

Flax-leaf broom

Genista linifolia L. (Fabaceae)

What is it?

Genista linifolia is native to the western Mediterranean. It was originally introduced to Tasmania as a garden plant and has recently been found naturalised in several locations around Hobart. It is widely naturalised on the mainland, where it occurs in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

Two other species of *Genista* are also naturalised in Tasmania: *Genista monspesulana* (canary broom) and *Genista stenopetala* (Madeira broom).

What is its weed potential?

Genista linifolia prefers sites with slightly acidic soils coupled with moderate rainfall. On the mainland, it is encountered as a weed of dry coastal cliffs, roadsides, drains

and fencelines, and is

also found encroaching onto pastureland. In Tasmania, it is known from a weed-infested coastal embankment, growing and competing well with numerous weedy shrubs, including *Lycium ferocissimum* (African boxthorn), *Paraserianthes lophantha* (Cape Leeuwin wattle) and *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* (boneseed). It is also recorded as dominating a dry, grassy slope near Hobart's Regatta Ground. Given time, this species could become more common as an invader of bushland, roadsides and disturbed sites throughout Tasmania.



Flowers of *Genista linifolia*

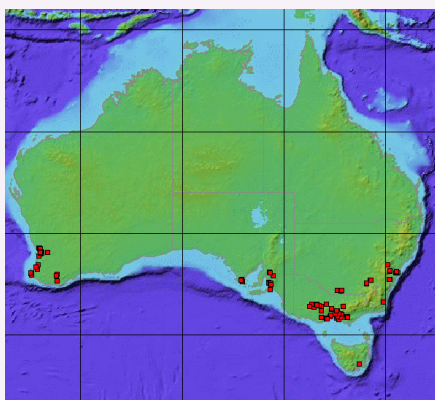
What does it look like?

Genista linifolia is a small to medium sized shrub which can grow to a height of up to 3 m. The leaves are trifoliate (each leaf is divided into 3 leaflets); the leaflets (c. 25 mm long and c. 5 mm wide) are narrow-linear to oblanceolate and are covered in grey hairs (more so on the underside of the leaflets).



Seed pods of *Genista linifolia*

These hairs give the plant a silvery look when viewed from afar. The flowers (up to 13.5 mm long) are bright yellow and are borne on short racemes at the ends of branches. Flowering occurs from mid-winter through to the start of summer. The pods (c. 20 mm long) are densely hairy with each containing up to 7 seeds.



Distribution of *Genista linifolia*.

(Source: Australia's Virtual Herbarium)

WEED PROFILE



Matthew Baker
WEED TAXONOMIST,
TASMANIAN HERBARIUM