

11 August 2025

# Australia's Floral Emblem is now in Bloom at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

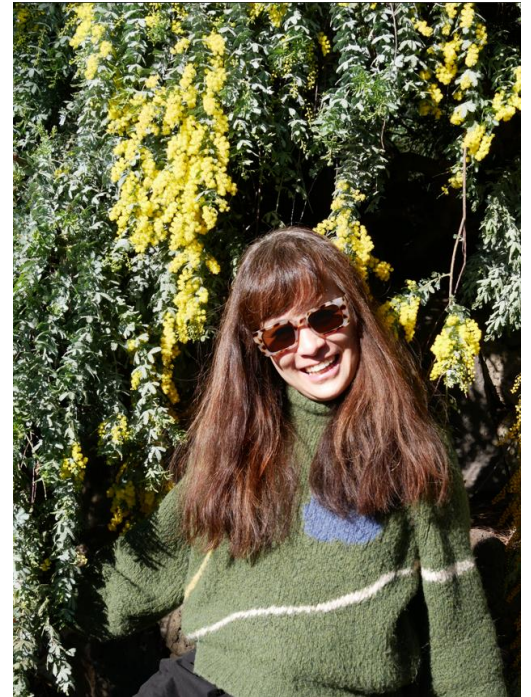
Now is the best time to see Australia's floral Emblem, *Acacia* (wattle) in bloom at Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and Cranbourne. A multitude of stunning and unique species are blooming at both gardens and expected to continue until the end of spring.

"We have approximately 87 species growing at Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and 92 species on display at Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne," said Tim Sansom, Executive Director Living Collections and Environment at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. "We have several must-see, unique and rare varieties including *Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze'."

This unusual cultivar was found in 1995 deep in the Black Range State Park. Like virtually all species of wattle, *Acacia leprosa* usually flowers in yellow, so, when bushwalkers stumbled upon a bright red specimen, they took cuttings and passed them on to Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. There, botanists worked with the nursery team to conserve the spectacular cultivar by propagating new plants from the original cuttings. As a result, *Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze' was born.

To this day, all 'Scarlet Blaze' plants are clones that descend from the cuttings propagated at the Melbourne Gardens nursery. There are approximately 1,100 known species of *Acacia*, but the vast majority occur naturally in Australia, with *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle) officially proclaimed the national floral emblem in 1988. For more than 25 million years, wattles have grown on the Australian continent. They have adapted to Australia's extreme environments, and many species have evolved resistance to fire, salinity, drought, alkalinity and disease.

"This genus has evolved various shapes and textures, sizes, bark and leaf forms due to the environments that they



are adapted to. They can range from tall trees to small shrubs and are fascinating to explore," said Sansom.

Some highlights include:

- A unique red cultivar called *Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze';
- *Acacia denticulosa* (Sandpaper Wattle) which is nicknamed the 'twisties' wattle due to its flowers' resemblance to the snack
- *Acacia aphylla* (Leafless Rock Wattle), a Western Australian species that evolved without leaves due to environmental selection pressures; and
- *Acacia cultriformis* (Knife-leaf Wattle), which has been grafted to look as though it is growing upside down.

The science team at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria was also part of the team that recently sequenced the genome of *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle) which will help support conservation of the rarer species in the genus.

**National Wattle Day is 1 September. PTO for images and descriptions of highlight wattles in bloom now.**

**For more information or interviews please contact:**

Tanya Hendy  
Communications and Media Coordinator  
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria  
0421 848 948  
Communications@rbg.vic.gov.au



Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

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## Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

### Temple of the Winds and steps down through the Grey Garden



Left: *Acacia cardiophylla*

Right: *Acacia aphylla* (Leafless Rock Wattle). Vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPCB). It lacks phyllodes and occurs east of Perth in Western Australia.



Left: *Acacia baileyana* 'Prostrata' (Cootamundra Wattle).

Right: *Acacia glaucoptera* (Flat Wattle). Its leaves are actually cladodes, which the flowers emerge from.

### The fence line along Anderson St



*Acacia montana* (Mallee Wattle)



Left: *Acacia boormanii* (Snowy River Wattle). Endangered under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG).

