

Strychnos cocculoides

Corky Monkey-orange

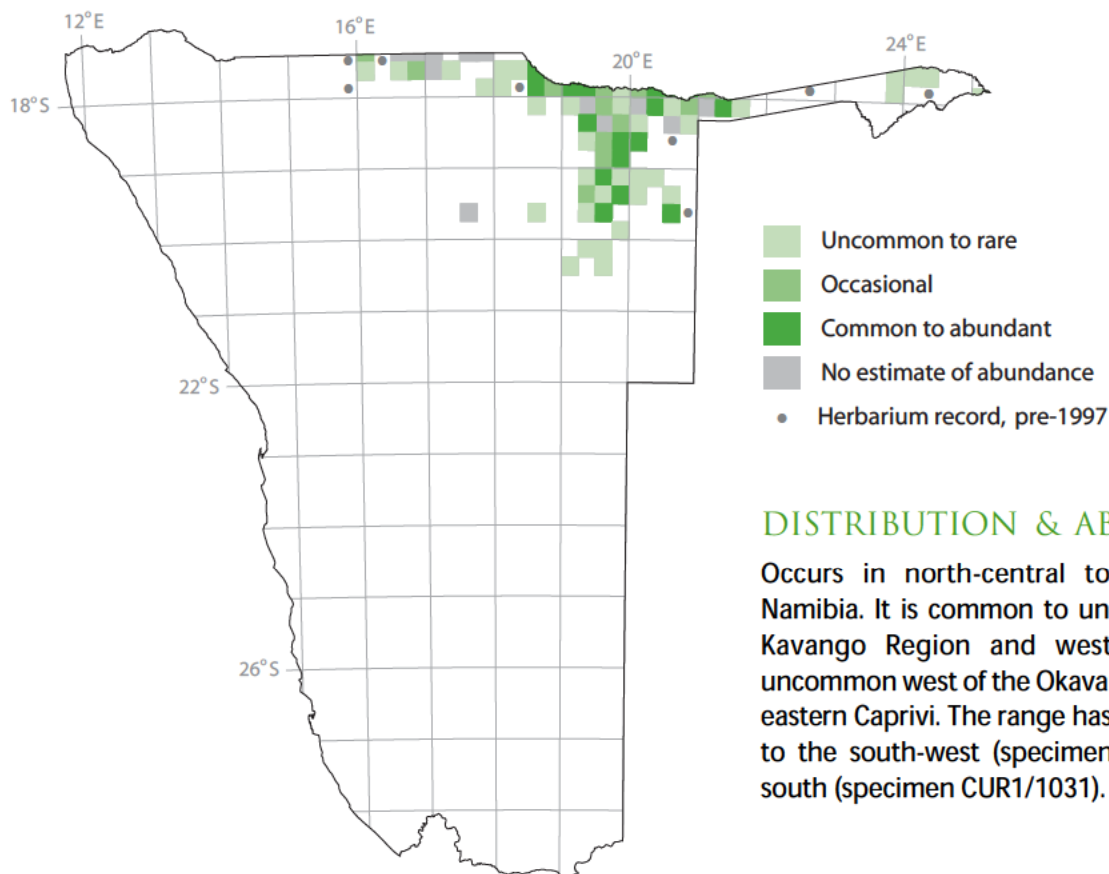
Geelklapper (A); muhuluhulu (L);
eguni (Od, Rk)

[125 records from 77 (7%) squares]



Semi-deciduous tree, with a compact canopy. BARK grey-brown, thickly corky and deeply grooved to expose a pale brown underbark; young branchlets plum-coloured, densely downy. SPINES curved in pairs at nodes and straight at ends of branches. LEAVES ovate to almost circular; bright green, shiny, sparsely downy; 5–7 pale green, protruding veins originating at or near base; apex broadly tapering with a pointed tip. FLOWERS green-white in dense, terminal clusters. FRUIT 60–100 mm in diameter, dark green with white to pale green specks; yellow when ripe with a hard, woody shell.

