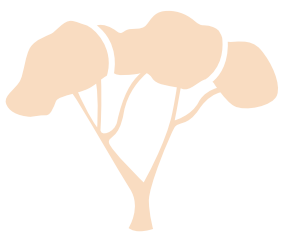




SIGNIFICANT FLORA FACT SHEET

Growth rate is very slow. Even at photopoints established for more than 30 years, little change in size of the larger shrubs of this species is evident.



PURPLEWOOD WATTLE

Acacia carneorum

Purplewood Wattle is a small usually multi-stemmed tree or large shrub to four metres high and eight metres across, commonly found growing in an extensive mound of drift sand due to erosion of the sandy soil environment it prefers.

This wattle is very long-lived, and its ability to resprout (coppice) from exposed roots often has resulted in large clonal colonies of several hectares being found, particularly in areas which have previously been subjected to heavy grazing pressure.



As the common name suggests, Purplewood Wattle is characterised by a very hard, durable and attractive purple-coloured heartwood. If not lacquered or otherwise protected from the air within a few weeks, the heartwood darkens to nearly black.

Purplewood Wattle produces flowers after significant rainfall events at any time of the year, but observations of pod production and hence the setting of viable seed, is very rare.

Growth rate is very slow. Even at photopoints established for more than 30 years, little change in size of the larger shrubs of this species is evident.

IDENTIFICATION

Purplewood Wattle is distinguished from other wattles by its very robust and sharp-pointed phyllodes ('leaves') clonal growth habit and striking purple colour of the freshly cut heartwood.

It is distinguished from the superficially similar Dead Finish (*Acacia tetragonophylla*) and Wait-a-while (*Acacia nyssophylla*) by its larger size, longer and more robust spiny phyllodes and its clonal growth habit.

DISTRIBUTION

Purplewood Wattle is restricted to the northeast pastoral district east of the Flinders Ranges towards Broken Hill. The species is not common but is reasonably abundant in the deeper sandy soils characteristic of the outwash areas adjacent to outcrops of schist or granite rock types. Such areas are particularly plentiful on Plumbago Station and the Bimbowrie Conservation Reserve. Annual rainfall is within the range of 175-200mm with no pattern of seasonality.



Exclosure, Wertaloona
Photograph by R. Davies



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THREATS

Purplewood Wattle is listed as endangered under South Australia's *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* and nationally under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* due to its restricted natural distribution, very slow growth and the rarity of production of viable seed.

There is also evidence of continuing impacts of grazing, but where grazing was excluded in a typical copse over more than 10 years, plant numbers have not increased, although some regrowth from root suckers has occurred.

Ongoing monitoring should enable a clearer definition of the main threatening processes and management needs of this unique species.



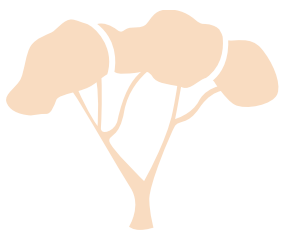
Purple heartwood
 B. Lay



Flower and phyllodes ('leaves')
 R. Davies



Legume (pod)
 R. Davies



Mature trees
 P. Ainsley