

*Duplicates*

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# Notes on Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of Southern Rhodesia

**Combretum imberbe**  
var **petersii** Engl. & Diels.  
(Combretaceae)

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By A. A. PARDY, Chief Research Officer, Forestry Commission.

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**Combretum imberbe var petersii Engl. & Diels.**  
(Combretaceae)

*Common Name.*—Leadwood, hardekol. *Native Names.*—Mubigiti, mubimba, muchenalota, muchiri, mugodo, imonso, murwiti, mutili, muzwile, muyando, mondo (Chis.); umtswili (Sind.).

*General Description.*—The hardekol is a somewhat silvery-foliaged, round-crowned tree. It may be of a somewhat shrubby habit of growth or a tree up to 50 feet in height with a fairly straight bole and a diameter of up to 2 feet. Coppice growth is often spiny. Twigs have a dense covering of reddish scales. The hairless leaves, of a narrow, oval shape and commonly with wavy margins, are opposite, simple and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long by fully  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in width. The reddish, scaly petioles are about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long. On both surfaces the leaf blade has a covering of very small, pale, grey-green scales. There are no stipules. Flower buds are covered with small reddish scales. The small creamy flowers which occur in spikes are to be seen during January. The four-winged, scaly fruits about  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch in length are of a yellowish grey-green colour. The bark is of an ashy-grey colour and reticulated.

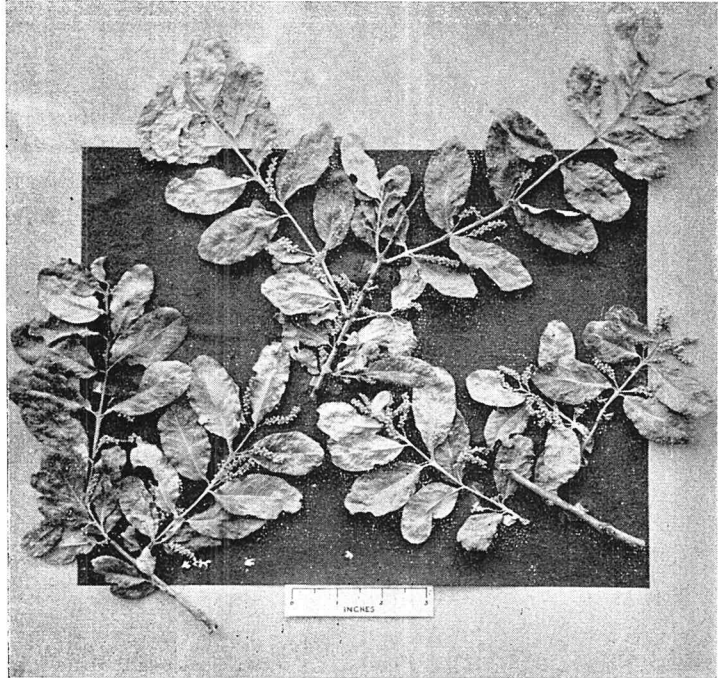
*Distribution.*—This tree is widely distributed in Southern Rhodesia at medium and lower elevations and is usually to be seen at its best in the low veld. It is frequently found on alluvial soils. It also occurs in adjoining territories.

*Uses.*—The wood is extremely hard and heavy. A narrow band of whitish sapwood surrounds a dark grey to almost black durable heartwood. It is said that natives used this wood for hoes before the appearance of iron hoes. It is suitable for mine props and fence posts, and is sometimes used for the manufacture of small ornaments. Well seasoned and treated with oil it is sometimes used as bearings. It also makes a good fuel wood and will smoulder for a long time. The ash, which has a high lime content, is very white and is reported to be sometimes used as a substitute for lime in whitewashing.

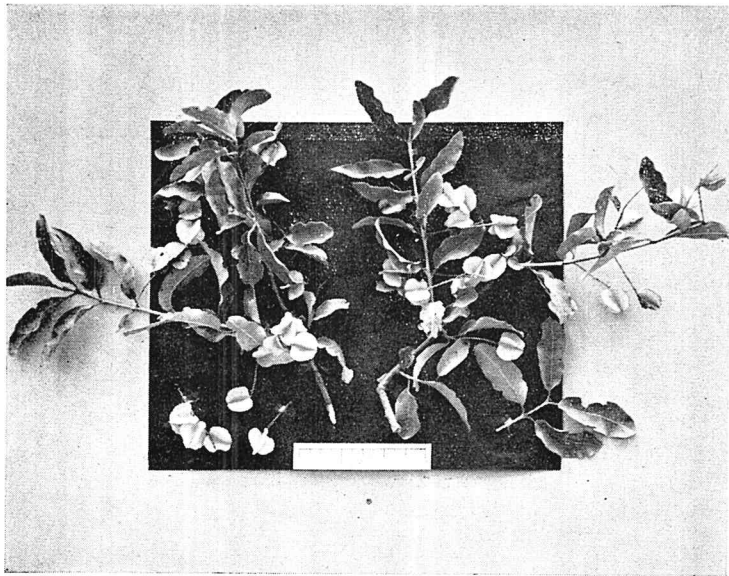


*Combretum imberbe* var. *petersii*.  
Habit photo.

[Photo by F. L. Orpen.]



*Combretum imberbe*.  
Leaves, and flowers commencing to open.  
[Photo by A. A. Pardy.]



*Combretum imberbe*.  
Leaves and fruits.  
[Photo by A. A. Pardy.]