

REFLECTION
WATTLE DAY
1ST SEPTEMBER

Wattle has a very special place in the Australian story. It was used for aeons by indigenous people and later became a rally point for the Europeans who first identified with this land as home. It was seen as a symbol of belonging to and identifying with the great south land. Today it is Australia's floral emblem and is featured on the nation's Coat of Arms.

Wattle is a marker in the life of our nation. It blooms in all parts of the country and all through the year. Somewhere in this vast land there is always wattle in bloom. It colours the great backdrop of Australian life, the bush. In spring it is particularly abundant, welcoming the return of warmer weather and reminding us of the great resilience and renewal of the native landscape. It is a symbol that has power in unifying the nation and all who share it.

Let wattle be a symbol of our common commitment as Australians.

<http://www.wattleday.asn.au/>

Find a flowering wattle tree and take some time to look at it—really look at it.

Is it a large tree or a small shrub? A young plant or a mature specimen?
Note the colour of the leaves. Observe their shape.

Feel the trunk: is it rough or smooth? Is there evidence of insect or bird activity? Are the branches soft and supple, or strong and firm? Are the leaves showing signs of water stress?

Look at the flowers: are all the balls the same size? are they all at the same stage of development? how many balls are in each cluster? what do they feel like? do they have a fragrance?

Gently pick a sprig of wattle, giving thanks to the tree for its gift of beauty and colour at the end of winter. Place the wattle in a special place in your home or office, where each time you look at it you are reminded of the beauty and benevolence of the earth.

Oh bright and beautiful wattle,
thank you for the gift you are to me,
and to this nation of Australia.