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Notes on Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of Southern Rhodesia

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Calodendrum capense (L.f.) Thunb.

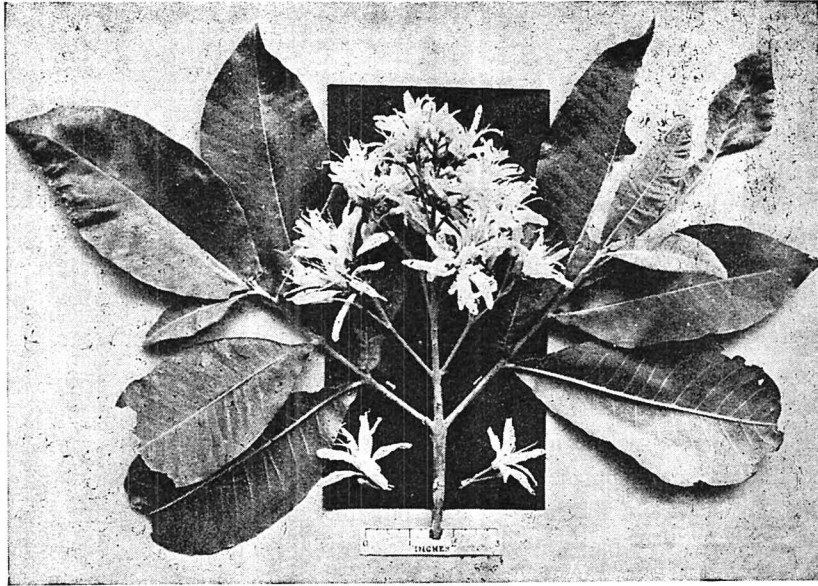
(Rutaceae)

Common Name.—Cape Chestnut. **Native Names.**—

General Description.—This is a comparatively rare but most attractive umbrageous tree. It can attain to a height of about 60 feet with diameters of 2 or more feet, but is usually a good deal smaller. The shiny, sparsely stellately hairy, short-stalked leaves are simple, opposite and without stipules. They are of a more or less elliptical shape and are pellucid gland-dotted, including gland dots along the margins which may be finely notched. Mid-ribs and veins are conspicuous on lower surfaces. The flowers are in terminal panicles. Each flower is about 1½ inches long, with short star-like sepals, long narrow, pinkish-mauve petals and long narrow, white staminodes resembling petals with dark purple spots. Flowers are to be seen usually during the earlier part of the rainy season but may also be seen at other times of the year. The fruits, about 2 inches in diameter, are woody capsules covered with blunt protuberances and contain large, shiny, black, angular seeds. The seeds are said to contain an oil and to be bitter, being eaten by neither monkeys nor birds. There are approximately 550 seeds per pound. The bark is of a grey colour and fairly thin and smooth.

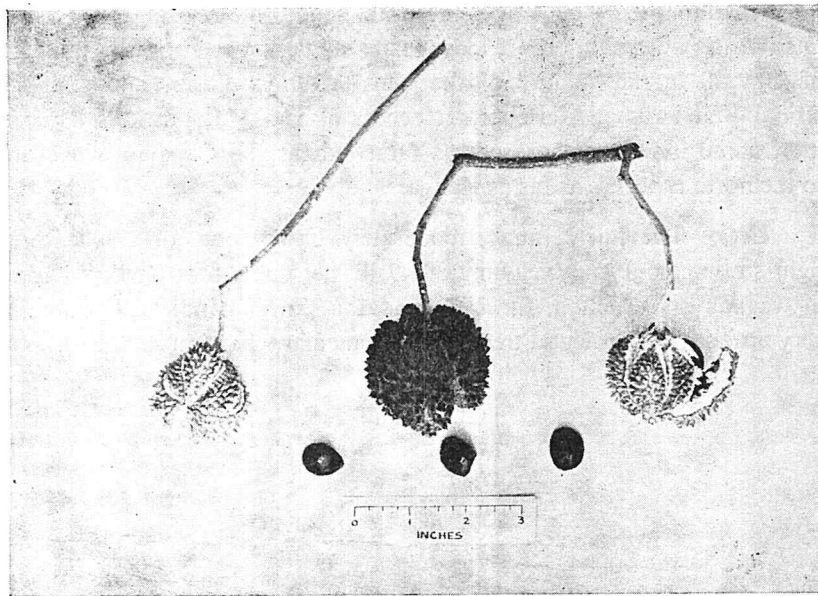
Distribution.—The Cape chestnut, found mainly in the Eastern Districts, is not common. It may, for example, be seen on the outskirts of Umtali, in the vicinity of the Umvumvumu River, and near the Bridal Veil Falls at Melsetter. It occurs also at Matopos. As its common name indicates, it occurs as far south as the Cape Province and to the north it occurs as far as Kenya.

