

Maerua schinzii

Lammerdrol

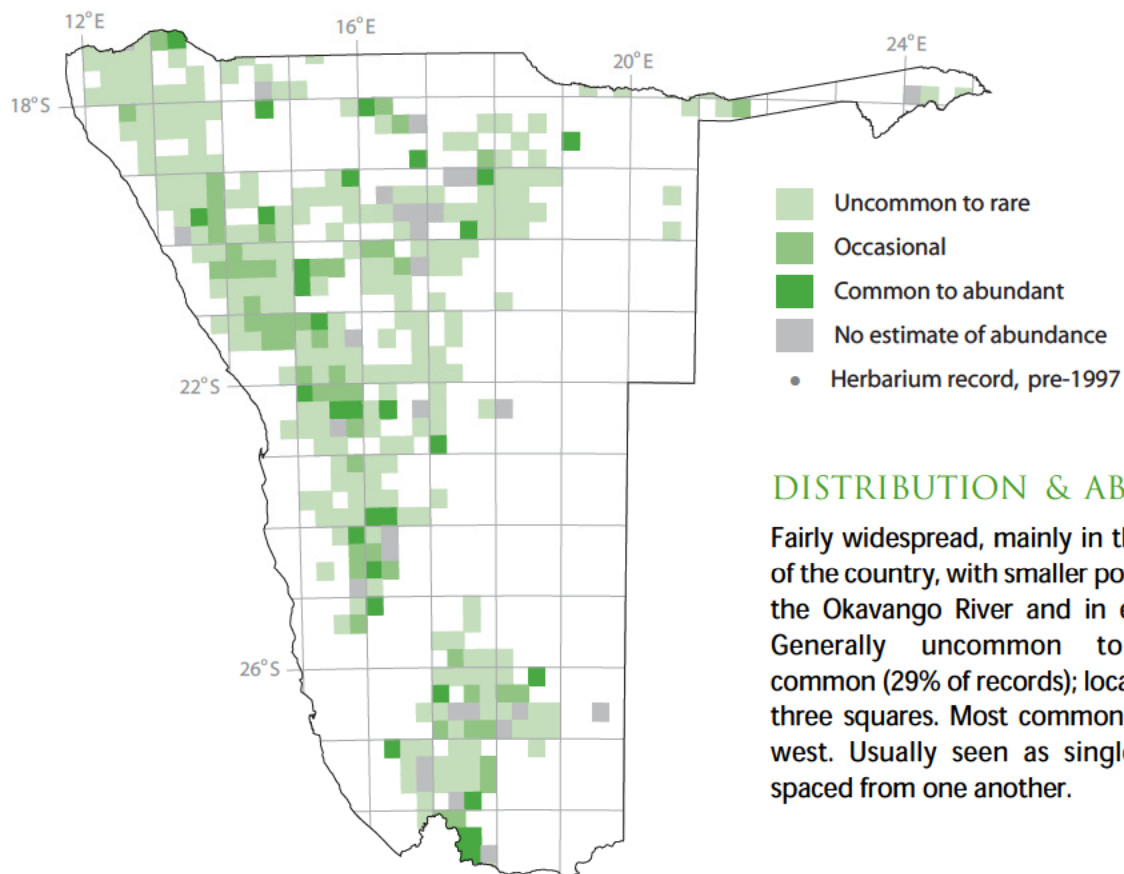
Ringwood tree (E); kringboom (A);
Knotenfruchtbaum (G); omutengu (H);
goradab (K)

[995 records from 360 (34%) squares]



Evergreen tree. BARK smooth, reddish-brown to almost black; **often one side of the trunk is darker, while the other side is paler grey and flushed dirty pink, often with horizontal 'wrinkles'**, hence the common name. LEAVES **elliptic to ovate or oblong, leathery, sometimes fine-sandpapery, other times velvety soft**; dull green to yellow-green; apex blunt, shallowly notched or with a hair-like tip; petiole up to 15 mm long. FRUIT **bean-like, constricted between seeds** to give a bead-like appearance.

Can very easily be confused with *M. angolensis*, and sometimes with *Boscia albitrunca*, especially in the north-west.



DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Fairly widespread, mainly in the western half of the country, with smaller populations along the Okavango River and in eastern Caprivi. Generally uncommon to occasionally common (29% of records); locally abundant in three squares. Most common in the central-west. Usually seen as single trees widely spaced from one another.

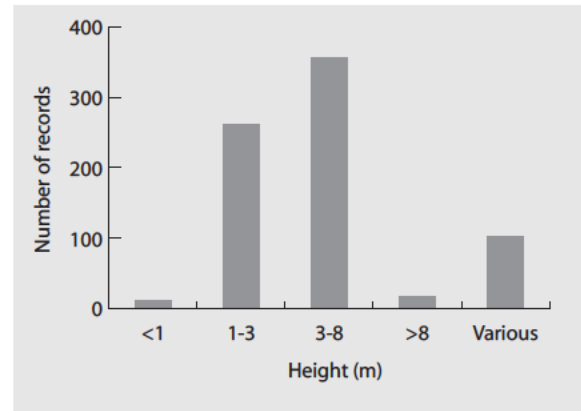
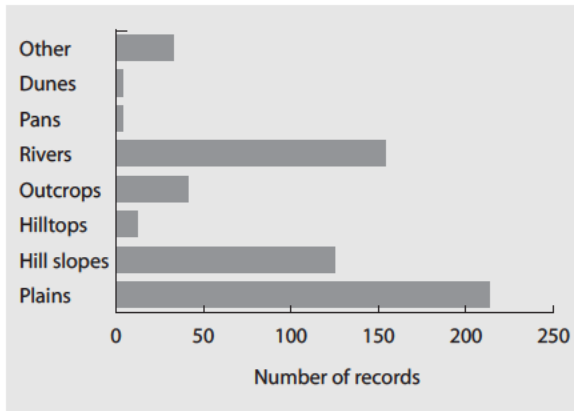
HABITAT

Various, but mainly plains, along dry rivers and on hill slopes. Also on rocky outcrops in the central-west and south. Grows on a variety of substrates.

GROWTH FORM

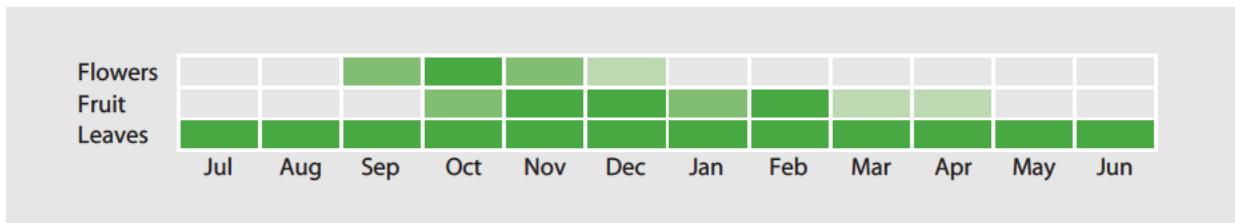
Usually a tree (90% of records) up to 8 m high, but occasionally higher. Mixed stands with individuals of all heights found in the central-west, north-west and south. In the north and

north-west where these trees are heavily browsed they tend to have an open, flat canopy, whereas in Windhoek where they are not browsed, they have a rounded, more drooping canopy. The leaves of the western trees seem to be thicker, more leathery and rougher than those of the east and central parts, which are softer and more velvety. In the far north-west many individuals were observed that were over 2 m, but with a very slender, sapling like trunk and a very wispy canopy.



ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS September to December, with a peak in October and occasional records most months. **FRUIT** some recorded every month, but mostly October to February. **LEAVES** evergreen, with young leaves produced from October to January; sometimes deciduous in the south.



GENERAL

Very nutritious and a favourite browse of game and livestock. Also eaten by ostrich. Caterpillars often defoliate trees. Young trees often need protection from a 'nursery plant' until they are large enough to withstand the browsing pressure. Mature trees generally have a browse line at giraffe height in Etosha National Park and Kaokoveld.

Various parts of the plant are used medicinally and ritually.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

In the north-west, *M. schinzii* is being increasingly used for temporary shelters by young people who are not aware of the old tradition of leaving these trees standing. They are also being hammered by giraffes in the north-west. Protected by forestry legislation.