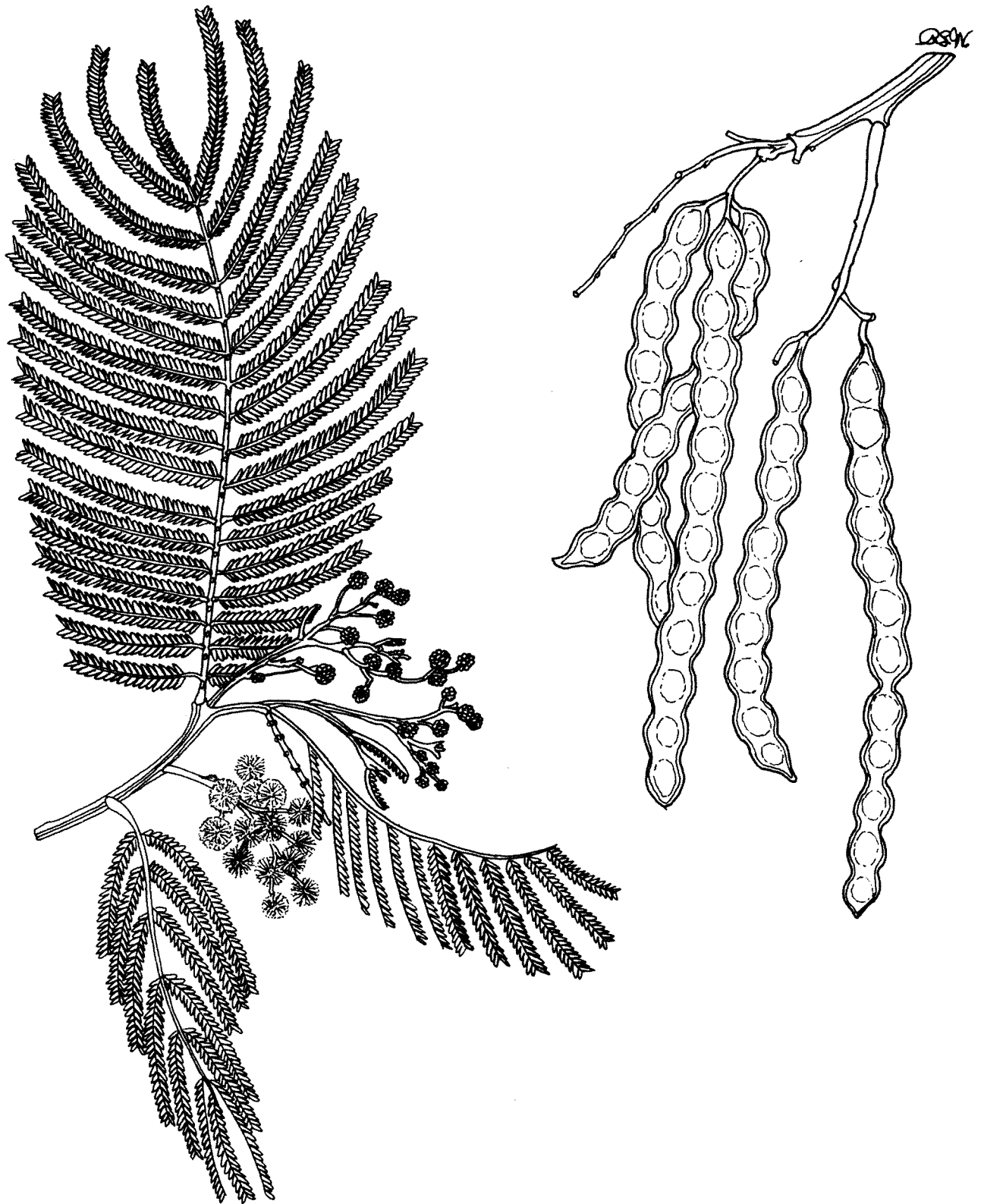
Range

Native of Australia

Other common names

green-wattle acacia, blackwattle, green-wattle

This species was formerly called *Acacia decurrens* (Wendl.) Willd.



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Flowering twig (left), fruits (right), 1 X