Uses.—The fairly tough, moderately hard wood, of a whitish to light straw colour and weighing 39-47 lb. per cubic foot air dry, is used in waggon construction, furniture and for shovel handles. It makes a very attractive ornamental tree. It is spectacular when in full flower.



Calodendrum capense
Leaves and flowers

[Photo by: F. B. Armitage.]



Calodendrum capense
Fruits and seeds

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

Dais cotinifolia L.

(Thymelaeaceae)

Common Names.—Dais, Kannabast tree. **Native Name.**—Rusitu.

General Description.—This is a large shrub or tree growing to a height of about 40 feet. The simple, hairless leaves, of an elliptical shape, entire and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ -3 inches in length, are usually opposite but may be alternate. They have conspicuous midribs and are dark green above and pale below. Petioles are about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long and no stipules are present. The flowers, which are to be seen mainly in early summer, are very striking. They are of a pinkish-mauve colour and occur in terminal heads about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, with four bracts at the base of each head. Black seeds are enclosed in the dry fruit in the base of the calyx. The bark contains a strong fibre.

Distribution.—The Dais occurs in the Eastern Border area but is not common. It may be seen, for example, in the Melsetter area in the vicinity of the Bridal Veil Falls. It occurs in the Union.

Uses.—The bark is said to be used as a thread by natives. It is excellent for ornamental purposes on account of its showy flowers, but is inclined to be straggly in its early stages.



Dais cotinifolia
Leaves and flowers

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

Harungana madagascariensis Lam.

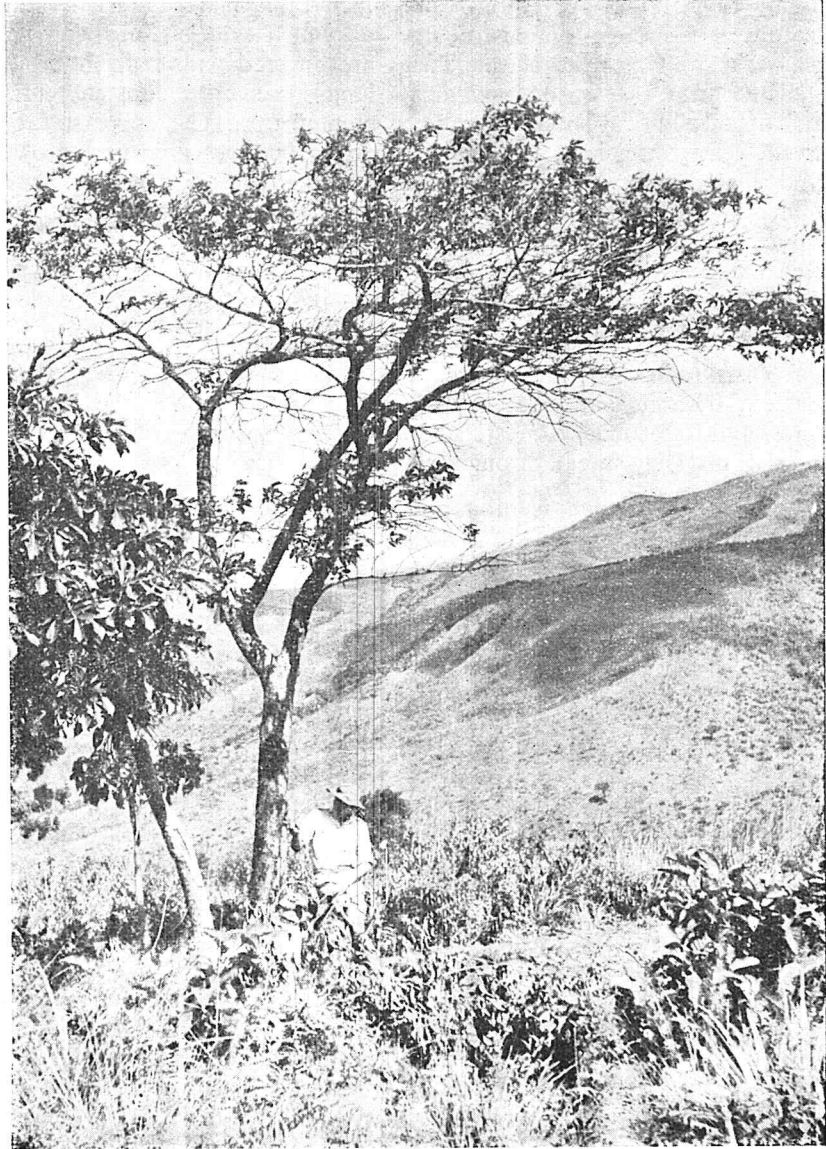
(Hypericaceae)

