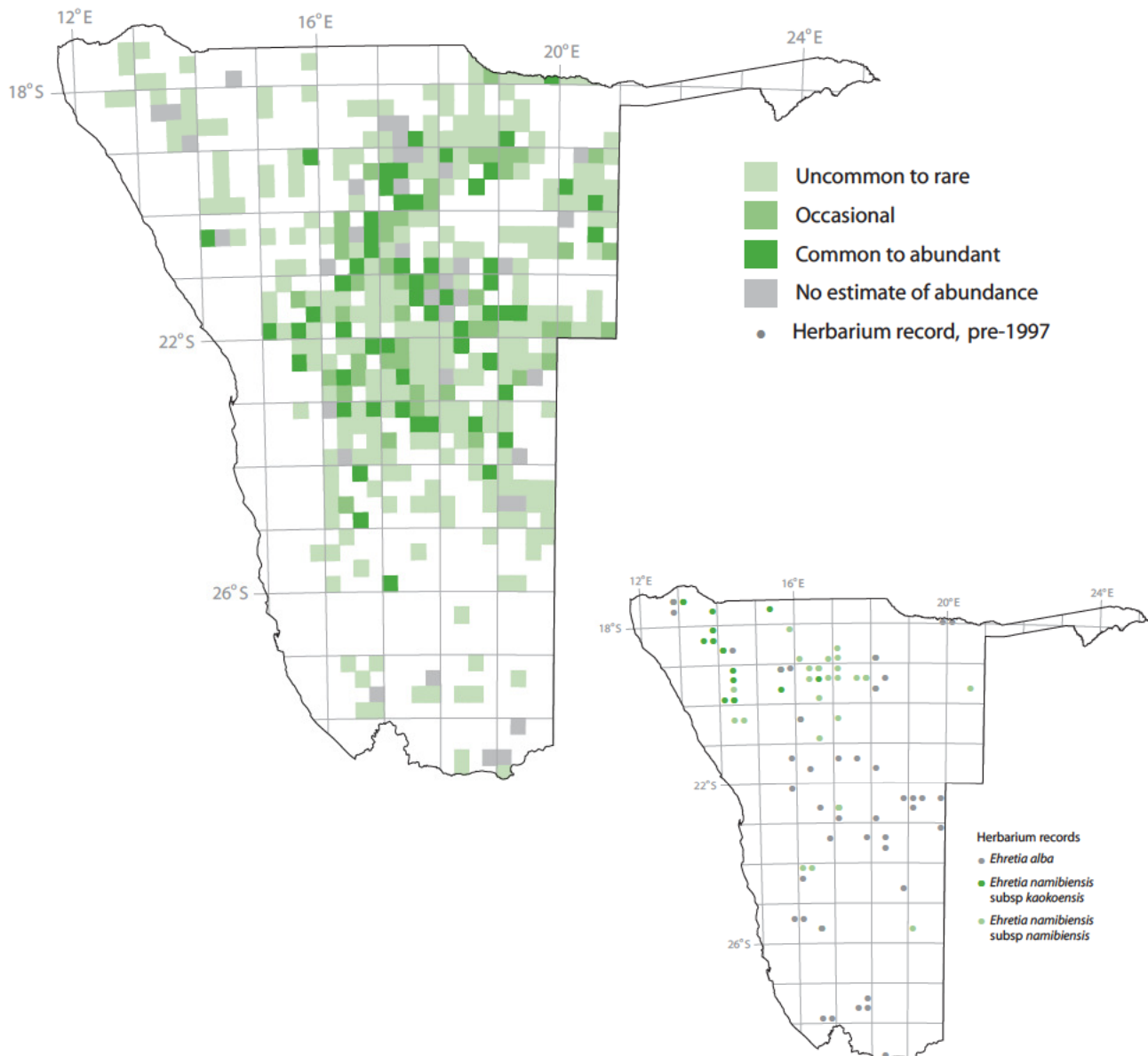


# *Ehretia alba* and *Ehretia* *namibiensis*

= *Ehretia rigida*

The revision of the genus *Ehretia* since the start of the TAP (Retief 2001) has divided *Ehretia rigida* in Namibia into *E. alba* and *E. namibiensis* (*E. rigida* is still a valid species, but it only occurs in South Africa).

Because it is not possible to go back to a sight record and check the identification, all abundance records for *E. rigida* have been mapped together and are presented below. Re-identified herbarium records have been included as an inset map to show the distribution of the two species.



