

## Long-leaf wattle (*Acacia longissima*) naturalised in Auckland

Mike Wilcox

Australian wattles (*Acacia*) have a considerable presence in Auckland. The bipinnate species found here are black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*) in old plantations and also abundantly naturalised in scrublands and pine woods in western Auckland and on the North Shore, scattered patches of green wattle (*A. decurrens*), occasional naturalised Parramatta wattle (*A. parramattensis*) and cedar wattle (*A. elata*), and planted silver wattle (*A. dealbata*), Bodalla silver wattle (*A. silvestris*) and the popular ornamental, Cootamundra wattle (*A. baileyana*). Two prickly species, grown as farm hedges, and also naturalised, are prickly Moses (*A. verticillata*) and kangaroo thorn (*A. paradoxa*). Phyllodinous species in Auckland are blackwood (*A. melanoxylon*), Gosford wattle (*A. prominens*), white sally (*A. floribunda*), Queensland silver wattle (*A. podalyriifolia*), and the abundant Sydney golden wattle (*A. longifolia*).

A further phyllodinous wattle, long-leaf wattle (*Acacia longissima* H.L.Wendl.) has recently been found to be abundantly naturalised in old Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and black wattle woods in west Auckland in the suburb of Green Bay. Here, between the Crestwood Metlifecare Retirement Village in Golf Road and the Titirangi Golf Course, this very slender-leaved wattle is abundant as a small tree to 5 m tall in the understorey. It appears to be shade tolerant and it flowers and seeds freely, and seedlings and saplings are abundant over an area of about 0.5

ha. While most other wattle species in Auckland flower in winter/spring (July-Oct), long-leaf wattle at this Green Bay site was in full flower in January. The long, very slender phyllodes are the most striking field feature.



**Fig. 1. *Acacia longissima*, Crestwood Retirement Village, Golf Road, Green Bay: 10 Jan 2011, Mike Wilcox.**

*Acacia longissima* belongs to the '*Acacia longifolia* group', a set of 17 phyllodinous species from south-eastern Australia with cylindrically spiked inflorescences (Brown et al. 2010). It grows in New South Wales from Batemans Bay north, in gullies in wet and dry sclerophyll forest, in sandy to clay soils extending to southern Queensland.

### Herbarium specimens

Auckland, Auckland University, cult., *J.E. Braggins*, 20 Jul 1999, AK 239652.

Auckland, Green Bay, Crestwood Retirement Village, *M.D. Wilcox*, 10 Jan 2011, AK 321066-7.

### References

Brown, G.K.; Clowes, C.; Murphy, D.J.; Ladiges, P.Y. 2010: Phylogenetic analysis based on nuclear DNA and morphology defines a clade of eastern Australian species of *Acacia* s.s. (section *Juliflorae*): the '*Acacia longifolia* group'. *Australian Systematic Botany* 23: 162–172.