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Notes on Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of S. Rhodesia

Dialiopsis africana Radlk.

Sapindaceae

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SALISBURY :

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Dialiopsis africana Radlk.
Sapindaceae

Common Name.— ———. **Native Names.**—Muchenya, muchenyua, muchenyura (Chis.).

General Description.—This is a tree up to about 20 feet in height with usually a fairly rounded crown. The bark is of a dark brown colour with a tendency to flake. The twigs when young are coated with soft brown hairs. The alternate, exstipulate, paripinnate leaves consist of up to six pairs of opposite or sub-opposite leaflets which are clustered at the ends of the fairly thick twigs. The overall length of a leaf is up to about 8 inches. The petiole, which is covered with small, soft, brown hairs, varies in length from about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The leaflets are of a somewhat oval shape with wedge-shaped bases and rounded or notched tips. They may be slightly indented and are of a thickish and hardish texture. In length they vary from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the bottom pair being the smallest and the top pair the largest. Mid-ribs and veins show very prominently on the lower surfaces of the leaves. Both lower and upper surfaces are sparsely hairy. The flowers, which are to be seen during October and November, are male and female and appear to be always on different trees although doubt has been expressed regarding this being invariably so. The flowers, which are small and not showy, appear just before or at the same time as the new leaves. The fruits, which are about an inch in length, are of an orange colour and velvety appearance. They are very showy during December and January in a good fruiting year.

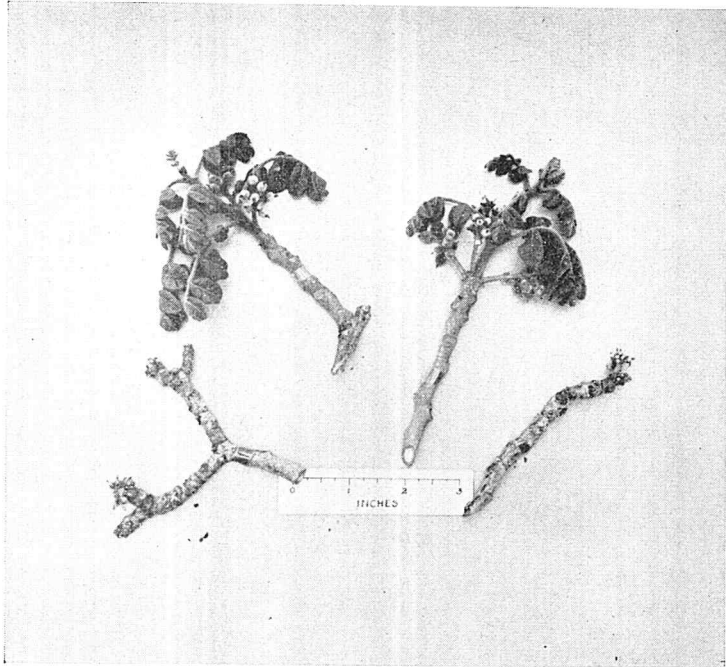
Distribution.—This tree occurs at medium elevations, but although fairly widespread it is not known to occur in great abundance in any particular area. It is found, for example, immediately to the south of Salisbury, near the Mazoe Dam and on the Umtali Commonage. It occurs in adjoining territories to the east and north.

Uses.—No special uses are known. The timber is reported from Tanganyika to be durable. It would make an attractive ornamental tree. The fruits are eaten by birds.



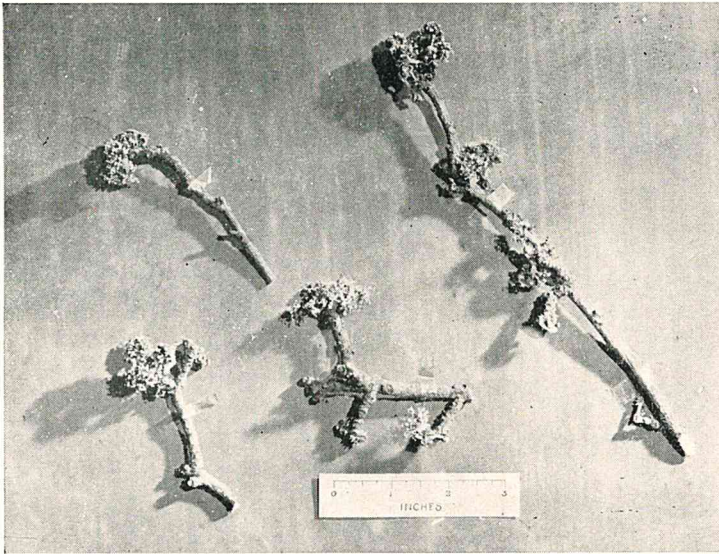
Dialiopsis africana.
Habit photo.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]



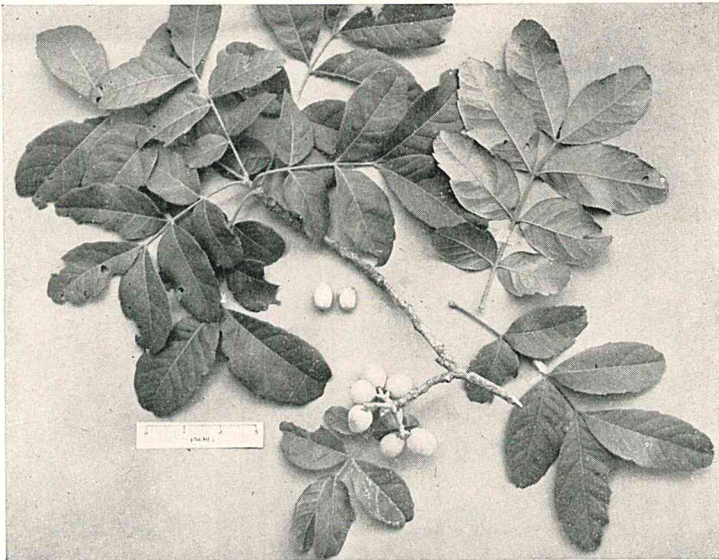
Dialiopsis africana.
Female flowers and young leaves.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]



Dialiopsis africana.
Male flowers.

[Photo: Public Relations Department.]



Dialiopsis africana.
Leaves and fruits.

[Photo. by A. A. Pardy.]