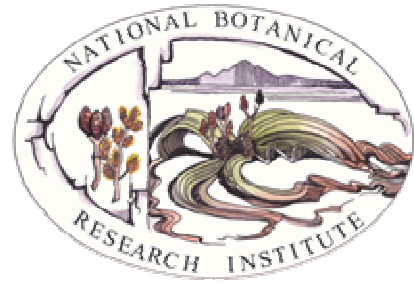


Kew

PLANTS PEOPLE
POSSIBILITIES



This report was generated from the SEPASAL database (www.kew.org/ceb/sepasal) in August 2007. This database is freely available to members of the public.

SEPASAL is a database and enquiry service about useful "wild" and semi-domesticated plants of tropical and subtropical drylands, developed and maintained at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. "Useful" includes plants which humans eat, use as medicine, feed to animals, make things from, use as fuel, and many other uses.

Since 2004, there has been a Namibian SEPASAL team, based at the National Botanical Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture which has been updating the information on Namibian species from Namibian and southern African literature and unpublished sources. By August 2007, over 700 Namibian species had been updated.

Work on updating species information, and adding new species to the database, is ongoing. It may be worth visiting the web site and querying the database to obtain the latest information for this species.

Internet SEPASAL

New query

Edit query

View query results

 *Display help*In names list include: synonyms vernacular names and display: 10 names per page*Your query found 1 taxon***Commiphora virgata Engl. [1669]**

Family: BURSERACEAE

Synonyms

None recorded

Vernacular names

Afrikaans	slapkanniedood [5082] [5121] [5298]
English	slender corkwood [5082] [5121], twiggy commiphora [5298]
Herero	omumbara [5083] [5087] [5091] [5298]
Khoekhoegowab (Namibia)	antob [5083] [5095], soba [5083] [5095], lâna.s/n [5083] [5095]
Nama (Namibia)	/h?b [5298]

Distribution

Plant origin	Continent	Region	Botanical country
Native	Africa	South Tropical Africa Southern Africa	Angola [5326] Namibia [1669] [5121]

Descriptors

Category	Descriptors and states
DESCRIPTION	Deciduous [5121]; Erect [5298]; Terrestrial [5153]; Shrub [1174] [5121]; Tree [1174] [5121] [5298]; Perennial [5153]; Unarmed - entire plant [5153] [5298]; Fragrant - infructescences [2075]; Fragrant - other parts [2075]; Aromatic - gum/resins [5123] [5153]; Plant Height 0.5-5 m [5121]
CLIMATE	Marked Dry Season [5121]; Tropical Summer Rains [5121]; Annual Rainfall <= 250 mm [5121]; Dry Season Length 8-11 months [5153]
SOILS	Limestone Parent Material [5123]; Gravels/Stony [2075] [5121]; Dry [5153]
HABITAT	Upland [5091]; Plains/Flats/Pans [5121]; Hillsides/Slopes [2075] [5121]; Outcrops/Kopjes/Inselbergs [5121]; Non-Permanent Watercourses [1174] [5121]; Altitude 400-1300 m a.s.l. [5104]
FURTHER DATA SOURCES	Botanical Illustration [5121]; Regional Distribution Map [5082] [5298]; Botanical Photograph [5298] [5459]; Databases [5123] [5327]; Habit Illustration/Photograph [5298]; Grid Map [5121] [5123]
SEPASAL DATASHEET STATUS	All Data Transferred from SEPASAL Paper Files

Uses

Major use	Use group	Specific uses
FOOD	Exudates	gum [5095]
ANIMAL FOOD	Aerial Parts	leaves, mammals, browse [5091] [5298]; goats [5095]
INVERTEBRATE FOOD		edible insects/caterpillars/larvae [5091] [5095] [5461]
MATERIALS	Wood	stems, toothbrushes [5091]; wood, carved wood, buckets/pails [5095]; carved wood, weapons [5298]
	Gums/Resins	gum, gums, perfumes [5095]
	Other	bark, perfumes [5091] [5095]
	Materials/Chemicals	
SOCIAL USES [5095]	Miscellaneous Social Uses	
MEDICINES	Unspecified Medicinal Disorders	other medicine types [5095]
	Circulatory System Disorders	leafy stems/branches, humans, heart, oral ingestion [5095] [5461]; bark, humans, heart, oral ingestion [5095] [5461]
	Digestive System Disorders	leafy stems/branches, humans, stomach, indigestion, oral ingestion [5095]; bark, humans, stomach, stomachic, oral ingestion [5095]; roots, humans, indigestion, oral ingestion [5095]
	Infections/Infestations	leaves, humans, colds, oral ingestion [5095] [5461]; bark, humans, colds, oral ingestion [5095] [5461]; stems, humans, colds, oral ingestion [5095] [5461]
	Pain	leafy stems/branches, humans, chest, oral ingestion [5095] [5461]
ENVIRONMENTAL USES [1174]	Revegetators	

Picture

None recorded

Notes

NOMENCLATURE/TAXONOMY

Name derivation:

"virgata" refers to the slender and erect branches [5298] .

