

Acacia verticillata subsp. ruscifolia

COMMON NAMES

prickly Moses

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub to small tree, stems ribbed, sparsely to densely hairy. Leaves reduced to small sharply pointed phyllodes up to 17 x 3 mm. Inflorescence consists of numerous pale yellow flowers arranged in spikes that extend beyond the leaves. Seed pod usually straight, up to 100 x 4 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

The sharply pointed phyllodes (false leaves) and flowers arranged in spikes make *A. verticillata* easily identifiable.

HABITAT

Waste places and scrubland. Seeds itself away from old house gardens, farms or similar.

GENUS

Acacia

FAMILY

Fabaceae

AUTHORITY

Acacia verticillata subsp. *ruscifolia* (A.Cunn. ex G.Don) Court

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September, October, November.

YEAR NATURALISED

1948

ORIGIN

S.E. Australia, Tasmania

ETYMOLOGY

acacia: Derived from Greek 'akazo' to sharpen, meaning point; spine or thorn.



Acacia verticillata. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Acacia verticillata. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/acacia-verticillata-subsp-ruscifolia/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026