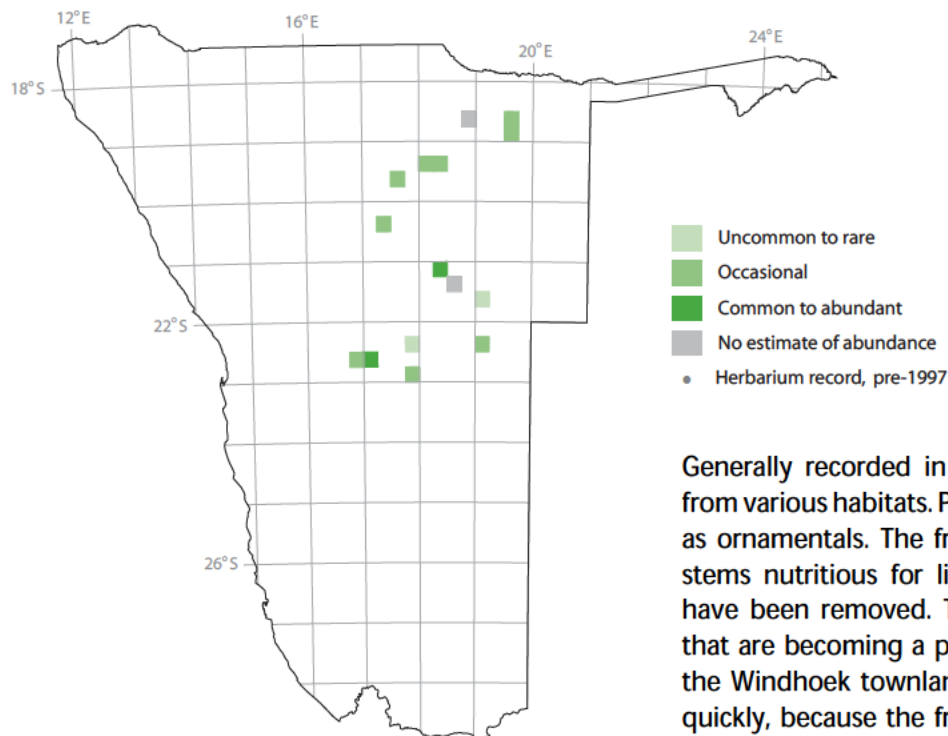


One record from Otavi area (1917C), one from Grootfontein area (1918CD) and another from Farm Regenstein (2217CA). Probably not a threat in Namibia, but should be monitored.

Opuntia spp. | Spiny Cactus / Prickly-pear

CACTACEAE | Origin: America | [18 records from 15 squares]

Spiny succulent, generally with broad, flattened, segmented, green stems which resemble leaves. LEAVES absent, replaced by numerous extremely sharp, slender spines. FLOWERS fleshy calyx, with brightly coloured petals. FRUIT ovoid with numerous spines; fleshy, juicy.



Generally recorded in the 1–3-m height class, from various habitats. Planted for cattle fodder or as ornamentals. The fruit are delicious and the stems nutritious for livestock once the spines have been removed. There are several species that are becoming a problem in public areas in the Windhoek townlands. They proliferate very quickly, because the fruit are eaten by animals, including birds, and the seeds are thus rapidly spread. They also grow vegetatively from sections of stem thrown onto the ground, thus chopping them up does not eradicate them, but rather exacerbates the problem.