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### *Acacia longifolia*

[Synonyms : *Acacia cibaria*, *Acacia floribunda*, *Acacia latifolia*, *Mimosa longifolia*]

**ACACIA** is a shrub or tree. Native to eastern Australia and Tasmania it has small fragrant, pale yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Acácia de Espigas* (Portuguese), *Akacia* (Swedish), *Akacie* (Danish), Golden wattle, Gossamer sydney acacia, *Gouewattel* (Afrikaans), *Laongblads-Akacia* (Swedish), *Langblättrige Akazie* (German), Long leaf wattle, *Mimosa à longues feuilles* (French), Sallow wattle, Sidney golden wattle, Sydney golden wattle, Sydney wattle, Wattle, and White sallow; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of chaste love, and secret love (yellow).

*Longifolia* is made up of Latin *longi-* (long) and *-folia* (leaved) components.

Acacia's flat leathery, brown fruit pods with their tiny seeds are eaten by some of the Australian Aborigines.

The hard and tough, lightweight wood has been fashioned into tool handles, the bark has been used for tanning and the stems have yielded fibre.

The willow-like dark greyish-green, leaf-like stalks have been used as fish poison.

Today acacia is often grown for shade - and as a street tree, not least in California (USA). It has also been cultivated as a coastal hedge or a windbreak. However authorities do provide a cautionary note for regions outside its natural habitat by drawing attention to the enthusiasm with which acacia can make itself at home. In South Africa it is now viewed by many as a weed or invasive plant.

It is believed to have been introduced to Britain in 1792.