

Rhus marlothii

Bitter Karee

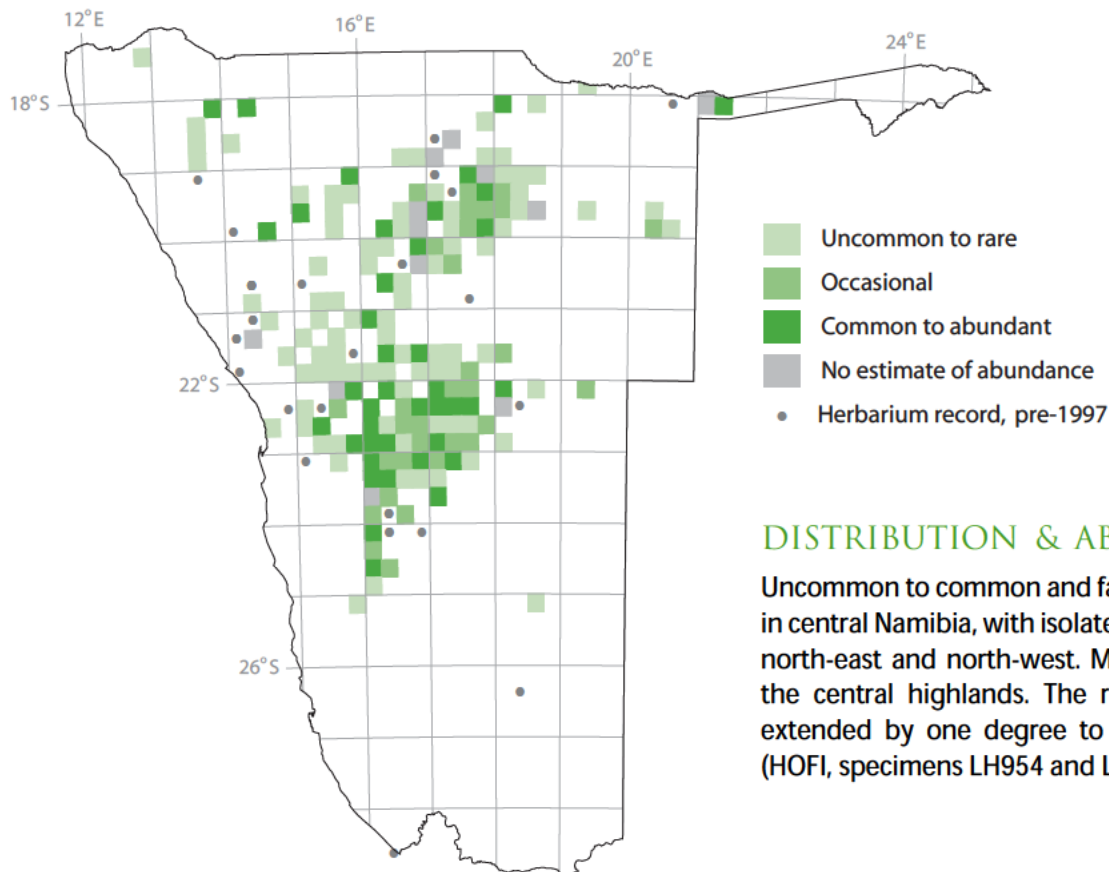
|khurubeb (K)

[474 records from 182 (17%) squares]



Shrub; sometimes a small tree. BARK grey-white, relatively smooth; often with distinct lenticels on young branchlets. LEAVES trifoliate; leaflets sessile, obovate to broadly oblanceolate; both surfaces olive-green, slightly downy; margin entire to slightly crenate near apex, fringed with fine white hairs; apex blunt to sub-acute; base tapering. FLOWERS tiny, star-like; greenish to pale yellow. FRUIT almost round, slightly flattened, cinnamon-brown, shiny.

Can be confused with *R. tenuinervis*, which has far broader, softer, hairier leaves with a more distinctly crenate margin, and is usually found growing in sandy areas.

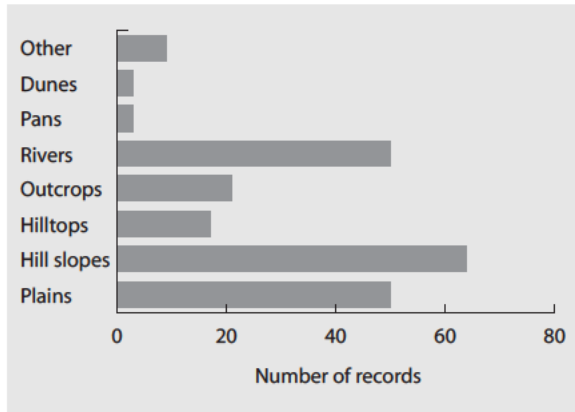


DISTRIBUTION & ABUNDANCE

Uncommon to common and fairly widespread in central Namibia, with isolated records in the north-east and north-west. Most common in the central highlands. The range has been extended by one degree to the north-west (HOFl, specimens LH954 and LH955).

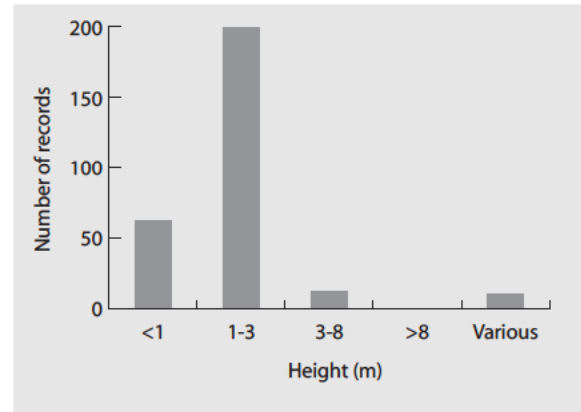
HABITAT

Various, but mainly on hill slopes, especially in the central highlands; also found on plains and in dry rivers. Substrates include calcrete, mica schist, sand and occasionally loamy soil.



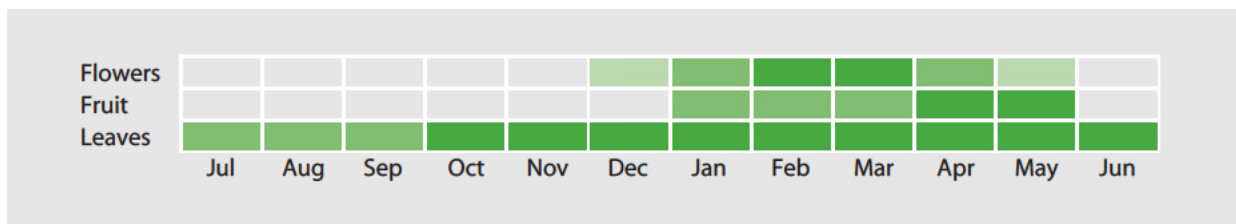
GROWTH FORM

Mostly a shrub in the 1–3-m height class, rarely a tree of over 3 m high.



ANNUAL CYCLE

FLOWERS December to May. **FRUIT** January to May. **LEAVES** semi-deciduous; bare individuals from July to September, young leaves from November to January.



GENERAL

The edible fruit is chewed to quench thirst; the roots are used medicinally. The leaves are eaten by caterpillars and rhino, but apparently not by stock as they are bitter. This plant often grows under other trees.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

None recorded.

Rhus marlothii, Grootfontein area,
G. Friederich

