

# *Albizia anthelmintica*

## Worm-cure Albizia / Aru

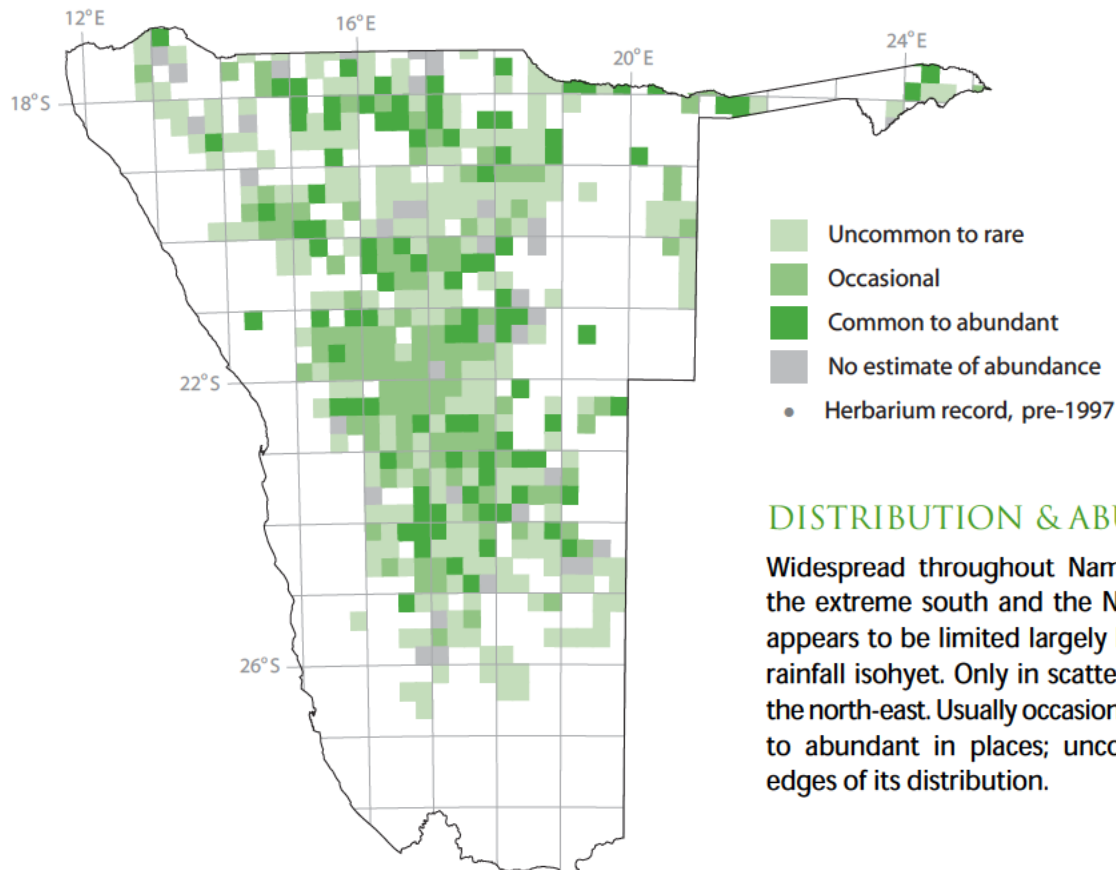
Aroe; oumaboom (A);  
Wurmringenbaum (G); omuama (H,  
Ok); arub/s (K); mupopo (Mb);  
mukengutji (Rk)

[1,570 records from 478 (45%) squares]



A tree with smooth, grey bark and a distinctive shape rather like a Japanese drawing. LEAVES with few pinna and leaflet pairs; leaflets obovate, oblique, fairly small, with a distinctly pointed tip; stipules are often hardened, but not into thorns. FLOWERS half-spherical heads, stamens long and numerous, petals small. FRUIT a flattened, papery pod with pointed tips and a swelling above each seed.

Flowers and pods are conspicuous. The leaflets are similar to those of *Acacia mellifera*, but with a pointed apex.

