Trees of the Year 2006



Raphia australis

Palm Family (Arecaceae)
Common names: Kosi palm; Kosi-palm (Afr.); umVuma (Z); iMali (R)
SA Tree No.: 26

Meaning of scientific name

The word used in Madagascar for the fibre obtained from leaves of *Raphia ruffia* is *rafia*, or in English raffia, and could be the origin of the genus name. Or the name could be derived from the Greek *rafis*, a needle, referring to the pointed leaflets. The species name *australis* means southern.

Areas where it occurs

Grows naturally in northern KwaZulu-Natal and southern Mozambique, only in a small area from just south of Kosi Bay to about 40 km north of Maputo.

Environment where it occurs

On seasonally flooded dunes or swamp forest, often in dense groups. The trees have breathing roots (pneumatophores) like mangroves (trees that grow in coastal lagoons).

Uses

Leaves used as thatch material and leaf stalks for hut construction, fencing and rafts. Craftsmen convert midribs of the leaves into fashionable furniture. Large fruiting spikes make attractive African ornaments.
Palmnut vultures (*Gypohierax angolensis*) nest in the trees and feed on the fruit.

Propagation

Fresh seeds grow easily once the outer scales have been removed. Seedlings need filtered sunlight, abundant water and protection from wind.

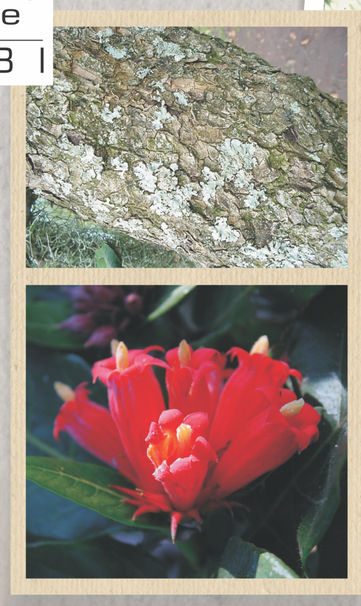
Conservation status: Vulnerable





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Burchellia bubalina

Coffee Family (Rubiaceae)
Common names: Wild pomegranate; Wildegranaat (Afr.); iThobankomo (X); isiGolwane (Z); maHlosana (Sw)
SA Tree No.: 688

Meaning of scientific name

The genus *Burchellia* was named after W.J. Burchell, early explorer, naturalist and author of *Travels in the interior of southern Africa*. The species name *bubalina* comes from the Latin word *bubalus* and refers to the buffalo-like horns of the mature calyx found on the fruits.

Distribution

The coastal strip of South Africa, from the Western Cape to KwaZulu-Natal, and forests of Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Also in Swaziland.

Uses

The hard, dense, close-grained wood is sometimes used to build huts and for making agricultural implements such as hoe handles and cattle yokes.
Roots are taken as an emetic to clean the body.
Mixture of roots and some other plant parts used to concoct a love charm. Bark and roots used together are suitable as splints for binding fractured limbs of animals. Planted in gardens as ornamental shrub or small tree.

Propagation

Easily propagated from seed sown in October or from cuttings of half-ripe shoots. Seeds take about 46 weeks to germinate and young plants must be protected from frost.

Conservation status:
Common



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