*Ehretia alba*= *Ehretia rigida* (in part)

## White Puzzle-bush

Deurmekaarbos (A); Bergflieder (G);  
omusepa (H)

[711 records from 312 (29%) squares]

A semi-deciduous shrub, **with rigid branches going in all directions**. BARK smooth, grey to dark grey. LEAVES **generally clustered on dwarf branches**; obovate to elliptic, **6–25 mm**; **hairless**; midrib and lateral veins prominent below; **margin entire, but with bristles which make it feel coarse**; apex tapering or rounded; base tapering. FLOWERS **white** to cream, **young buds pale mauve to lilac**; corolla tube and lobes c. 3 mm long; sweet-scented. FRUIT almost round, 4–6 mm, with persistent calyx; red.

Flowers are small but conspicuous, fruit might be overlooked at a passing glance. This species was formerly known as *E. rigida* in Namibia, and might be confused with *E. namibiensis*.

Abundance and distribution are shown along with *E. namibiensis* (page 565). For other aspects of the biology, all records of *E. rigida*, excluding those in the north-west, have been renamed *E. alba*.

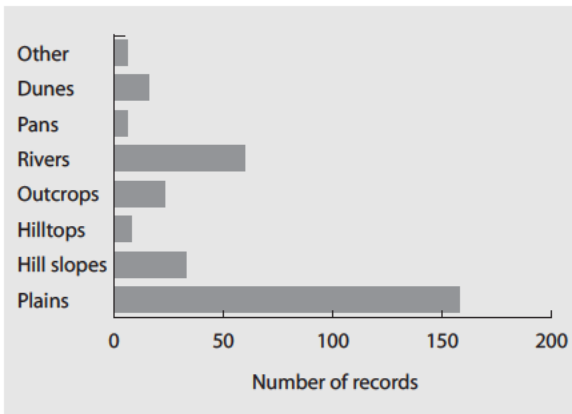


## DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Predominantly in central Namibia and generally uncommon to occasional or common in places. There are only a few records of this species in the north-west.

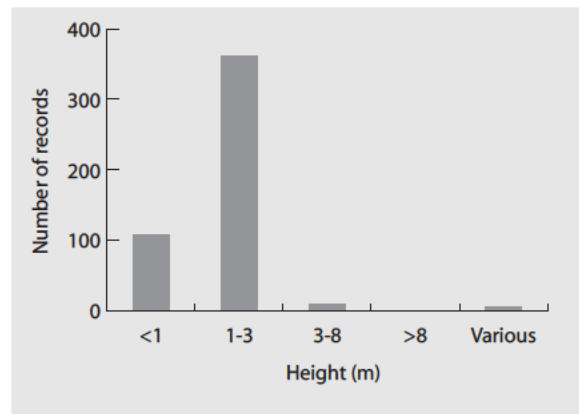
## HABITAT

Found in various habitats, but mainly on plains and river banks; also on hill slopes and hilltops in the central highlands and dunes in the south-east. Occurs on rocky, as well as sandy substrates and calcrete.



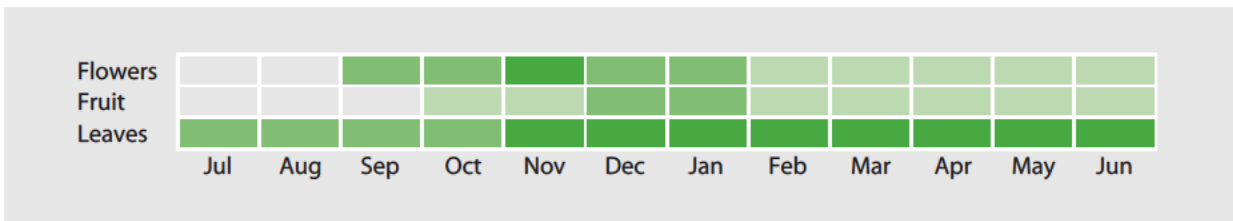
## GROWTH FORM

Predominantly a shrub up to 3 m high, but occasionally higher; rarely a tree.



## ANNUAL CYCLE

**FLOWERS** mainly September to January, with some flowers until May. **FRUIT** October to May, with a peak in December and January, but never prolific. **LEAVES** some bare individuals from July to November, with young leaves mainly September and October.



## GENERAL

Heavily browsed. This plant has the ability to coppice some distance away from the parent plant; it would make a good hedge plant for gardens. Sweetly scented when flowering; often flowers quite profusely.

## CONSERVATION CONCERNS

None recorded.

