
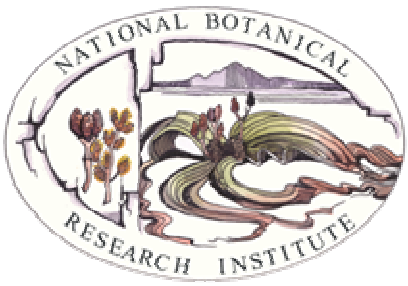


This report was generated from the SEPASAL database (www.kew.org/ceb/sepasal) in August 2007. This database is freely available to members of the public.

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which has been updating the information on Namibian species from Namibian and southern African literature and unpublished sources.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:** All names per page

*Your query found 29 taxa*

# Cyperus longus L.

**Family: CYPERACEAE**

## Synonyms

Pycreus longus (L.)Hayek

## Vernacular names

| | |
|---|---|
| Afrikaans (Namibia) | waterbiesie [5083] |
| Afrikaans (South Africa) | dooiwortel [5713], waterbiesie [5303] [5713] |
| English (South Africa) | sweet cyperus [5713] |
| German (Namibia) | gemeines Zypergras [5083] |
| Jul'hoan (Namibia) | !omn'lai [5083], !um'mnlai [5083] [5101] |
| Ndebele (Southern Africa) | mlabie [1340] |
| Otjiherero (Namibia) | onenge [5083] [5091] |
| Zulu (South Africa) | indawo [5303] |
| Zulu (Southern Africa) | indawo [1340] |

## Partial distribution

| Plant origin | Continent | Region | Botanical country |
|---|---|---|---|
| Native | Africa | East Tropical Africa | Kenya [6544], Tanzania [6544] |
| | | Northern Africa | Egypt |
| | | South Tropical Africa | Mozambique [5480], Zambia [5481], Zimbabwe [5419] |
| | | Southern Africa | Botswana [5104] [5700] [5713], Cape Province [5104] [5713], Lesotho [5104] [5550] [5713], Namibia [5104] [5149] [5183] [5713], Natal [5104] [5713], Orange Free State [5104] [5713], Swaziland [5104] [5452] [5713], Transvaal [5104] [5713] |
| | Asia-Temperate | Western Asia | Israel |
| | Europe | | |

**ISO countries:** India [5713] , South Africa [5104]

## Descriptors

| Category | Descriptors and states |
|---|---|
| DESCRIPTION | Herb [5104]; Tussock Forming/Tufted/Caespitose [5091]; Bulbous; Aquatic [5123]; Erect [5123]; Rhizomatous [5123]; Perennial [5104] [5123] [5303]; Stoloniferous [5303] [5713]; Fragrant - 'roots' [5091]; Plant Height 0.1-1.7 m [5104] |
| CLIMATE | Subtropical, Hot and Arid [5104] |
| SOILS | Limestone Parent Material [5101]; Sometimes Waterlogged (frequency unknown) [5123]; Alluvial Soils [5123]; Sandy [5123]; Seasonally Waterlogged [5713] [6544]; Sandy Loams [5123]; Silts [5123] |
| HABITAT | Woodland [5123]; Shrubland/Bushland/Scrub [6544]; Grassland/Forb-Land [5303] [5713] [6544]; Watercourses [5091] [5123] [5713]; Vlei/Dambo/Seasonally Flooded Grassland [5303] [5713] [6544]; Pans [5101] [5123]; Altitude 15-1800 m a.s.l. [5104] |
| PRODUCTION AND VALUE | Wild Plants Utilised [5091] [5101]; Traded Locally [5095] |
| FURTHER DATA SOURCES | Botanical Illustration [5303] [6544]; Databases [5123]; Grid Map [5123] [5303] |
| CHEMICAL ANALYSES | Poisonous Compounds - sap/leaf sap [1340] [5303] |

## Uses

| Major use | Use group | Specific uses |
|---|---|---|
| FOOD ADDITIVES | 'Roots' | spices |
| ANIMAL FOOD | Aerial Parts | unspecified aerial parts, mammals, grazing [5091] [5123] |
| MATERIALS | Unspecified Materials | 'roots', perfumes |
| | Fibres | rhizomes, necklaces [5091] |
| | Other Materials/Chemicals | rhizomes, cosmetics [5101] |
| MEDICINES | Unspecified Medicinal Disorders | 'roots'; tubers/tubercles, humans, external applications [1340] |
| | Digestive System Disorders | humans, stomach [5303] [5713]; tubers/tubercles, humans, stomach, enemas [1340] |
| | Infections/Infestations | humans, colds [5303] [5713]; tubers/tubercles, humans, nose, colds, external applications [1340]; tubers/tubercles, humans, ears, colds, external applications [1340]; tubers/tubercles, humans, nose, colds, oral ingestion [1340]; tubers/tubercles, humans, ears, colds, oral ingestion [1340] |
| | Metabolic System Disorders | humans, diaphoretic [1340] |

