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Notes on Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of Southern Rhodesia

Conopharyngia elegans Stapf
(Apocynaceae)

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Conopharyngia elegans Stapf

(Apocynaceae)

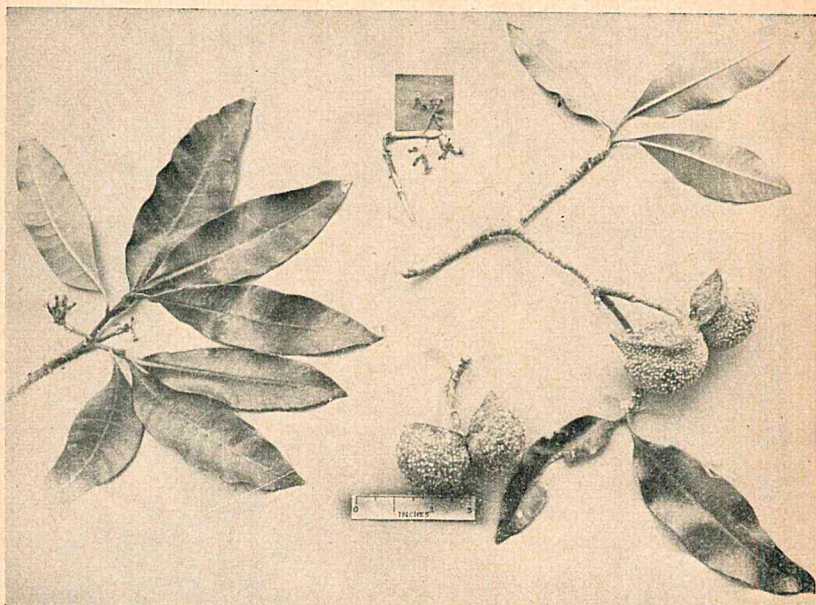
Common Name.—
(Chis.).

Native Names.—Ruchene

General Description.—This is a shrubby, medium-sized tree up to about 20 feet high with a milky latex. Leaves are simple and opposite with margins entire. They are up to 6 inches long, lanceolate and with more or less pointed tips. Midribs and veins are prominent on the under surfaces, which are paler than the upper surfaces. The numerous, fairly straight veins, which are almost at right angles to the midribs, give the glossy leaves a characteristic appearance. The petioles are about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long and stipules are present. Twigs have distinctive encircling leaf scars. The yellowish-white flowers, each about $\frac{1}{3}$ inch long and which are to be seen mainly during the early part of the rainy season, are in many-flowered loose panicles at the end of the twigs. The usually paired fruits are very characteristic. Each fruit, about 2 inches long, is of an obliquely ovoid shape, woody with recurved tips and covered with small warts.

Distribution.—This tree is fairly common at lower elevations along river courses in the more easterly part of Southern Rhodesia. It is found, for example, in the Birchenough Bridge, Fort Victoria and Chipinga Pools areas. It occurs in adjoining territories to the south and east and as far north as Tanganyika.

Uses.—No special uses are known.



Conopharyngia elegans
Leaves, flowers and fruits.

[Photo by: F. B. Armitage.]