

# *Acacia auriculiformis*: Earleaf Acacia<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Quickly reaching a height of 40 feet and a spread of 25 feet, earleaf acacia becomes a loose, rounded, evergreen, open shade tree. It is often planted for its abundance of small, beautiful, bright yellow flowers and fast growth. The flattened, curved branchlets, which look like leaves, are joined by twisted, brown, ear-shaped seed pods. Growing 6 to 8 feet per year, earleaf acacia quickly grows into a medium-sized shade tree. This makes it a popular tree. However, it has brittle wood and weak branch crotches, and the tree can be badly damaged during wind storms. Prune branches so there is a wide angle of attachment to help them from splitting from the tree. Also, be sure to keep the major branches pruned back so they stay less than half the diameter of the trunk. These techniques might increase the longevity of existing trees.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Acacia auriculiformis*

**Pronunciation:** uh-KAY-shuh ah-rick-yoo-lih-FOR-miss

**Common name(s):** earleaf acacia

**Family:** *Fabaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10A through 11 (Figure 2)

**Origin:** native to northern Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia



Figure 1. Full Form - *Acacia auriculiformis*: Earleaf acacia  
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**UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status:** caution, may be recommended but manage to prevent escape (Central, South); not considered a problem species at this time, may be recommended (North)

**Uses:** not recommended for planting



Figure 2. Range

## Description

**Height:** 35 to 40 feet

**Spread:** 25 to 35 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular

**Crown shape:** round

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear and sickle-shaped

**Leaf venation:** 3-7 parallel veins

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen, broadleaf evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** dark to medium green

**Fall color:** no color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** bright yellow

**Flower characteristics:** showy; emerges in cluster on 2-3" long, axillary spikes

**Flowering:** spring to fall



Figure 3. Leaf - *Acacia auriculiformis*: earleaf acacia

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Figure 4. Flower - *Acacia auriculiformis*: earleaf acacia

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## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** irregular; curved, twisted, compressed, and spiraling pod

**Fruit length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** turns from green to brown when mature



**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves a litter problem



Figure 5. Fruit, Young - *Acacia auriculiformis*: earleaf acacia  
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Figure 6. Fruit, Young - *Acacia auriculiformis*: earleaf acacia  
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## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically one trunk; no thorns

**Bark:** greenish white and smooth, becoming greenish brown and vertically fissured with age

**Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure

**Breakage:** susceptible to breakage

**Current year twig color:** green

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Wood specific gravity:** unknown



Figure 7. Fruit, Young - *Acacia auriculiformis*: earleaf acacia  
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## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; well-drained to occasionally wet

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** no

**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant

**Pest resistance:** free of serious pests and diseases

## Use and Management

Seeds also germinate in the landscape and it has escaped cultivation in south Florida where it is becoming a mildly invasive weed in some areas. However, it is not as invasive as Australian pine or Brazilian pepper and probably will not become so. Despite this, many people consider this to be an undesirable tree.

Earleaf acacia grows in full sun on almost any soil including alkaline and is moderately salt-tolerant. It will withstand periods of water inundation but is also very tolerant of drought.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern. Occasionally anthracnose infects leaves.

## Reference

Koeser, A.K., Friedman, M.H., Hasing, G., Finley, H., Schelb, J. 2017. Trees: South Florida and the Keys. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.