Common Name.— **Native Names.**—Muminyu, mutseti, mutsodzo, mutusotso (Chis.).

General Description.—This is a shrub or tree up to a height of about 40 feet. It is evergreen and much branched. A very striking feature is its orange- or red-coloured sap which exudes from twigs and leaves as well as from slash. Twigs are covered with reddish brown stellate hairs. Leaves, up to 7 inches long, are simple, opposite, entire and of an elliptical shape tapering to pointed tips. The upper surfaces of the leaves are dark green and the lower surfaces are rusty brown. Mid-ribs and veins are conspicuous on lower surfaces. Petioles are about 1 inch long and there are no stipules. Terminal inflorescences of small, white, scented flowers are dense, many-flowered panicles and are to be seen mainly during the latter part of the rainy season. The fruits are small, orange-coloured berries. The bark is of a reddish-brown colour and somewhat scaly.

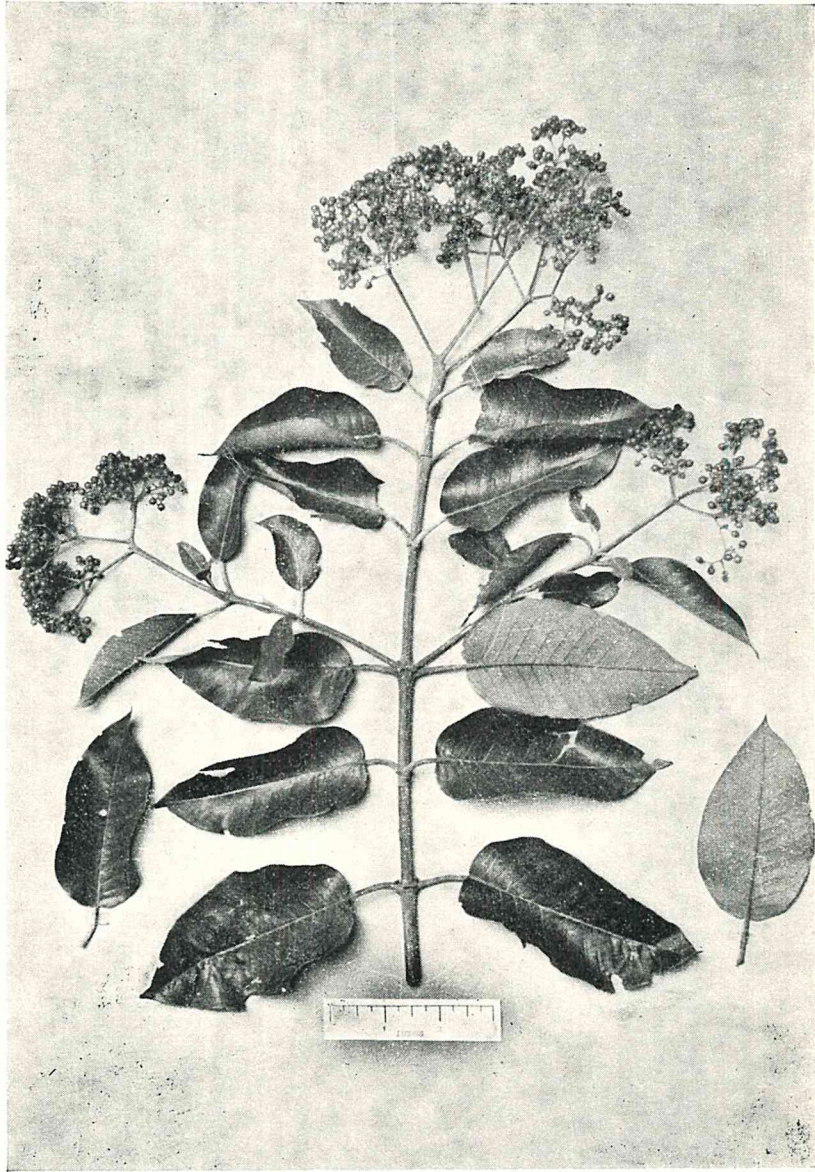
Distribution.—This tree occurs in the higher rainfall areas of the Eastern Districts and is to be found as a pioneer along the edge of forest and in secondary forest. It is quite common in the Mount Selinda area. It is widely spread throughout tropical Africa.

