2008 Trees of the Year

Diospyros whyteana (SA tree number 611)

Ebony Family (Ebenaceae)
Commonly known as Bladdernut, Blackbark; Swartbas (A); Mohlatsane (NS); Munyavhili (V); umTenatane (X); uManzimane, umKahze (Z)

- Evergreen shrub or small, multistemmed tree with a straight trunk branching low down to form a dense, round to pyramidal crown.
- Found in forests, on mountain slopes and in rocky places in all the provinces of South Africa, extending as far north as Ethiopia.
- Shiny leaves with a fringe of ginger hairs, leathery, dark green above and paler below.
- Bell-shaped, white to creamy-yellow flowers hanging from hairy stalks; male and female flowers on different trees.
- Scarlet-red, fleshy berries are enclosed in inflated, bladder-like capsules that dry to red. They remain on the tree for many months after the fruits have fallen and are therefore found on the trees at almost any time of the year.

Uses

- Leaves are browsed by stock and game, and birds eat the fruit.
- The roasted seeds have been used as a substitute for coffee.
- The wood is dense, evenly grained, strong and suitable for furniture, but large logs are often not available. Stems of smaller diameter are used for implement handles.
- Medicinally used for treating menstrual pain, impotency, infertility and rashes.





Harpephyllum caffrum (SA tree number 361)

Mango Family (Anacardiaceae)
Commonly known as Wild plum; Wildepruim (A); umGwenya (Z, X); Mothekele (NS)

- Large, evergreen tree 15 m tall, with thick crown.
- Commonly found in riverine forests, woodland in the eastern parts of SA. Often planted in urban areas.
- Glossy, dark green, compound leaves with sickle-shaped leaflets.
- Small, whitish green flowers carried near the tips of the branches; male and female flowers on separate trees.
- Many red, plum-like fruits produced in clusters at the tips of the branches. Fruit are enjoyed by humans, mammals and birds.

Uses

- Fruit eaten by birds, other animals, insects and humans; used for making jams and jellies.
- Ideal large, fast-growing shade tree for a garden.
- Bark used medicinally. Also used for dyeing, as it gives a mauve or pink colour.
- The pale reddish, fairly heavy wood is used as a general purpose timber and for furniture and beams. It is also used for carving curios.





Markhamia zanzibarica (SA tree number 677)

Jacaranda Family (Bignoniaceae)
Commonly known as Bell bean tree; Klokkiesboontjieboom (A); Mula-kholoma (V)

- A small, upright tree with slender, crooked branches and a soft, green crown.
- Found in bushveld, in riverine fringes, and on rocky ridges and hill slopes from Tanzania and Malawi southwards to Botswana, Namibia, northern SA and the Caprivi Strip.
- Bark grey-brown, smooth and glossy when young but flaky in older trees. Young branches with conspicuous lenticels.
- Leaves opposite, compound and odd-pinnate (2–4 pairs of leaflets), with fine yellowish hairs on the lower surfaces of mature leaflets.
- Bell-shaped yellow flowers with maroon flecks, 2–3 mm long, carried directly on the stems and branches.
- Slender, bean-like capsules, up to 50 cm long and spirally twisted, produced in late summer. Dark brown when mature, splitting open lengthwise to release many flat, winged seeds that are dispersed by the wind.

Uses

- The flowers are visited by ants. The leaves are eaten by elephants.
- The wood is fairly hard and durable and is used for roof timbers in buildings and for making tool handles. It is well suited for the manufacture of ornaments.
- The roots are used in traditional medicine to treat backache.

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Photographs: A.L. Notten (SANBI), M. Jordaan (SANBI), G. Nichols, D.C.H. Plowes and J. Vahrmeyer
Text: Beate Sachse and Emsie du Plessis

50 YEARS CELEBRATION