

Acacia karroo

Soetdoring

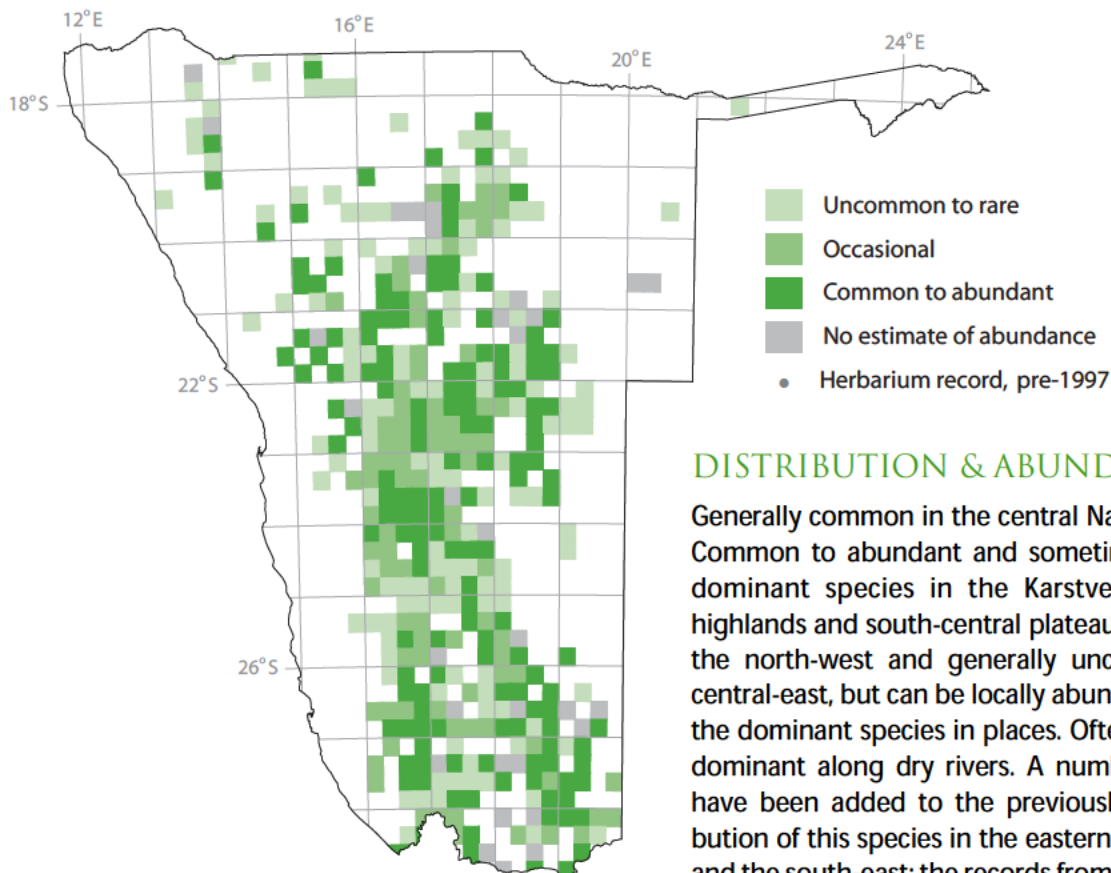
Sweet-thorn (E); Weissdorn, Süssdorn (G); ||khuus (K)

[1,369 records from 411 (38%) squares]



A fairly tall, erect tree. BARK **black, fissured; orange-red underbark** on young branches; exuding a sweet gum when injured. THORNS straight and white. LEAVES **glandular and shiny**. FLOWERS in **golden balls**. FRUIT a sickle-shaped, shiny, reddish-brown pod; clustered.

Flowers and fruit are conspicuous. Young plants may be mistaken for *A. nebrownii*, *A. erioloba* or *A. tortilis*.

