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PLANTS PEOPLE
POSSIBILITIES



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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which has been updating the information on Namibian species from Namibian and southern African literature and unpublished sources.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 29 taxa***Cyperus congestus Vahl [5104]**

Family: CYPERACEAE

Synonyms

Cyperus cooperi (C.B.Clarke) K.Schum

Mariscus cooperi C.B.Clarke

Mariscus congestus (Vahl) C.B.Clarke

Mariscus congestus (Vahl)C.B.Clarke var. pseudonatalensis (Kük.) Podlech

Vernacular names

Jul'hoan (Namibia) !gewu [1332]

Nharo (Namibia) n!ani [1332] [5094]

Partial distribution

Plant origin	Continent	Region	Botanical country
Native	Africa	South Tropical Africa	Mozambique [5480], Zambia [5481], Zimbabwe [5419]
		Southern Africa	Botswana [5104], Cape Province [1332] [5104] [6608], Lesotho [5104] [5550], Namibia [5104] [5149] [5183], Natal [5104] [6608], Orange Free State [5104] [6608], Swaziland [5104] [5452], Transvaal [5104] [6608]
Status Unknown	Africa Australasia	Middle Atlantic Ocean Australia	St Helena [6608]

ISO countries: Turkey [6608] , South Africa [1332] [5104] [6608]

Descriptors**Category**

DESCRIPTION

Descriptors and states

Herb [5104]; Erect [1332]; Rhizomatous [1332] [6608]; Perennial [5104]; Stoloniferous [1332]; Plant Height 0.17-0.91 m [5104]

CLIMATE	Marked Dry Season [5104]; Subtropical, Hot and Arid [5104]
SOILS	Well Drained [1332]
PRODUCTION AND VALUE	Wild Plants Utilised [1332]
FURTHER DATA SOURCES	Botanical Illustration [6607]; Databases [5123]; Grid Map [5123] [6607]
SEPASAL DATASHEET STATUS	Taxon Recently Added from Literature [6040]
HABITAT	Altitude 2-2425 m a.s.l. [5104]

Uses

Major use	Use group	Specific uses
FOOD	'Roots'	bulbs/corms [5094]
ANIMAL FOOD	'Roots'	bulbs/corms, birds, forage [1332]; bulbs/corms, mammals, forage [1332]

Picture

None recorded

Notes

DISTRIBUTION

Mozambique:

Maputo Province [[5480](#)] .

Namibia:

Nama pan area (Tsumkwe district) [[1332](#)] .

Namibia:

Otjiwarongo and Warmbad Districts [[5183](#)] .

South Africa:

Limpopo, Northwest, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Free State, KwaZulu/Natal, Northern Cape, Western Cape and Eastern Cape Provinces [[5104](#)] .

DESCRIPTION

Bulbs:

Rounded, 25 mm in diameter, with a sharp point at the top, and covered with several papery brown layers which may be removed to expose a pale, nut-like body [[1332](#)] .

Height:

0.17-0.91 m [[5104](#)] .

Inflorescences:

Umbel usually open, simple. Bracts overtopping the umbel, similar to the leaves. Spike of many spikelets, usually compound, more or less corymbose, dense, with very small or no bract [[6608](#)] .

Leaves:

Often as long as the stem, broad, tough, smooth, without transverse lineolations [[6608](#)] .

Lifeform:

Cyperoid, helophyte [[5104](#)] .

Rhizomes:

Short, horizontal, woody [[6608](#)] .

Lifeform:

Sedge [[5094](#)] .

Stems:

Triquetrous at the top, smooth, throwing short lateral shoots at the base [6608] .

Stolons:

Some stolons are produced above ground as well, from among the leaves. They afterwards turn downwards, entering the soil close to the parent plant and thereafter behaving in all aspects like rhizomes [1332] .

FOOD - 'ROOTS'

Bulbs, raw:

The bulbs are edible and a fairly important food of the northern Bushmen. The taste is sweetish and they have a crisp texture and a cloudy, very slightly astringent juice. Light roasting improves the flavour. They are easily gathered by scratching away the top layer of soil, and their presence is often shown by the disturbed soil where they grow [1332] .

Bulbs:

A sedge with edible bulbs [5094] .

ANIMAL FOOD - 'ROOTS'

Bulbs, birds, mammals, forage:

In Namibia it is a favourite food of many birds and small animals, which scratch and burrow to find them [1332] .

ALTITUDE

Southern Africa:

2-2425 m [5104] .

CYTOLOGY

For the genus $x = 5, 8, (6, 7, 9, 13)$ (high aneuploids, high polyploidy) [5150] .

PROPAGATION - VEGETATIVE

The species is capable of spreading very rapidly by its bulbs [1332] .

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DATASHEET PROGRESS

Updated for southern Africa by E. Irish, checked by C. Mannheimer; SEPASAL Namibia, National Botanical Research Institute, May 2007 .

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