

Philenoptera nelsii= *Lonchocarpus nelsii*

Kalahari Omupanda

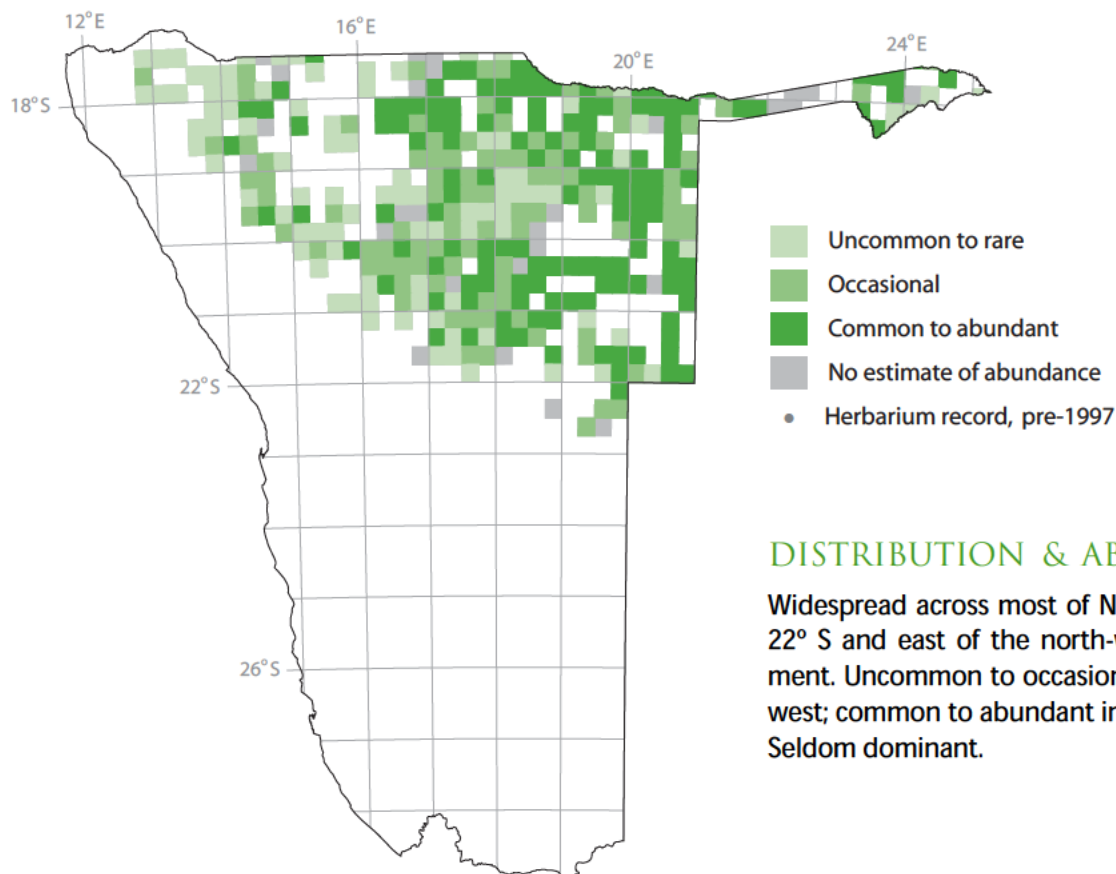
Kalahari apple-leaf (E); appelblaar (A);
Apfelblattbaum (G); mukololo (L);
mupanda (Rk, Rum); mukorokoro (T)

[1,120 records from 353 (33%) squares]



A small tree. BARK yellowish-grey. LEAVES **apparently simple**, large, dark green, **leathery and pucker-edged**. FLOWERS white to **purple**, in densely-branched sprays. FRUIT a flattened pod.

Flowers and pods are conspicuous. Young, hairy leaves may be confused with those of *Combretum molle*, while mature leaves resemble those of *C. zeyheri*. Both species of *Combretum* have opposite leaves and lack stipules, which are initially present in *Philenoptera*.

