

KEY TO THE WATTLES OF BARRM BIRRM

This key is of a simple type, with two choices at each step. The correct choice leads either to the plant name (common name in brackets) or to the number of the next pair of choices. Keep going until you have identified your plant.

* Signifies the plant is a weed (not indigenous to the area).

Signifies the plant is listed as rare.

All photos were taken on Barrm Birrm.

1. Spine-like phyllodes (leaves).

Go to 2



1. Non-spine-like phyllodes (leaves) - could still have prickly phyllodes or thorns. Go to 4

2. Phyllodes (leaves/spines) in whorls or irregular around stem.

Go to 3



2. Phyllodes (leaves/spines) obviously alternate. Spherical (ball) flowers. Plant is about 1m high, sometimes spreading.

Acacia genistifolia
(Spreading Wattle)



3. Cylindrical flowers. Phyllodes (leaves/spines) obviously whorled around stem.
Plant usually 1.5-2m tall.

Acacia verticillata
(Prickly Moses)



3. Spherical (ball) flowers. Phyllodes (leaves/spines) not obviously whorled around stem, somewhat messily arranged or irregular. Plant prostrate or no more than 30cm tall.

Acacia aculeatissima
(Snake Wattle)



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4. Thorns all along branches. Leaves usually short and wavy.

Acacia paradoxa
(Hedge Wattle)



(Note: plant have been found that are a natural hybrid between Acacia paradoxa and Acacia leprosa – so if has thorns but doesn't match with A.paradoxa it is a hybrid).

4. No thorns.

Go to 5

5. Mature leaves appear pinnate (left) or bipinnate (right).

Go to 6



5. Leaves not pinnate or bipinnate.

Go to 11

6. Leaves appear pinnate. Smallest leaf parts (pinnules) are 3-6cm long. Tree 8-15m tall. Leaves often all the way to the ground.

**Acacia elata*
(*Cedar Wattle*)



6. Leaf bipinnate. Smallest leaf parts (pinnules) less than 1cm long.

Go to 7



7. Leaves grey/blue (as pictured above).

Go to 8

7. Leaves green (as pictured below).

Go to 9



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8. Smallest leaf parts (pinnules) get shorter towards the end of the pinna (pictured left). Full pinna is about 2cm long or less. Complete leaf (pictured right) 5cm long or less. Tree to 3-6m.

**Acacia baileyana*
(Cootamundra Wattle)



8. Smallest leaf parts (pinnules) more or less uniform length. Leaf up to 15cm long, 10cm wide (pictured left). Single raised gland just below the junction of each pinna pair (pictured right). Upright shrub/small tree to mostly 1-3m. Flowers late Winter to early Spring.

Acacia dealbata
(Silver Wattle)



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9. Smallest leaf parts (pinnules) relatively short and fat and close together (gap between pinnules, if any, less than width of a pinnule).

Go to 10



9. Smallest leaf parts (pinnules) relatively long and thin and widely spaced (gap between pinnules is much greater than width of pinnule). Usually a very tall tree.

**Acacia decurrens*
(Early Black-wattle)



10. Single raised gland just below the junction of each pinna pair (pictured right). Flowers mid-Winter to early September. Tree 2-6m. *Acacia nano-dealbata*[#]
(Dwarf Silver-wattle)



10. Raised gland below and occasionally (at least once per leaf) between the junction of each pinna pair (pictured right). Flowers about November-December (pre-xmas). Tall tree to 15+m high. *Acacia mearnsii*
(Black Wattle)



11. Small straggly shrub usually 60cm or less in height. Phyllodes (leaves) almost a triangular shape and prickly. *Acacia gunnii*
(Ploughshare Wattle)



11. Taller than 1m.

Go to 12

12. Phyllodes (leaves) 3cm long or less.

Go to 13

12. Phyllodes (leaves) longer than 3cm.

Go to 14

13. Phyllodes (leaves) more or less triangular, crowded and 'criss-crossing' on branch. Flowerheads in short racemes (ie. numerous spherical flowerheads emanate from a single stalk).

**Acacia pravissima*
(Ovens Wattle)



13. Phyllodes (leaves) lanceolate (lance-like), shiny, green. Flowerheads are axillary (ie. emanate singly from leaf axils).

