

Acacia simplex (Sparr.) L. Pedley

Acacia laurifolia Willd.

Acacia simplicifolia (L. f.) Druce

SAMOAN NAME: *tātānia* (or incorrectly, *tītānia*)

ENGLISH NAME: none

STATUS: rare indigenous

REASON FOR LISTING: restricted Samoan distribution

SUGGESTED ACTION: This is a wide-ranging species common in littoral habitats on other nearby archipelagoes. But because it is rare, its distribution in Samoa should be mapped and population size estimated. The small population reported on 'Upolu should also be checked to see if it is viable there. Its known habitat, beaches at the west end of Savai'i, should be preserved as much as possible.



Indigenous to Samoa, also found in Tonga, Futuna, and Melanesia. This tree is restricted to two places in Samoa—beaches and shores on the west end of Savai'i, and the southwest coast of 'Upolu at Matāutu where a single collection was once made, reported only near sea level. The wood was used for war clubs and boat keels, and seeds were strung into seed leis. For some reason, it is often called *tītānia* nowadays, which is the biblical word for "tares" (seeds).

Small tree up to 8 m or more in height (but usually much less), with glabrous, longitudinally striate stems; bark gray-brown, green beneath, inner bark reddish, wood light tan. **Leaves** simple, alternate; blade an elliptic to suborbicular phyllode mostly 7–16 cm long, attenuate at the base, acute to rounded or subretuse at the tip; surfaces glabrous, with 5–14 similar, parallel, longitudinal veins prominent on the lower surface and having irregular reticulations between them; petiole 3–6 mm long. **Inflorescence** of 30–50 flowers in an axillary head about 6 mm in diameter, on a peduncle 5–18 mm long borne on a short axillary branch, several usually forming on the branch but only a few maturing. **Calyx** campanulate, of 4 or 5 narrow subspathulate lobes less than 1 mm long. **Corolla** of 4–5 free, tiny yellow, oblancheolate petals ca. 1.5 mm long. **Ovary** superior, 1-celled, style filamentous with a small terminal stigma. **Stamens** numerous, yellow, showy, exserted, filaments 1–2 mm long. **Fruits** in clusters of several (up to 12 or more), narrow, oblong, flattened legumes 6–15 cm long, somewhat constricted between the 3–10 dark, oval seeds that are 5–7 mm long. **Flowering** reported from July and October to December, but probably occurring periodically throughout the year, the fruits long-persisting.

Distinguishable by its small tree habit, parallel-veined leaves (phyllodes), small yellow flowers in pedicellate axillary heads, and flattened pods (legumes) somewhat constricted between the seeds.

SAVAII:

Reinecke 503—Matāutu coast.

Vaupel 365—Manase (Bishop Museum: 16 August 1905).

Christophersen 939—Beach near Falelima.

Christophersen 1931—Beach at Āvao.

Christophersen 2460—Beach at Sāfotu-Manase.

Christophersen 2774—Sandy shore near Faleālupo.

Whistler 100—One sapling on a sandy beach between Faleālupo and Tufutafoe.

Whistler 994—Shore east of Āsau Bay.

Whistler 3891—Shore east of Āsau Bay.

Whistler 8238—Shore at the south end of Faleālupo.

Whistler 11563—Littoral forest on the northeast side of Āsau Bay.

UPOLU:

Whistler 8373—Rocky coastal peninsula just west of a little bay between Matāutu and Sa’anapu.

SINE LOC:

Whitmee 202—Without further locality.