Commiphora virgata

Omumbara

Slender corkwood (E); slapkanniedood (A); soba (K)

[271 records from 120 (11%) squares]

Much-branched shrub or a shrubby tree branching near the ground. Bark yellow-white to silvery on main branches, peeling off in papery strips. Branchlets slender and often drooping, older branchlets red-brown. Leaves trilobulate, leaflet usually obovate, small; both surfaces dark green to green-yellow, hairless; margin entire; petiole lanky and slender. Flowers small, greenish to green-yellow. Fruit ovoid, up to 10 mm in diameter, red; pseudaril white to pale red, four-lobed with lobes almost covering entire seed.

DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Most common of the small Commiphora spp. Occasional to locally common or abundant in the north-west; common in the central Namib as far south as the Kuiseb River.
HABITAT
Found mainly on hill slopes and rocky outcrops, on stony, rocky or gravel substrates.

GROWTH FORM
Usually a shrub of less than 3 m high; just south of the Kunene River it is often a tree of over 3 m.

ANNUAL CYCLE
FLOWERS mostly in December, with occasional records in other months. FRUIT most often recorded in April, but present from October to May. LEAVES present on most plants from February to April, with new leaves produced in November and December.

GENERAL
A pachycaul collector’s item, and of horticultural potential as such, and as a bonsai subject.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS
Potentially threatened by pachycaul collectors. Endemic.

Commiphora mossambicensis Continued from page 291:

HABITAT
Found on river banks.

GROWTH FORM
Mostly recorded as a shrub in the 1–3-m height class. A tree of 6 m on Impalila Island. A ‘really scruffy, clambering shrub’ at Lian-shulu Bush Lodge (1823AB, SHA1).

ANNUAL CYCLE
Data only recorded in May, August and November. FLOWERS and FRUIT only recorded in August. LEAVES recorded in May and November, with young leaves in August.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS
None recorded.