**Acacia howittii*
(Sticky Wattle)



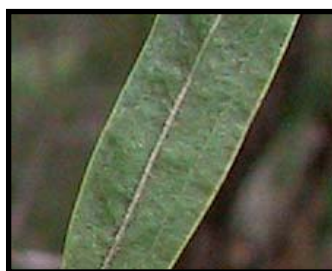
14. Phyllodes (leaves) with more than one main vein.

Go to 15



14. Phyllodes (leaves) with one main vein.

Go to 16



15. Phyllodes (leaves) with two main veins. Flowers cylindrical.

**Acacia longifolia*
(Sallow Wattle)



15. Phyllodes (leaves) with 3-5 main veins. Spherical cream flowers. Small-medium tree. Often has bunches of red/brown shrivelled seed pods.

Acacia melanoxylon
(Blackwood)



16. Flowerheads are axillary (ie. each flowerhead is borne on a single stalk that emanates from a leaf axil), often flowering along the length of the branch. *Go to 17*



16. Flowerheads in racemes (ie. many flowerheads emanate from a single stalk).

Go to 19



17. Flowerheads mostly in threes or more (ie. mostly three or more flowerheads per leaf axil), occasionally in twos at the end of flowering branches.

Go to 18



17. Flowerheads mostly in twos (ie. two flowerheads per leaf axil).

Acacia stricta

Almost all phyllodes point upwards (ie. close to horizontal or above horizontal). (*Hop Wattle*)



18. Some or all phyllodes (leaves) at least 1cm wide, straight (not curved), shiny/varnished, dark green.

Acacia leprosa var. *uninervia*

(formerly *Acacia leprosa* - large phyllode form)

(*Cinnamon Wattle*)



18. All phyllodes (leaves) less than 8mm wide, many slightly curved, green with almost a greyish-speckly tinge.

Acacia strictophylla[#]

(formerly *Acacia leprosa* – Dandenongs form)

(*Dandenong Cinnamon Wattle*)



19. Phyllode (leaf) length/width ratio 9-15; ie. phyllodes (leaves) are long and narrow, width usually 1.5cm or less.

Acacia provincialis
(Wirilda)
(formerly *A.retinodes*)



19. Phyllode (leaf) length/width ratio 5-7, width usually 2cm or more, and often much more. Phyllodes (leaves) often curved (falcate). Australia's national floral emblem.

Acacia pycnantha
(Golden Wattle)



GLOSSARY:

Phyllode This is what looks like the leaf. A curiosity of most wattles is that they aren't technically leaves but a modified, flattened leaf stalk. This is true for all but the pinnate & bipinnate leaf structures, which are real leaves.

Pinna The segment of a bipinnate leaf – pictured below (*Acacia mearnsii*).

Pinnule Smallest part (leaflet) of a bipinnate leaf – pictured below.

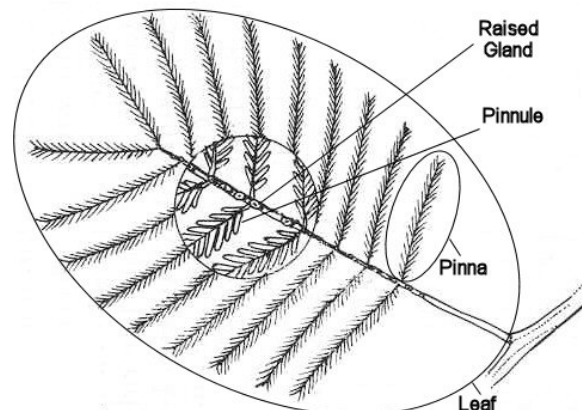


Figure 1: Picture of the bipinnate leaf of *Acacia mearnsii* (Black Wattle). Adapted from Walsh & Entwisle (1996) *Flora of Victoria*. Volume 3. Inkata Press.

Table 1: Quick guide to the wattles on Barrm Birrm.