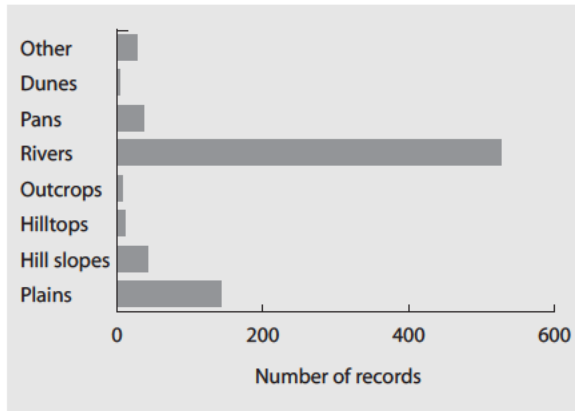


DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Generally common in the central Namibian interior. Common to abundant and sometimes one of the dominant species in the Karstveld, the central highlands and south-central plateau. Uncommon in the north-west and generally uncommon in the central-east, but can be locally abundant and one of the dominant species in places. Often localised and dominant along dry rivers. A number of localities have been added to the previously known distribution of this species in the eastern Kunene Region and the south-east; the records from the Cuvelai and north-east are range extensions, but were not confirmed by specimens.

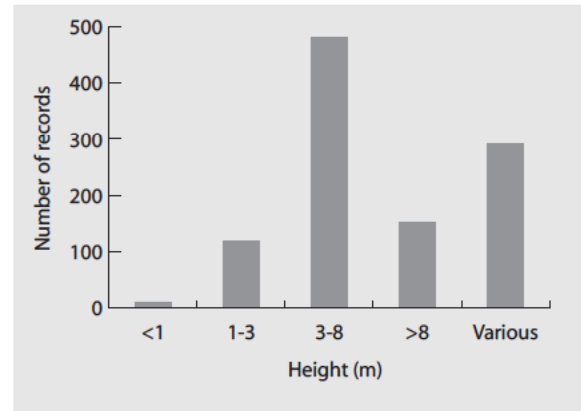
HABITAT

Mostly found on river banks and in dry riverbeds; occasionally on plains, and less often on pans (in the central-east) and floodplains. Substrates include silt, clay, sand and calcrete.



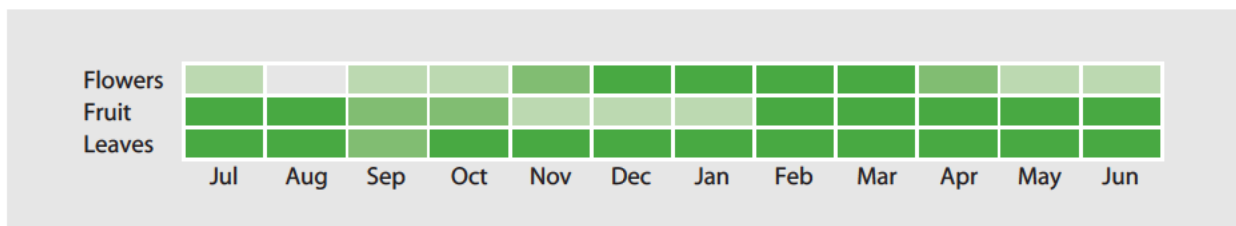
GROWTH FORM

Mostly a tree from 3–8 m high, but shrubby forms occur in all height categories. Trees higher than 8 m occur mainly along rivers in the Kalahari, central highlands and the south. Stands with mixed heights occur throughout the country.



ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS November to April, with a peak in December and January, but with occasional flowering all year. Flowering appears to be responsive to rainfall. 'Flowering again after rain' was noted in January 1998 in 2316CD and in March 1999 in 2118CA. In April 1998 and 1999, flowers were only 'just starting' in 2217BD and 2515BB, respectively. **FRUIT** all year, but less often between September and January; young fruit recorded from October to April, and ripe fruit mainly from July to October. **LEAVES** essentially evergreen; occasional bare trees from May to November, and young leaves from August to January.



GENERAL

The bark of *A. karroo* is used medicinally and for tanning purposes. The resin is edible, even palatable. Weavers nest in the trees, and the flowers attract masses of bees, butterflies and other insects. In 2618DB black beetles bored holes 30–40 mm deep into the stems, which then exuded gum; eventually the trees died (FOU2). Often parasitised by mistletoe. Dead trees were noted in several areas. In other areas old trees have died and young ones are coming up (SCH16 in 2118CA). Encroaching in places (KOL4, 2116DA). In 1917DA, valleys that were open in the 1960s are now dense with *A. karroo* and *Ziziphus mucronata*.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

None recorded.