

Acacia *ataxacantha*

Flame-thorn

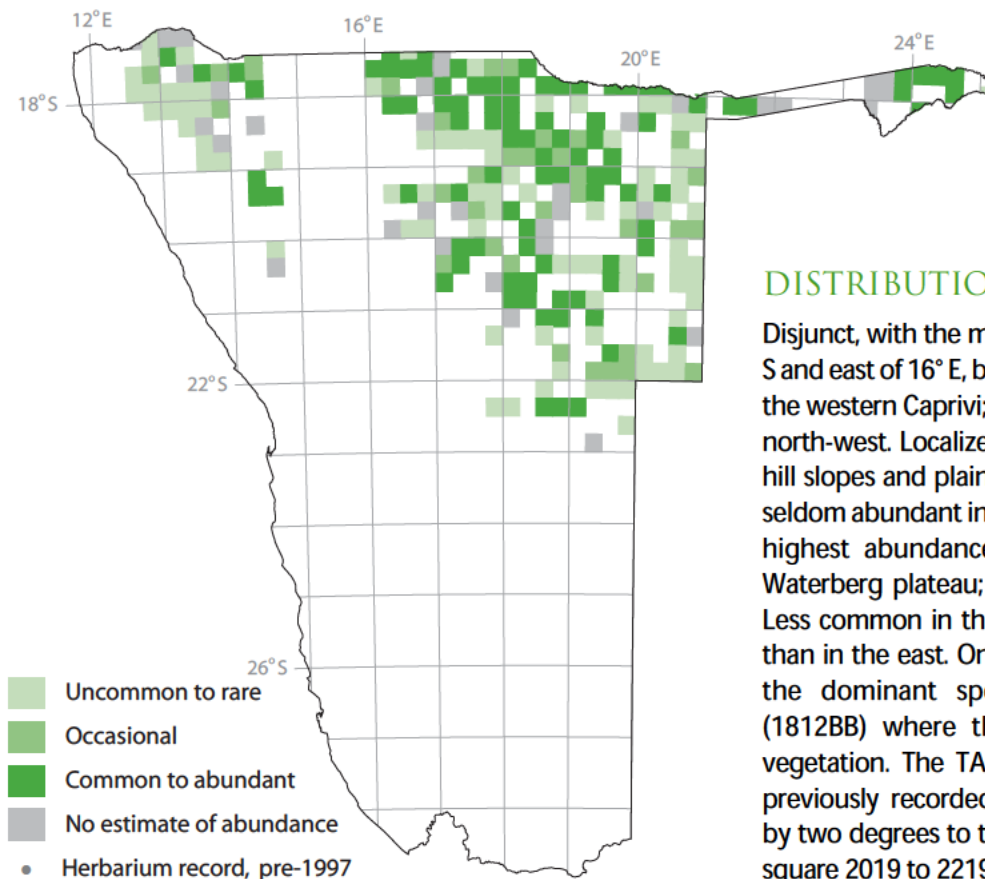
Rankroos, vlamdoring (A);
Rosendornakazie (G); oruweyo (H);
mukoro (Rk, Rum, T)

[482 records from 253 (24%) squares]



Scrambling shrub. THORNS large, hooked, **rose-like**; scattered irregularly along branches. LEAVES large, with stalked, petiolar gland and hooks on the rachis. FLOWERS in spikes towards tips of branches; cream. FRUIT a flat, **deep red to purplish-brown** pod, with pointed tips; brittle, dehiscent.

Flowers and pods conspicuous. In the extreme eastern Caprivi, this species may be confused with *Acacia schweinfurthii*.

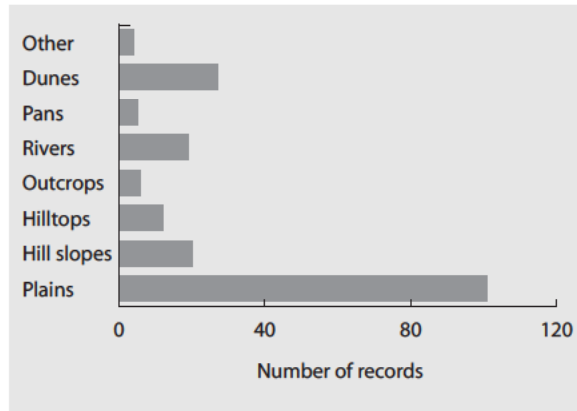


DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Disjunct, with the main population north of 23° S and east of 16° E, but not recorded throughout the western Caprivi; a second population in the north-west. Localized in some areas, mainly on hill slopes and plains. Common to uncommon, seldom abundant in the eastern population; the highest abundance was recorded from the Waterberg plateau; uncommon in the Caprivi. Less common in the north-west and Karstveld than in the east. Only once recorded as one of the dominant species: in the north-west (1812BB) where there is very little woody vegetation. The TAP has extended the range previously recorded by herbarium specimens by two degrees to the south-east (from degree square 2019 to 2219).

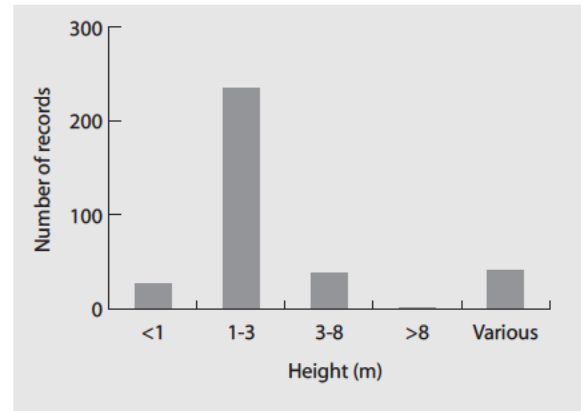
HABITAT

Various, but mostly on sandy plains in woodland; sometimes on gravel. In the north-west, it occurred predominantly on hill slopes and riverbanks, sometimes on rocky outcrops; in the north-east, on dunes and along river banks, as well as on plains.



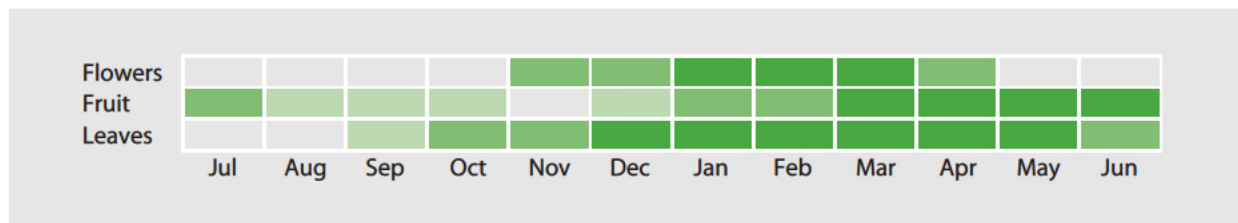
GROWTH FORM

Mostly a shrub up to 3 m high – seldom higher (10% of records) – sometimes climbing into or over other plants. Often forming dense thickets.



ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS November to April, with the main peak in February; flowering only started in April in some years. **FRUIT** starting in December, but mostly March to June; old fruit present till October. **LEAVES** mainly December to May, with most trees bare in winter; new leaves in September and October, sometimes late November or December if rains were late.



GENERAL

Occasionally browsed. Roots used medicinally; otherwise traditionally used, for example, bows, arrows, spears. Resin is edible. 'Butterflies love it.' *Acacia ataxacantha* has horticultural potential as a hedge or barrier species. Also known as 'oroo' in Otjiherero (PIE1, 2017BB).

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

None recorded.

Acacia ataxacantha, B. Curtis