Right: *Acacia trigonophylla*. The phyllodes of this species are contiguous with the branches, so they appear to have no obvious leaves.

## Long Island



*Acacia dealbata* (Silver Wattle). This species is significant to First Peoples and known as Muyan. The flowering indicates a change of season from *Warring* to *Guling*, also aligning with the harvesting of *luk* (eels) along the *Birrarrung* (Yarra River).

Soon to flower:



*Acacia paradoxa* (Prickly Wattle)



*Acacia melanoxylon*

### Herbarium bed



*Acacia denticulosa* (Sandpaper Wattle). EPCB: vulnerable.



*Acacia aspera* subsp. *parviceps*. FFG: Endangered.

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### Forest Walk near Oak Lawn gate

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*Acacia glandulicarpa* (Hairy-pod Wattle). FFG: Endangered, EPBC: Vulnerable.

Near the Visitor Centre and main entrance gate at Melbourne and in the Future gardens at Cranbourne



*Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze'. A unique and rare wattle with eponymous scarlet coloured blooms.

Rare and Threatened Bed



*Acacia lineata* (Streaked Wattle)



*Acacia farinosa* (Mealy Wattle)

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**PTO for Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne**



Royal  
Botanic  
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## Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne

### Future Garden



*Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze'. This is also found at Melbourne Gardens – see previous section.

### On the path near the Visitor Centre and Red Sand Garden



*Acacia spectabilis* (Mudgee Wattle). Bright and spectacular, living up to the '*spectabilis*' in its name. Found in NSW and Queensland.

### Forest Garden



*Acacia howittii* (Sticky Wattle). It is called sticky wattle due to its slightly sticky and perfumed pendulous foliage.

### Forest Garden and Research Garden



*Acacia boormanii* subsp. *gibba* (Mt Typo Wattle). A beautiful early flowering wattle, which is different to the more commonly known subspecies *Acacia boormanii* subsp. *boormanii* (Snowy River Wattle). Only occurs on Mt Typo in Victoria.

### Ironbark Garden



*Acacia flexifolia* (Bent-leaf Wattle). An early flowering small *Acacia* that grows to 1.5m tall. It occurs in north central Victoria and is endangered.

### Not in flower but still worth seeing due to interesting features

#### Peppermint Garden



*Acacia alata* (Winged Wattle). This is from Western Australia and has interesting, flattened foliage. 'Alata' means winged.

#### Weird and Wonderful Garden



*Acacia cyperophylla* (Miniritchie). From Western Australia. Interesting, flaky, peeling bark up the trunk and lower branches. This bark type is referred to as 'minni ritchi', also seen on some *Eucalyptus*.

#### Arid and Weird and Wonderful Garden



*Acacia aphylla* (Leafless Rock Wattle). These can be seen across Cranbourne Gardens, with the most noteworthy specimens in the Arid and Weird and Wonderful Garden. It is also found at Melbourne Gardens, see previous section.

#### Backyard Garden



*Acacia cultriformis* (Knife-leaf Wattle grafted standard). A prostrate form of *Acacia cultriformis* grafted onto *Acacia dealbata* (Silver Wattle).

**PTO for photo credits**

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**Photo credits**

**Melbourne Gardens**

*Acacia aspera* subsp. *parviceps* by Neville Walsh

*Acacia baileyana* 'Prostrata' - Cootamundra Wattle  
by Neil Blair

*Acacia boormanii* by Ian McCann

*Acacia cardiophylla* by Neil Blair

*Acacia farinosa* by Graham and Maree Goods

*Acacia montana* by Maree and Graham Goods

*Acacia melanoxylon* by Neil Blair

*Acacia paradoxa* by Neil Blair

**Cranbourne Gardens**

*Acacia howittii* (Sticky Wattle) by Geoff Lay

All other images can be credited to Royal Botanic  
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**For more information or  
interviews please contact:**

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Communications and Media  
Coordinator  
Royal Botanic Gardens  
Victoria  
0421 848 948  
Communications@rbg.vic.g  
ov.au



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