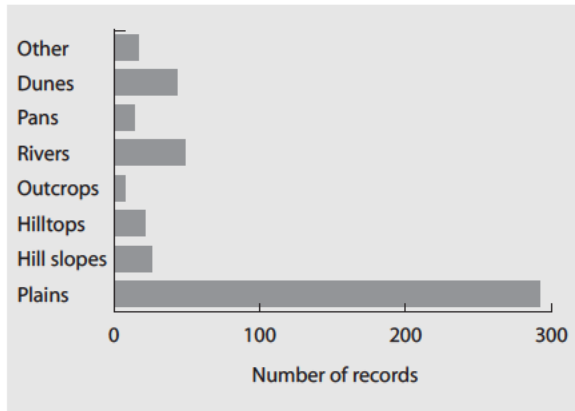


DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Widespread across most of Namibia north of 22° S and east of the north-western escarpment. Uncommon to occasional in the north-west; common to abundant in the north-east. Seldom dominant.

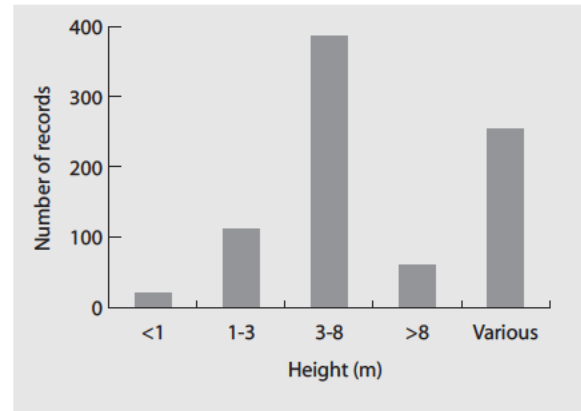
HABITAT

Various habitats, but most often on plains. Also along rivers in the north-east and north-west; on hills on the north-central plateau; on dunes and around pans in the north-east. Generally on deep sand; occasionally on calcrete or dolomite.



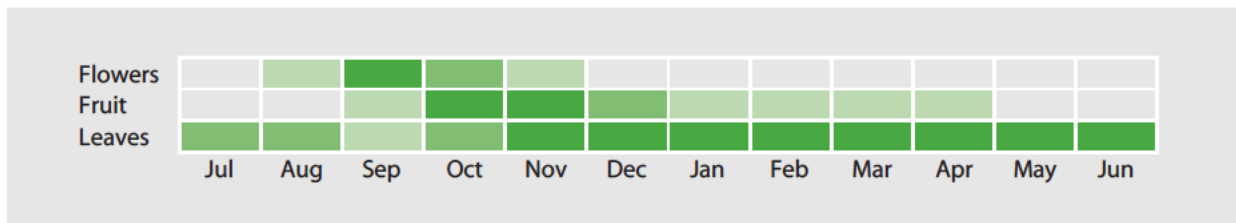
GROWTH FORM

Mostly a tree in the 3–8-m height class, but sometimes taller (10% of records), particularly on the north-central plateau; younger plants more shrub-like. There were many stands of plants of mixed heights in the east and on the north-central plateau.



ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS August to November. **FRUIT** September to April. **LEAVES** semi-deciduous, with bare trees from July to October and new leaves from September to November.



GENERAL

The wood is very tough and flexible, and does not break or shatter easily. It has been used in the past for making ox-wagon wheels and bearings for agricultural implements. It is still used by farmers for chain guides and to replace oak bearings in modern implements. Particularly used where slow-moving bearings are needed, and friction would soon wear out metal bearings.

The leaves are eaten by giraffe and cattle; flowers are eaten by guinea fowl and dik-dik and attract insects including honey- and bumble-bees. In Kaokoveld, the outer, scaly bark of branches is used to promote curdling in milk; spoons are carved from the wood. Susceptible to parasites such as *Plicosepalus* spp., which appear to have killed some specimens. This plant is regarded as an indicator of fertile soil in the north.

With its neat shape and attractive flowers, *Philenoptera nelsii* is of horticultural potential.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

None recorded. Protected by forestry legislation.