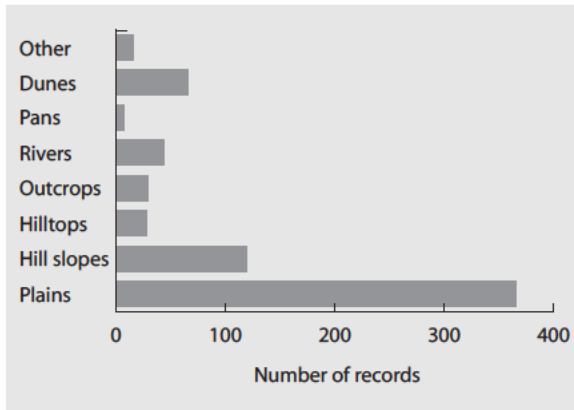


### DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Widespread throughout Namibia, except in the extreme south and the Namib Desert. It appears to be limited largely by the 150-mm rainfall isohyet. Only in scattered localities in the north-east. Usually occasional, but common to abundant in places; uncommon on the edges of its distribution.

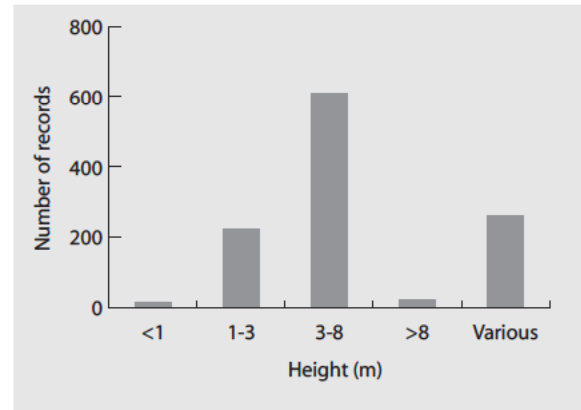
## HABITAT

Mostly found on plains, but also hill slopes and occasionally other habitats, such as dry rivers in the central-west, and dunes and interdune valleys in the south and south-east. It grows on gravel or rock substrates mostly, sometimes calcrete, sandy clay or sand.



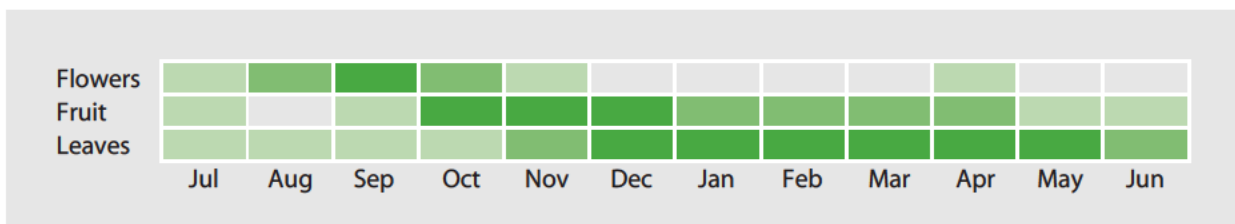
## GROWTH FORM

Most often a tree 3–8 m high; occasionally over 8 m. Only 16% of records noted young trees; this could be because young trees are easily overlooked.



## ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS are recorded at least once in almost every month, but mainly August to October. In some years they start in June or last up until February (for example, February flowering was recorded for three years in the Karstveld), or have a second flowering in April. FRUIT mostly from October to April, with young fruit between September and November and ripe fruit in December and January. LEAVES deciduous, mostly December to May, but some leaves may be found on some individuals all year; young leaves September to November.



## GENERAL

As the scientific and common names indicate, *A. anthelmintica* has properties that kill parasitic worms, such as tapeworm. The plant is browsed extensively by goats and game, especially young plants and new shoots; dassie and porcupine gnaw the trunk; elephant strip the bark and twigs; birds, such as the White-browed Sparrow-weaver and Red-billed Buffalo-weaver nest in them; sunbirds visit the flowers; and 'dikpens' (armoured ground crickets) and baboons eat the leaves.

Apart from using the roots and bark as a remedy for intestinal worms, small branches are also used as toothbrushes. The gum is good to eat. The tree has horticultural potential as garden or bonsai subject; it is attractive, tolerates frost and drought, and is able to grow in mica schist.

The plant is often infested with parasites such as *Tapinanthus*. Dead or dying trees were noted in a number of areas, which could be due to parasites or other causes. The Kavango population appears to be healthy, with no dead trees and many young ones, especially in somewhat protected areas (HOR2).

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