

Plant of the Week

Acacia fimbriata Fringed Wattle, Brisbane Wattle

The **Fringed Wattle** (*Acacia fimbriata*), has taken the horticultural and landscape industry by storm in recent years. This lovely shrub, widespread in its native habitat from Nerriga in southern NSW to Yeppoon just north of Rockhampton in Queensland¹, is now widely planted in parks and gardens in towns and cities throughout eastern Australia.



Acacia fimbriata is a fast growing, nitrogen-fixing shrub used extensively in catchment protection¹. It can do well on a wide range of substrates and has been listed as a fire retardant species. Seeds are eaten by King Parrots and Crimson Rosellas, leaves are eaten by Imperial Hairstreak Butterflies and pollen utilised by bees².

Legumes are simple dry fruits, a characteristic of the plant family **Fabaceae** to which **Acacias** belong (Fabaceae subfamily Mimosoideae). Legumes ('pods') develop from a single carpel and usually split along both sides. Peas and beans are legumes, so too are clover, lucerne, chick peas and lentils. The seeds of legumes are an important food source (essential amino acids) throughout the world.



In Australia, wattle seed is recognised as a bush tucker item. Seeds are roasted, then ground to produce flour used in cakes, biscuits, bread and icecream³. **Colin Campbell of ABC Gardening Australia** writes "**Brisbane Wattle (*Acacia fimbriata*) roasted, tastes like a combination of hazelnut, chocolate and coffee⁴**". He then continues: "**An ordinary sponge can be transformed by sandwiching jam made from the Blue Lillypilly between layers, and topping it with whipped cream blended with ground roasted seed of *Acacia fimbriata*, cream and decorating with fresh Lillypilly berries**".

Photograph courtesy of
Andrew Orme, National
Herbarium of NSW

¹ Florabank: http://www.florabank.org.au/lucid/key/species%20navigator/media/html/Acacia_fimbriata.htm

² Save our Waterways: http://www.saveourwaterwaysnow.com.au/01_cms/details_pop.asp?ID=8

³ Society for Growing Australian Plants Queensland: <http://www.sgapqld.org.au/bushtucker18.html>

⁴ Gardening Australia: <http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s839492.htm>

Map of natural distribution, modified from Florabank:

http://www.florabank.org.au/lucid/key/species%20navigator/media/html/Acacia_fimbriata.htm

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