## *Ehretia namibiensis*

= *Ehretia rigida* (in part)  
= *Ehretia obtusifolia*  
= *Ehretia amoena*

### Namibian Puzzle-bush

[121 records from 72 (7%) squares]

Shrub. BARK light grey; stems with scattered bristles and glands. LEAVES alternate or clustered on older branches; broadly obovate to broadly elliptic, 20–50 mm long; sparsely hairy on both sides, dull yellowish-green; midrib with glandular bristles below; margin entire to shallowly toothed; apex rounded, notched or with a small point; base tapering. FLOWERS **lavender blue or light mauve**; 8–9 mm long; corolla lobes shorter than tube; **flower stalk and calyx with dense glandular hairs**. FRUIT a fleshy berry, almost round, 5–6 mm.

This is a recently described species with two subspecies. Subspecies *kaokoensis* occurs in the north-west and subsp. *namibiensis* in the rest of the country. This species can be confused with *E. alba*.

Abundance and distribution are shown along with *E. alba* (page 565). For other aspects of the biology, records of *E. rigida* from the north-west, as well as records of *E. obtusifolia*, have been renamed *E. namibiensis*.

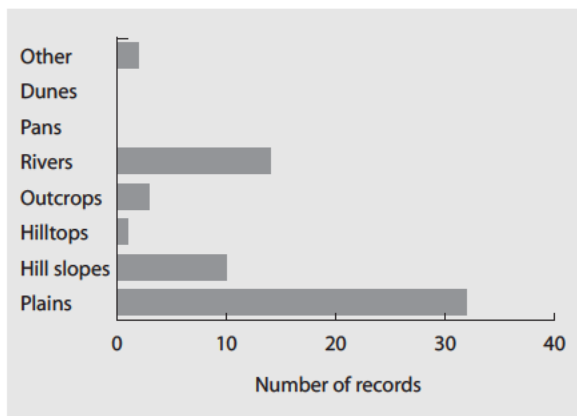


## DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Found in scattered localities in most of Namibia north of 26° S, but mostly in the north-west. Subspecies *kaokoensis* is uncommon to rare north-west of about 20° S and 16° E. Subspecies *namibiensis* is uncommon to occasionally common in the rest of the country.

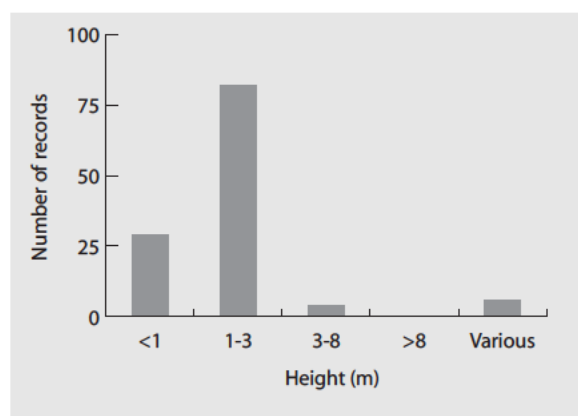
## HABITAT

Subspecies *kaokoensis* is found mostly along dry rivers or on plains; subsp. *namibiensis* in various habitats, but mostly on plains, but also hill slopes.



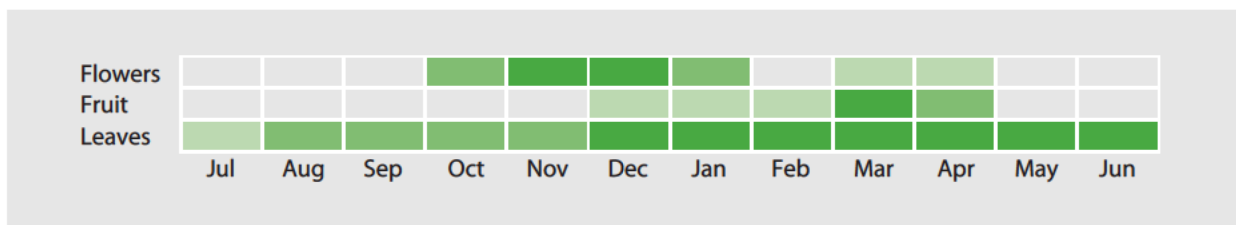
## GROWTH FORM

Mostly a shrub in the 1–3-m height class; subsp. *namibiensis* is occasionally a tree of over 3 m high.



## ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS from October to January, with a second flush in late summer. FRUIT mainly March and April. LEAVES mainly December to June, with young leaves in October.



## GENERAL

Browsed by game and livestock.

## CONSERVATION CONCERNS

None recorded.



*Ehretia namibiensis*, C. Mannheimer