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Notes on Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of S. Rhodesia

Ziziphus mucronata. Willd.
(Rhamnaceae)

By A. A. PARDY, Conservator of Forests (Research).

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Ziziphus mucronata. Willd.
(Rhamnaceae)

Common Name.—Wait-a-bit tree, blinkblaar wag'n bietjie.
Native Names.—Muchecheni (Chis.); umpafa (Sind.).

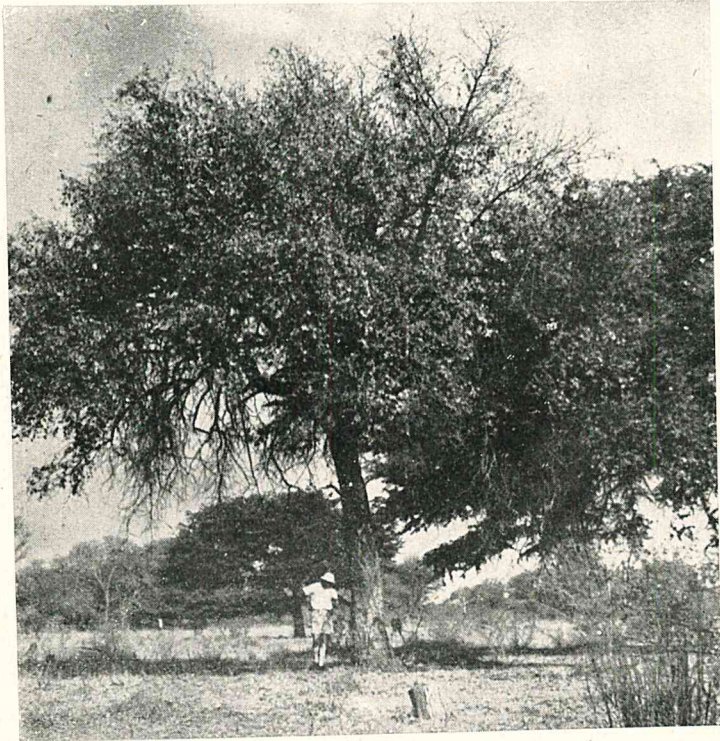
General Description.—This fairly common, much-branched tree may be found up to 40 feet in height although it is usually a good deal less than this and, in fact, is often quite shrubby. The branches are frequently somewhat pendulous. The leaves are simple and alternate. There are very slight indentations along their edges and the three, or sometimes five, main veins radiating from the base of the leaf blade are very noticeable. The young shoots are more or less hairy as are also the leaves. Some forms have practically no hairs. There are two stipules at the base of each leaf and when these persist they develop into prickles, one being straight and one curved. These give rise to the common name of "wait-a-bit" tree. Sometimes prickles are more or less absent. The small yellow flowers which appear during the earlier to the middle part of the rainy season are in clusters in the axils of the leaves. The fruit is a drupe and when ripe is dark reddish-brown and about half an inch in diameter.

Distribution.—This tree is widely distributed as a scattered tree or shrub at medium and lower elevations in this Colony.

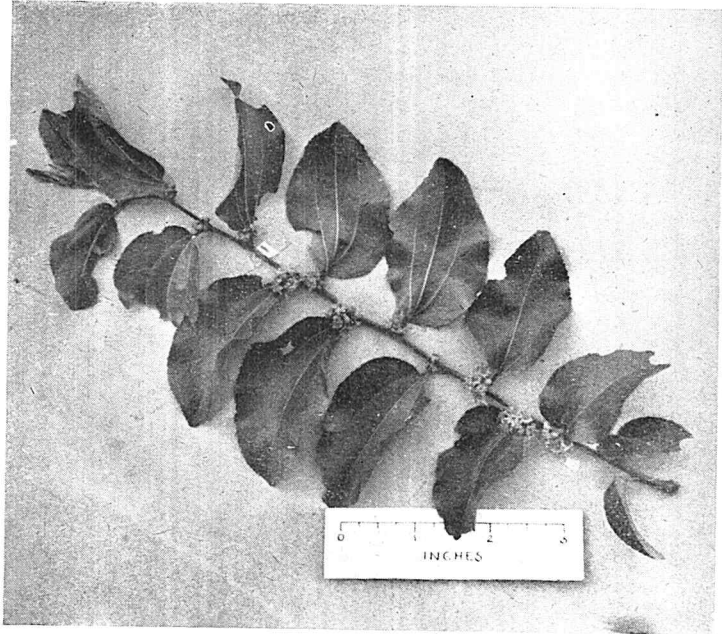
It is also found elsewhere in Central and Southern Africa.

Uses.—Owing to lack of straightness or size, little use is made of the wood. However, when of suitable size the hard, yellow, close-grained wood can be used for felloes, naves, yoke skeys and implement handles. The young shoots make good whip sticks. The fleshy part of the fruit is edible. The leaves are said to have a good feeding value for cattle.

It can be raised fairly easily from seed.

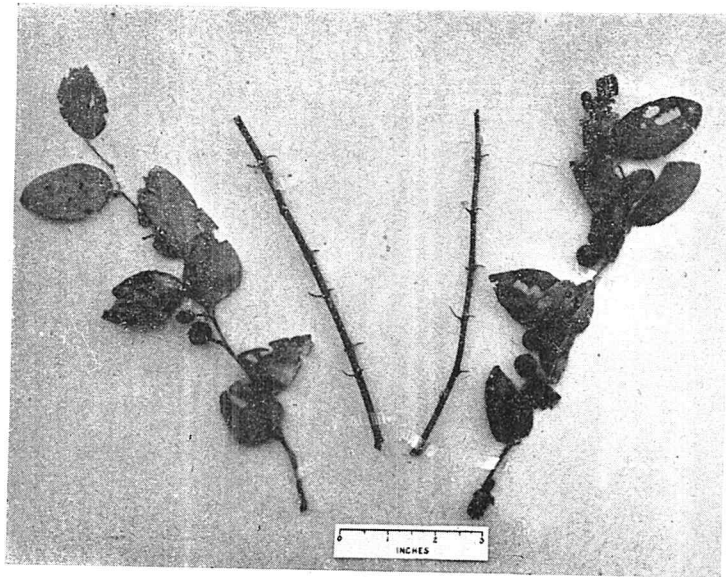


Ziziphus mucronata.
Habit photo.
[Photo. by E. J. Kelly Edwards.]



Ziziphus mucronata.
Leaves and flowers.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]



Ziziphus mucronata.
Twigs, showing prickles, leaves and fruit.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]