DISTRIBUTION

Namibia:

Occasional to locally common or abundant in the north-west. Common in the central Namib as far south as the Kuiseb River [5121] .

Angola:

Mossamades (now called Namibe) [5326] .

RARITY/CONSERVATION

Recorded as endemic to Namibia by Craven, but also recorded in Angola - must therefore be near endemic to Namibia [5149] [5326] .

DESCRIPTION

Bark:

yellow-white to silvery, peeling off in long, silvery, horizontal strips [5082] [5121] [5153] .

Branchlets:

slender and often drooping, red-brown [5121] .

Height:

0.5 - 3 m [5082] [5104] .

Leaves:

trifoliolate, leaflets usually obovate, small, not hairy, margins smooth, both surfaces yellow-green to dark green [5121] [5298] .

Lifeform:

A small, many-branched tree [5082] .

Lifeform:

Usually a shrub of < 3 m high. May be a shrubby tree of over 3 m, especially just south of the Kunene River [5121] .

Lifeform:

Shrub 1-3 m, tree to 5 m [1174] .

Odour:

The wood and fruits are aromatic [2075] .

IDENTIFICATION

The leaves, flowers and fruit are similar to those of the closely related *C. giessii*, which is a many-stemmed shrub with reddish brown bark that usually does not peel [5082] .

ANIMAL FOOD - AERIAL PARTS

Mammals, browse, leaves:

leaves are browsed by livestock [5091] [5298] .

INVERTEBRATE FOOD

Edible caterpillars:

Usta wallengrenii is eaten with relish and traded throughout north-west Namibia [5461] .

Edible caterpillars:

Host of a large, edible caterpillar, oruwowo (Herero) [5091] [5298] .

Edible caterpillars:

Usta wallengrenii (Saturniidae) are abundant in the rainy season [5095] .

MATERIALS - WOOD

weapons, carved wood:

used for panga handles [5298] .

Stems, toothbrushes:

twigs used as toothbrushes [5091] .

MATERIALS - GUMS/RESINS

Gums, bark, perfume:

The gum and bark are pound into powder and added as "sâi" (perfume) to fat by Damara and Himba women [5091] [5095] .

MATERIALS - OTHER MATERIALS/CHEMICALS

Bark, perfumes:

Dried bark is finely ground and used as a body powder by women, particularly Herero [5091] .

SOCIAL USES - MISCELLANEOUS SOCIAL USES

Good luck:

If someone has died when a woman has just borne a baby she is washed in water in which this plant has been soaked for good luck [5095] .

MEDICINES

Various ailments:

Used throughout former Damaraland. A decoction of leaves, bark and stem is taken for coughs, colds, general health and strength, restoring maternal health after child-birth, stomach disorders, hearts and chest pains. It is very strong and bitter, so a spoonful is taken at midday and at night. Water in which the plant parts have been soaked is used for washing to promote good health and for women after child-birth. [5095] [5461] .

MEDICINES - DIGESTIVE SYSTEM DISORDERS

roots, bark, twigs, humans, indigestion, antidote:

Chewed, sometimes after cooking, to aid digestion after eating too much meat [5095] .

ENVIRONMENTAL USES - REVEGETATORS

Land reclamation [1174] .

ALTITUDE

1,100 - 1,300 m .

400 - 1000 m [5104] .

GEOLOGY

Often found on granite, also quartz, quartzite and mica schist [5123] .

Mica schist and granite [2075] .

FLOWERING/FRUITING/SEED SET

Flowering, Namibia:

October to January, but mostly December, with a few records in March [5121] .

Flowering, Namibia:

October and November [5082] .

Fruiting, Namibia:

February to April [5082] .

Fruiting, Namibia:

mostly December to May [5121] .

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

The information from Gärtner et al, 1982 [1174] should be used with caution as much of it is questionable [5153] . According to Sullivan (1998, 2000) the information recorded for *C. krauseliana* by Van den Eyden et al (1992) should be for *C. virgata*. The latter recorded the same medicinal uses as Sullivan, but also said that washing oneself with water in which the twigs had been soaked is believed to bring luck. [2136] [5095] [5461] .

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