Uses.—The wood is of a pinkish-yellow colour and fairly light. No special uses are known. The orange-coloured latex is said to be used as a dye and the roots and bark used medicinally by natives.



Harungana madagascariensis
Habit photo. Note *Cussonia spicata* to left

[Photo by: F. B. Armitage.]



Harungana madagascariensis
Leaves and fruits

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

***Pappea capensis* E. & Z. var. *radlkoferi* Schinz**

(Sapindaceae)

Common Names.—Indaba tree, Lobengula's Judgment Tree.

Native Names.—Chitumunu (Chis.); isagogwane (Sind.).

General Description.—This is a medium-sized to fairly large tree, closely allied to *P. capensis* E. and Z. It has a dense, symmetrical crown. The greyish-green, simple, alternate, stiff, rough-textured leaves are up to about 4 inches long and on an average are about 2 inches in length and tend to be bunched at the ends of twigs. Under surfaces are hairy. They are of a somewhat oblong shape with rounded tips. Margins have usually slight indentations and commonly are sharply serrate and are usually wavy. Mid-ribs and veins are very conspicuous on under surfaces. Petioles are $\frac{1}{4}$ inch - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long and stipules are absent. The small flowers to be seen during the earlier part of the rainy season are in long spikes and are unisexual and may be on the same or different plants. The round fruits, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter, are hard and leathery and contain a seed with a fleshy covering which, when ripe, is red and edible.

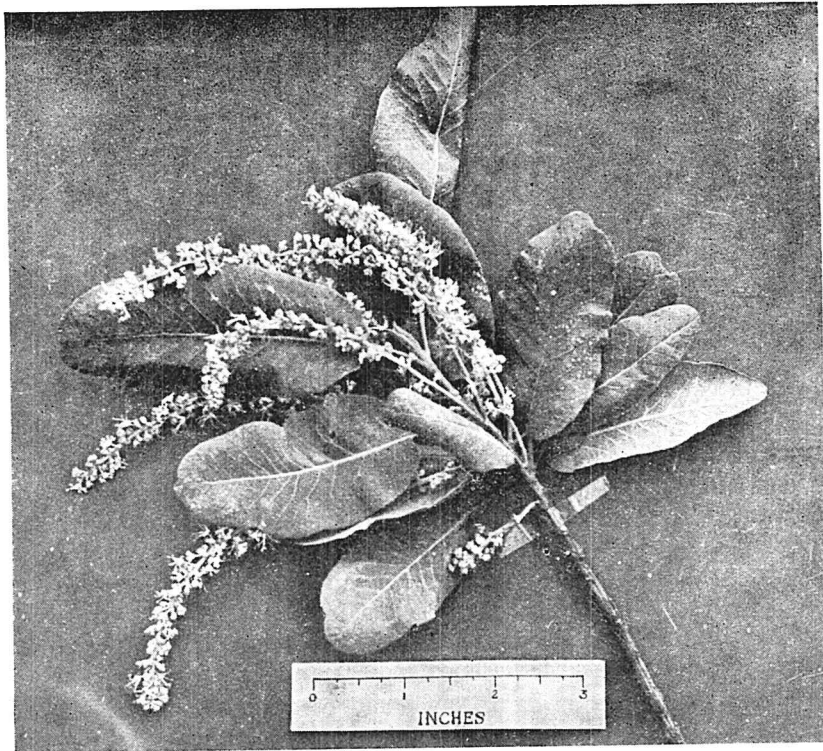
Distribution.—This tree is common in Matabeleland, the Indaba Tree being in the grounds of Government House, Bulawayo. It is said that Lobengula pronounced judgment under this particular tree. It occurs sparsely in parts of Mashonaland. It also occurs in the Union.

