

*Ficus sycomorus*

## Sycamore Fig

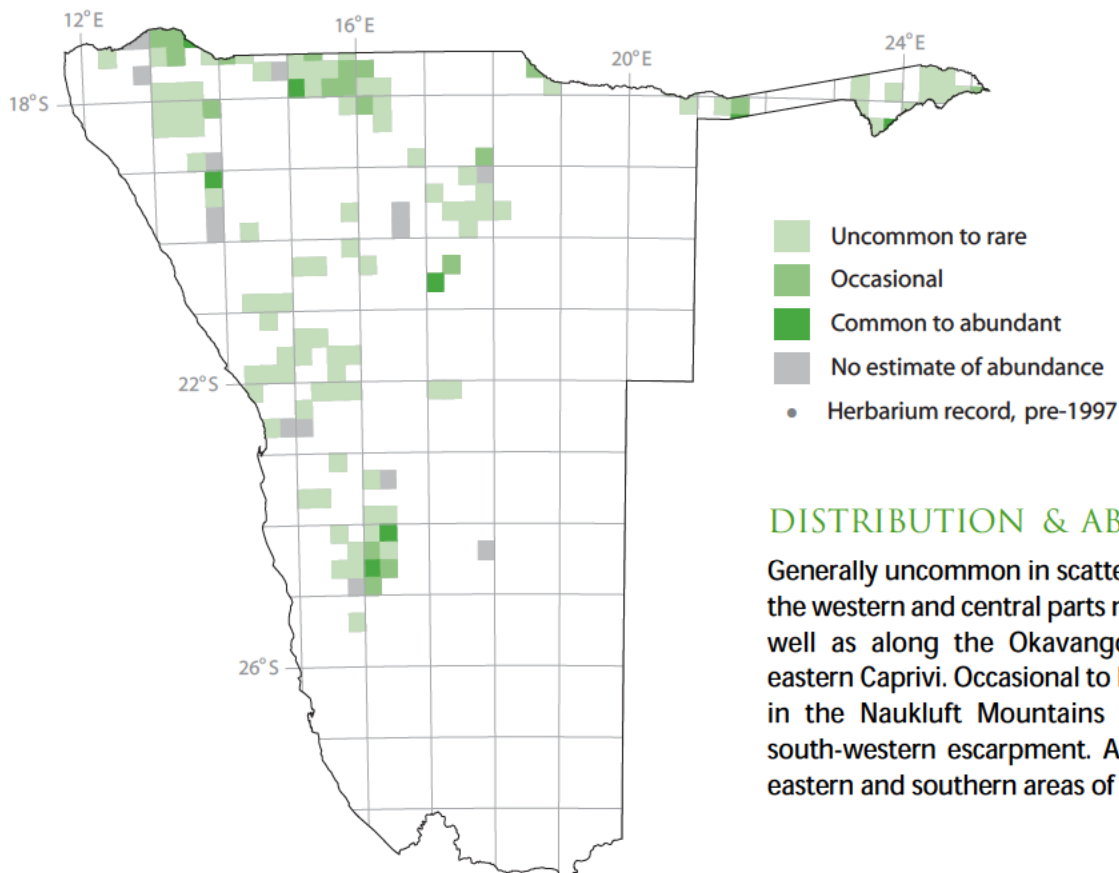
Geelstamvy (A); Waterbergfeige (G);  
muchaba (L); omukuyu (Ok)

[338 records from 142 (13%) squares]



See page 50 for photo of figs.

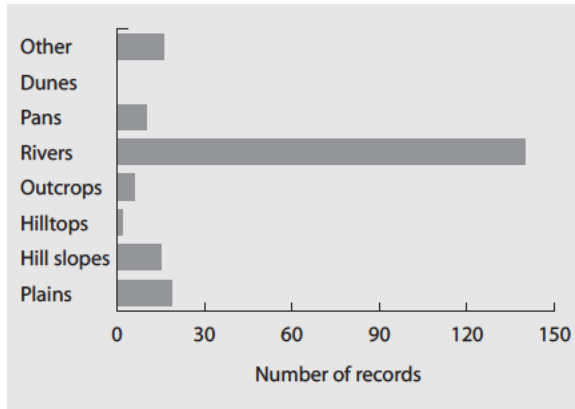
Large, semi-deciduous tree; trunk diameter up to 2 m and often buttressed; crown spreading. BARK variable, usually yellow, relatively smooth with rough, grey patches flaking off. LEAVES **round to broadly-elliptic**, 80 mm long; **stiff, rough**, leathery, dark green, **veins prominent**; base blunt to heart-shaped. FIGS in dense clusters on main stem and branches, or solitary in leaf axils; 15–30 mm in diameter; yellow with red, vertical streaks and white downy covering; stalk 20–30 mm long.

**DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE**

Generally uncommon in scattered localities in the western and central parts north of 25° S, as well as along the Okavango River and in eastern Caprivi. Occasional to locally common in the Naukluft Mountains and along the south-western escarpment. Absent from the eastern and southern areas of the country.

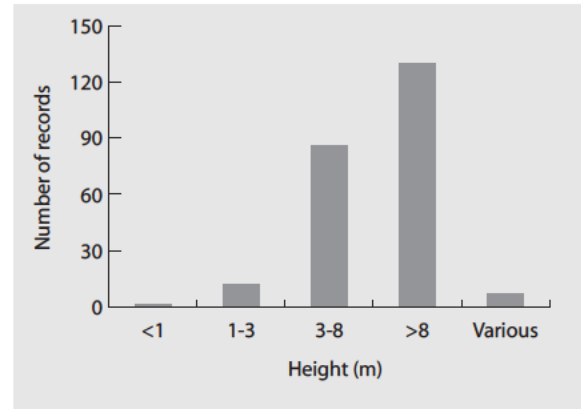
## HABITAT

On plains and around pans or depressions in the central-north and north-east; along river banks and dry river courses, in kloofs, on hill slopes and often near springs in the north-west, and central and southern parts of their range.



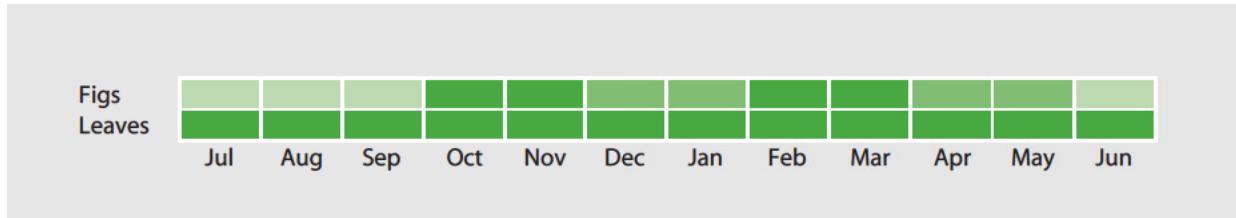
## GROWTH FORM

A large tree up to 8 m high or more. Few young ones recorded.



## ANNUAL CYCLE

Figs all year, with two peaks – October/November and February/March. LEAVES evergreen, with new leaves appearing in September, October, January and February.



## GENERAL

The fruit are eaten by livestock, game, birds and insects, as well as by people. They can be dried for later use, or made into an alcoholic beverage. Various parts are used for medicinal purposes.

## CONSERVATION CONCERNS

The trees have been affected in areas with excessive water abstraction which has caused springs to dry up. The apparent lack of young trees is also a concern. Local communities protect these trees for their fruit and shade. They are also protected by forestry legislation.

Butressed roots of *Ficus sycomorus*,  
Kaokoveld, B. Curtis