## Picture

None recorded

## Notes

### DISTRIBUTION

*Botswana*:

Var. longus [5700] .
*Mozambique*:
Var. tenuiflorus in Maputo and Zambezia Provinces [5480] .
*South Africa*:
Var. longus in Mpumalanga, KwaZulu/Natal and Eastern Cape Provinces. Var. tenuiflorus in Limpopo, Northwest, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Free State, KwaZulu/Natal, Northern Cape, Western Cape and Eastern Cape Provinces [5104] .
*Stems*:
Culms only slightly swollen at the bases, usually solitary, 0.6-0.9 m tall, 1-4 mm thick, terete below, 3-angled above, smooth [5713] .
*Swaziland*:
Var. longus [5452] .
*Zimbabwe*:
Var. tenuiflorus [5419] .

**DESCRIPTION**

*Height*:
0.6-0.8 m [5303] .
*Height*:
Var. longus 0.1-1.7 m. Var. tenuiflorus 0.3-1.06 m [5104] .
*Inflorescence*:
Simple or compound, of 1 sessile and 4-8 stalked spikes with or without secondary spikes. Rays very unequal, up to 100 mm long [5713] .
*Leaves*:
Several. Sheaths light to dark reddish-brown. Blades withering early, usually shorter than the culm, 150-300 mm long, (2-) 6-10 mm wide [5713] .
*Lifeform*:
Cyperoid, helophyte [5104] .
*Lifeform*:
Sedge [5123] .
*Stolons*:
Rather stout, 3-5 mm thick, horizontal, often curved, bearing scales [5713] .

**ANIMAL FOOD - AERIAL PARTS**

*Unspecified aerial parts, mammals, grazing*:
In Kaokoland (Namibia) it is grazed by livestock [5091] .

**MATERIALS - FIBRES**

*Necklaces, rhizomes*:
The roots are plaited into necklaces worn by Himba women in northwest Namibia [5091] .

**MATERIALS - OTHER MATERIALS/CHEMICALS**

*Cosmetics, rhizomes*:
The rhizome is ground and is used as a cosmetic powder [5101] .

**MEDICINES - UNSPECIFIED MEDICINAL DISORDERS**

*Tubers, humans, external applications*:
The Zulu people blow the powdered tuber into the nose and ears for colds and other troubles in those regions [1340] .

**MEDICINES - DIGESTIVE SYSTEM DISORDERS**

*Humans, stomach*:
Used in traditional medicine in Natal to treat stomach ailments in children [5303] .
*Tuber, humans, stomach, enemas*:
The tuber is used by the Zulu in preparing an enema for children with stomach troubles [1340] .

**MEDICINES - INFECTIONS/INFESTATIONS**

*Tubers, humans, nose, ears, colds, external applications, oral ingestion*:
The Zulu people blow the powdered tuber into the nose and ears for colds. It may also be chewed for the same purposes [1340] .

**TOXICITY/POISONOUS COMPOUNDS**

The juice of the plant is said to be poisonous and is said to burn the skin when applied to it [1340] .

**CONSTRAINTS - MISCELLANEOUS**

Sap reputed to be poisonous [5303] .
The juice of the plant is said to be poisonous and is said to burn the skin when applied to it [1340] .

**ALTITUDE**

*East Africa*:
150-1200 m [6544] .
*Southern Africa*:
15-1800 m [2830] .
*Southern Africa*:
Var. 15-1800 m. Var. 245-1340 m [5104] .

**TOPOGRAPHY/SITES**

*Natal*:
In shallow, periodically inundated depressions in grassland, usually rooted where water is deepest [5303] .

**VEGETATION**

*East Africa*:
In grassland or bushland [6544] .

**FLOWERING/FRUITING/SEED SET**

*Flowering, southern Africa*:
November to March [5713] .

**CYTOLOGY**

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

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DATASHEET PROGRESS**

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

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