

## Plant of the Month – October 2012

### *Acacia aptaneura* – Slender Mulga



Recently published by Bruce Maslin and Jordan Reid in **volume 22(4) of *Nuytsia***, *Acacia aptaneura* is a segregate of the widespread and highly variable 'Mulga group' of species. *Acacia aptaneura* is a shrub or tree from 3 to 10(12) metres tall and like many of the 'Mulga group' can exhibit a

conifer-like appearance. Its phyllodes are terete to flat up to 1.5mm wide and green to grey-green and its pods are often tinged orange, smooth, normally glabrous with rimmed margins.

*Acacia aptaneura* is widespread in Western Australia; it also occurs in the Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales. In Western Australia the species extends from near Karratha south through Gascoyne Junction and Yalgoo to Paynes Find and extends eastwards to the Northern Territory border. *Acacia aptaneura* grows in a wide range of habitats. It has been recorded from sometimes stony or gravelly red-brown sandy loam, clay-loam or clay, commonly over hardpan.

It occurs on alluvial flats and other water-gaining sites, and on slopes and crests of low rocky hills (including banded ironstone).

The species has two main flowering flushes, March to May and June to August. However, sporadic flowering has also been recorded for all other months of the year except January. Pods with mature seeds have been collected from September to December, but on some plants the pods are often not fully developed in September.

The species name *aptaneura* is derived from the Greek *a-* (without) and *pteron* (a wing) in allusion to the rimmed (wingless) pods, with *aneura* as the stem of the epithet, as is the convention established by the authors for all published segregates of the 'parent species' *Acacia aneura*.

Photo: Daphne J. Edinger

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