Latin Name	Common Name (natural range – weeds only)	Simple ID – Key Features at a Glance
1. <i>Acacia aculeatissima</i>	Snake Wattle	Prostrate plant spreading to 1m or more. Prickly spine-like phyllodes. Flowers early Spring.
2. <i>Acacia baileyana</i> *	*Cootamundra Wattle (from NSW)	Small grey/blue bipinnate leaf. Pinna 2cm long or less. Flowers Winter. Small tree.
3. <i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle	Large grey/blue bipinnate leaf. Glands at pinna junction only. Flowers Winter. Pinna often slightly separated.
4. <i>Acacia decurrens</i> *	Early Black-wattle (from NSW and ACT)	Tall tree. Large green bipinnate leaves with long, narrow pinnules widely separated. Flowers late Winter to early Spring.
5. <i>Acacia elata</i> *	*Cedar Wattle (from NSW)	Leaf appears pinnate. Pinnule 3-6cm long. Tree with leaves to the ground. Flowers Summer to mid-Autumn.
6. <i>Acacia genistifolia</i>	Spreading Wattle	Spiny phyllodes. Spines alternate. Flowers late Summer to Winter (eg. Feb-Oct).
7. <i>Acacia gunnii</i>	Ploughshare Wattle	Low shrub always less than 1m high. Prickly, almost triangular phyllodes.
8. <i>Acacia howittii</i>	*Sticky Wattle (from Eastern Victoria)	Small phyllodes less than 3cm long and lanceolate. Large shrub-tree.
9. <i>Acacia leprosa</i> var. <i>uninervia</i> (formerly <i>A.leprosa</i> – Large Phyllode form)	Cinnamon Wattle	At least some phyllodes 1cm+ wide. One main vein on phyllode. Pendulous branches with axillary flowers in threes all along flowering branch, late Winter-Early Spring. Flowers noticeably aromatic.
10. <i>Acacia longifolia</i> *	*Sallow Wattle (from East Coast - NSW and Vic)	Cylindrical flowers. Two main veins on phyllodes. Variable leaves in shape and colour. Large shrub or small tree.
11. <i>Acacia mearnsii</i>	Black Wattle	Flowers not long before xmas (eg. Nov). Large tree. Green bipinnate leaf. Glands occur at pinna junction and occasionally between pinna junctions.
12. <i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Blackwood	Large tree. Cream flowers late Winter to early Spring. 3-5 main veins on phyllode.
13. <i>Acacia nano-dealbata</i> #	Dwarf Silver-wattle	Large green bipinnate leaf. Glands at pinna junction only. Flowers Winter. No gap between pinna or pinna overlapping.
14. <i>Acacia paradoxa</i>	Hedge Wattle	Sharp thorns all along flowering branches. Flowers Spring.
15. <i>Acacia pravissima</i> *	*Ovens Wattle (from Ovens River to south NSW)	Small phyllodes less than 3cm long and almost triangular. Large shrub/small tree. Flowers Spring.
16. <i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	Golden flowers on racemes. Single main vein on thick leathery phyllodes (up to 15cm long & usually 2cm wide or more). Phyllodes often curved (falcate).
17. <i>Acacia provincialis</i> (formerly <i>A.retinodes</i>)	Wirilda	Single vein on long (up to 15cm) and narrow phyllodes (less than 2cm wide). Flowers on racemes. Flowers sporadically at any time of year, most likely in Dec-Feb.
18. <i>Acacia stricta</i>	Hop Wattle	Low-small shrub. Flowers are axillary. Phyllodes have one main vein, long and thin, most/all less than or equal to 1cm wide, dull green colour and almost all phyllodes point upwards. Flowers late Winter-Early Spring
19. <i>Acacia strictophylla</i> # (formerly <i>A.leprosa</i> – Dandenongs form)	Dandenong Cinnamon-wattle	All phyllodes less than 8mm wide. One main vein on phyllode. Pendulous branches with axillary flowers in threes all along flowering branch, late Winter-Early Spring. Flowers two weeks after <i>A.leprosa</i> .
20. <i>Acacia verticillata</i>	Prickly Moses	Cylindrical flowers in Spring. Spiny phyllodes in whorls around branch. Shrub 1-2m.

*Weed – not indigenous to the area. # Regarded as Vulnerable, Rare or Threatened in Victoria or Australia.

NB. *Acacia floribunda* (Gossamer Wattle; from East Coast – Vic – Qld) is a weed species that has been seen on Barrm Birrm. It is like *A.longifolia* but has longer cylindrical flowerheads and narrower leaves (usually a shrub to 2m, can get taller).

If you find any wattle that doesn't fit this key please contact Riddells Creek Landcare.