Flowers are inconspicuous, fruit conspicuous, especially when ripe. Can be confused with *S. spinosa*, but *S. cocculoides* generally has much thicker cork with deeper fissures. The plum-coloured young branchlets are diagnostic.

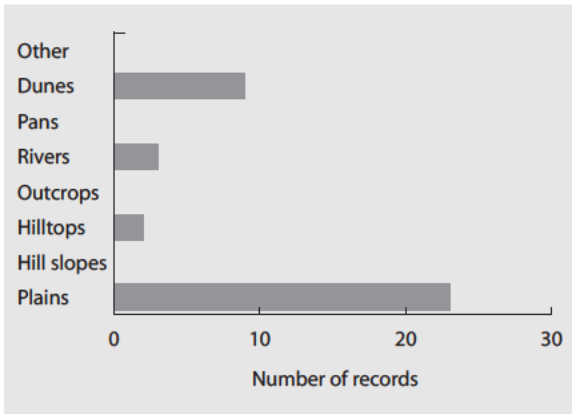


DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Occurs in north-central to north-eastern Namibia. It is common to uncommon in the Kavango Region and west of Tsumkwe; uncommon west of the Okavango River and in eastern Caprivi. The range has been extended to the south-west (specimen HIL1/200) and south (specimen CUR1/1031).

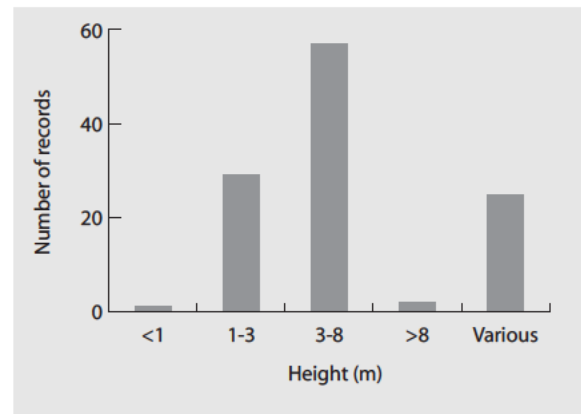
HABITAT

Generally, found on sandy plains and dunes in areas of mixed woodland and riverine forest.



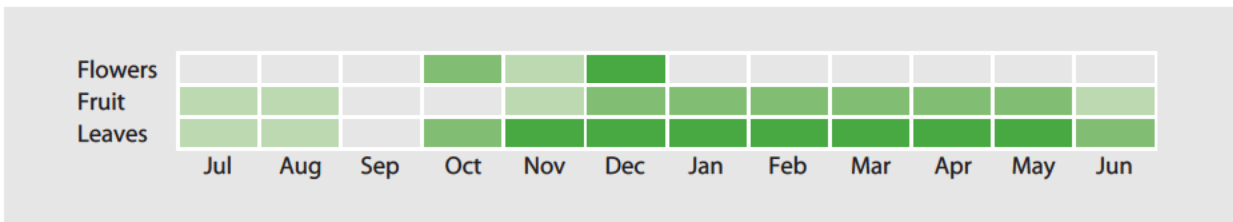
GROWTH FORM

Usually a tree in the 3–8-m height class.



ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS October to December, with individual records from May some years. **FRUIT** November to May, sometimes up to August. **LEAVES** mainly from October to June, with leaves present on some individuals most of the year.



GENERAL

The fruit are edible and palatable, and can be stored for relatively long periods of time. They are becoming an important cash crop, even as far south as Windhoek and Swakopmund. The pulp is eaten raw or made into wine or brandy; green fruit are buried in sand and collected later, when the pulp has liquified and makes a refreshing beverage. The seeds are not eaten and, as well as the bark, are said to contain the poison, strychnine. The roots, green fruit and juice are used medicinally. Dry fruit shells are used to make rattles, store small items, or hold cosmetic fats and butters. The wood of the tree is used for implement handles.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

Local communities conserve the trees for their food and economic values, and they are starting to cultivate them. Protected by forestry legislation.