Uses.—The wood is hard, tough and of a lightish-brown colour, but as usually only small dimensions are obtainable, little use is made of it, although it can be used for furniture, yokes, etc. The fleshy part of the fruit is edible and the kernel is said to contain an oil having an effect similar to castor oil.



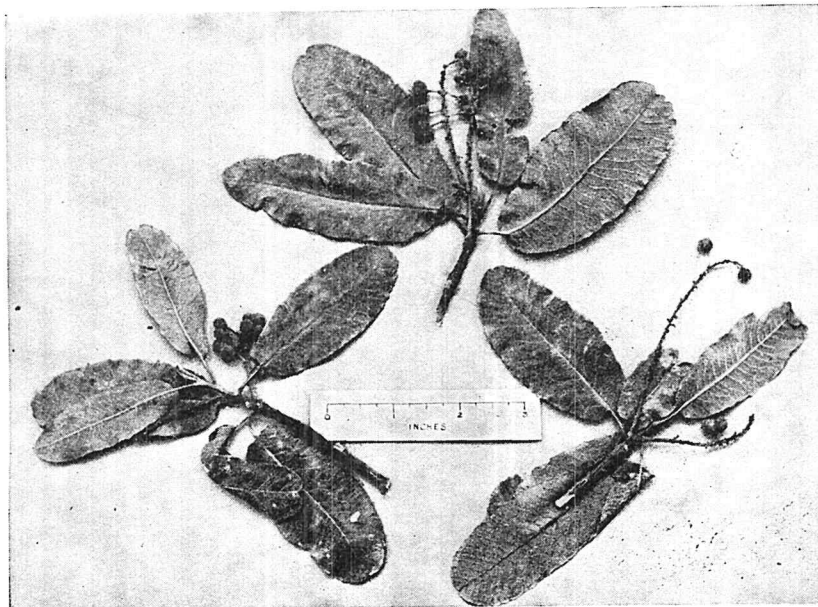
Pappea capensis var. *radlkoferi*
Habit photo

[Photo by: F. L. Orpen.]



Papea capensis var. *radlkoferi*
Leaves and male flowers

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]



Papea capensis var. *radlkoferi*
Leaves and fruits

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

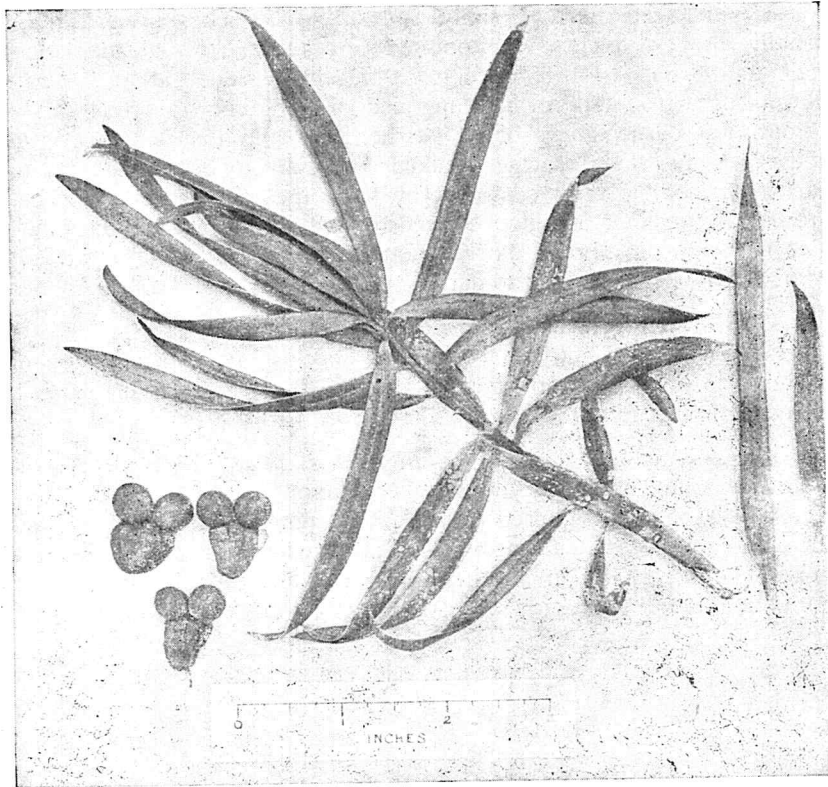
Podocarpus milanjanus Rendle
(Podocarpaceae)

Common Name.—Yellow wood. **Native Names.**—Ruhombge, munyenza, mushijha (Chis.).

