TREES OF THE YEAR 2009

SOUTH AFRICAN national biodiversity institute
SANBI
www.sanbi.org

BRIZA
www.briza.co.za

Acacia galpinii

Family: Fabaceae (Legume Family)
Common names: Monkey-thorn, Tshikwalo (Tshivenda), Apiesdoring (Afr.), Molopa (N. Sotho)
SA tree number: 166

Large, fast-growing tree with lush, light green leaves, excellent for large garden.

General appearance
- Tall, deciduous, up to 36 m, with rounded crown.
- Bark greyish brown, flaking in thin strips; prickles in pairs.
- Leaves feathery compound, light green.
- Flowers cream, on elongated spikes (Sep.–Oct.), produced before new leaves.
- Pods flat, red- to purple-brown (Feb.–Mar.).

Where it occurs
- Open, wooded grassland or woodland, often near streams.
- Northern SA (Limpopo and North West) to Zambia and Tanzania.

Meaning of the name
- *Acacia*—refers to thorns (Greek akis = thorn).
- *galpinii*—in honour of E.E. Galpin (1858—1941), plant collector.
- Monkey-thorn—monkeys like taking cover in the wide branches and eat the pods.

Ecology and uses
- Insects visit the flowers.
- Seeds dispersed by animals that eat the pods.
- Browsed and used as shade tree by game in summer.
- Provides shelter for nesting birds.

As a garden tree
- Ideal for large garden—flat crown and preference for full sun.
- Can survive hot and dry conditions.
- Easy to propagate from nonparasitised seeds.
- Seeds soaked in hot water overnight, sown next day.
- Frost-tolerant, but severe frost can damage young branches.
- Invasive roots may damage structures.
- Well suited for bonsai.





Pterocarpus rotundifolius

Family: Fabaceae (Legume Family)
Common names: Round-leaved kiaat, Round-leaved bloodwood, Dopperkiaat (Afr.), Muhataha (Tshivenda), mokwatapa (N. Sotho), iNdlandlovu (Zulu)
SA tree number: 237

The flowers strongly honey-scented. Bee-keepers like it good source of nectar and food for bees.

General appearance
- Deciduous, up to 20 m, open crown, often multistemmed.
- Bark grey-brown, splitting longitudinally.
- Leaves divided into 57 rounded leaflets, glossy green.
- Flowers yellow, pea-shaped, in sprays; petals crinkly; flowering after spring rains.
- Pods flattened, round, one-seeded.

Where it occurs
- Open bushveld and rocky hillsides, often in colonies.
- Northern KwaZulu-Natal to northern parts of Limpopo and North West.
- Also indigenous to Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia.

Meaning of the name
- *Pterocarpus*—'winged fruit' (ptero = wing; karpus = -fruited).
- *rotundifolius*— 'round leaves' (rotundi = rounded; folius = -leaved).

Ecology and uses
- Insects visit and pollinate the flowers.
- Cattle and game browse young leaves.
- Host plant for larvae of bushveld charaxes butterfly.
- Burns easily in bush fires, which stimulate coppicing.
- As a general-purpose timber, but not very durable.
- Leaf infusion as drops for sore eyes.

As a garden tree
- Drought-hardy, grows best in frost-free areas.
- Fast-growing, with noninvasive roots.
- Easily propagated from nonparasitised seeds, but insect predation fairly common.
- Seeds soaked in hot water overnight, sown next day.
- Also propagated from truncheons (large cuttings from stem) taken in early spring; roots easily.

Halleria lucida

Family: Scrophulariaceae (Snapdragon Family)
Common names: Tree Fuchsia, Notsung (Afr.), um-Binza (Xhosa), iMinza (Zulu), Mothêbêrêbê (N. Sotho)
SA tree number: 670

Excellent tree for attracting birds to a garden.

General appearance
- Evergreen tree or large shrub, often multistemmed.
- Crown spreading, glossy green leaves on drooping branches.
- Bark grey-brown and grooved lengthwise.
- Flowers tubular, orange to brick-red (or yellow), clustered in leaf axils and on short shoots on branches and main trunk, very rich in nectar.
- Clusters of round green berries, turning black when ripe; edible, but not tasty.

Where it occurs
- Cape Peninsula up the east coast to Mpumalanga and Limpopo, extending to Ethiopia.
- Coastal and karroid scrub, evergreen forest & margins, rocky mountain slopes and near rivers.

Meaning of the name
- *Halleria*—after Albrecht von Haller (1708–77), German professor of botany.
- *lucida*—Latin for 'shiny', referring to the leaves.
- Notsung—origin not clear, perhaps from a Khoi name.

Ecology and uses
- Leaves browsed by game, fruit eaten by birds.
- Used for skin and ear complaints by Zulu people.
- Thought to be a charm against evil.
- Timber light-coloured, hard, heavy and strong.
- Once valued for wagon poles, tools and spear shafts.
- Wood also used to start a fire by friction.

As a garden tree
- Cultivated since 1811, growing in the Government Gardens in Cape Town and in greenhouses in England.
- Relatively hardy to frost.
- Excellent for attracting birds, offering nectar and fruit.
- Easily propagated by seed, cuttings, truncheons or layering; sow seed from spring to midsummer; fast-growing.



Authors:
Beate Hölscher, Giles Mbambezeli, Alice Notten & Thompson Mutshinyalo.
Layout and design:
SANBI Graphics. June 2009.

Text derived from *Plants of the Week* (Plantzafrica.org) and the following sources:
COATES PALGRAVE, M. 2002. *Keith Coates Palgrave Trees of southern Africa*, edn 3. Struik, Cape Town.
VAN WYK, B. & VAN WYK, P. 1997. *Field guide to trees of southern Africa*. Struik, Cape Town.
VENTER, F. & VENTER, J-A. 1996. *Making the most of indigenous trees*. Briza, Pretoria.