



Big Island Invasive Species Committee

Do Not Cultivate



Present

BLACK WATTLE *Acacia mearnsii*



Forest and Kim Starr



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Description: Tall, densely branching tree 25-50' tall, occasionally up to 150'

Leaves: Light green compound leaves with many small leaflets

Flowers: Clustered white to light yellow spherical flowers 1/4" in diameter

Don't confuse with these look alike:



Forest and Kim Starr

Koa



Forest and Kim Starr

Koa Haole

Fruit: Dark, flat pods, 4" long, split open when dry to reveal many dark flat seeds, 1/8" diameter



Forest and Kim Starr

TREE

BLACK WATTLE
Acacia mearnsii

Origin: Australia
HWRA Score: 15

Family: Fabaceae

Big Island Habitat: Dry to mesic pastures and forests up to 4,000'.

Description: A tall, woody, many branched tree with dense leaves, which forms thickets.

Impacts: Black wattle grows quickly and produces many seeds, closing in pasture and open land. It shades out and displaces native species, especially in drier areas.

Dispersal Mechanism: The many seeds are widely spread by birds and invasive grazing animals. When dry, the pods open explosively, casting many seeds over a wide area. The tree freely produces suckers at the base when disturbed by browsing animals or after fire, creating dense, monotypic stands.

Cultivation: Black wattle was introduced to the Hawaiian Islands in the 1890's as a forestry tree. The bark was used for tanning leather.

Don't confuse with:

- **Koa** (*Acacia koa*) The mature leaf-like phyllodes of this native tree are sickle shaped.
- **Koa Haole** (*Leucaena leucocephalla*) This widespread invasive tree is much shorter, and produces distinctive flat seed pods.