General Description.—This tree is one of the two conifers indigenous to Southern Rhodesia, the other being **Widdringtonia whytei** Rendle. It is commonly a small tree or may even be rather shrubby, but can be found up to a height of about 60 ft. with a clear bole of about 20 ft. Diameters are up to about 2 ft. The leaves are simple, spirally arranged, narrow, shiny and up to 7 inches in length, but usually about 4 inches with pointed tips and narrowing to a small stalk at the base. Flowers are male or female. The catkin-like male flowers or cones, 1-1½ inches long and of a pinkish to orange-brown colour, are borne singly or in pairs. They and the female flowers, consisting of a scale bearing a naked ovule, are to be seen during the earlier part of the rainy season. The fruits are modified cones. There are usually together two globose seeds on a fleshy bright red receptacle. The bark is thin, fibrous, fairly smooth and comes off in strips. The colour of the bark is a light to dark brown.

Distribution.—**P. milanjanus** occurs in the higher rainfall areas of the Eastern Border, but is not common. Specimens are to be seen some 30 miles to the south and north of Umtali. It is found as far north as Kenya and Uganda.

Uses.—This tree produces a high-class softwood of a yellowish colour and having an air dry weight of about 32 lb. per cubic foot. Careful seasoning is required to prevent warping. The wood is suitable for many purposes, e.g. shop counters, drawer linings, shelving and boxes. Unfortunately in Southern Rhodesia this tree is not common nor is it, as a rule, well-grown.



Podocarpus milanjanus
Leaves and fruits

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

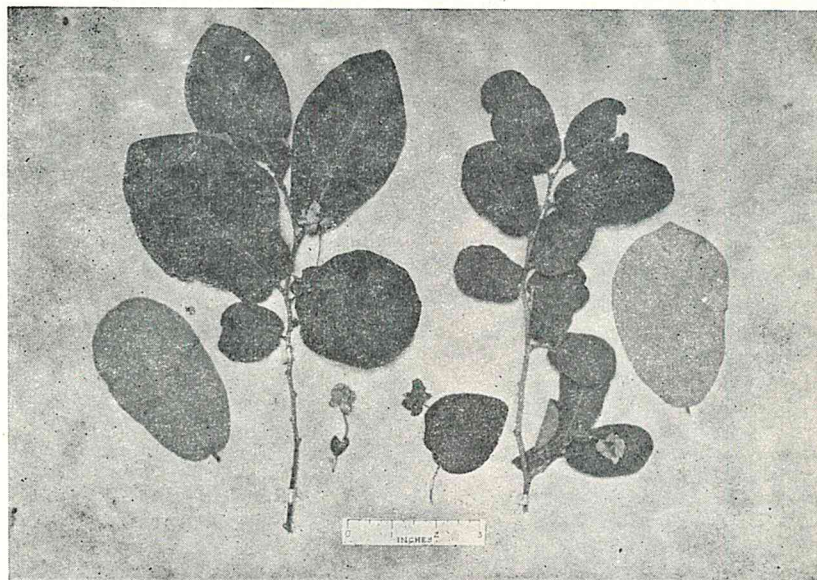
Popowia obovata (Benth.) Engl. & Diels
(Annonaceae)

Common Name.—**Native Names.**—Muderère, mugaramuzuru, mukozombo (Chis.), (u)mukojombo, (u)mukozombo (Sind.).

General Description.—This is a straggling shrub growing to a height of about 7 feet. The leaves are alternate, obovate or obovate-oblong, hairy and up to about 4 inches in length. The tips of the leaves are usually more or less rounded and under surfaces are paler than upper surfaces. Leaf-stalks are short. The yellow-green flowers, which are to be seen mainly during the earlier part of the rainy season, are axillary, solitary and long-stalked. On the flower-stalk is a large leafy bracteole. The fruits are clusters of red, fleshy, cylindrical, carpels up to 3 inches in length. They are constricted between the seeds and somewhat resemble fingers.

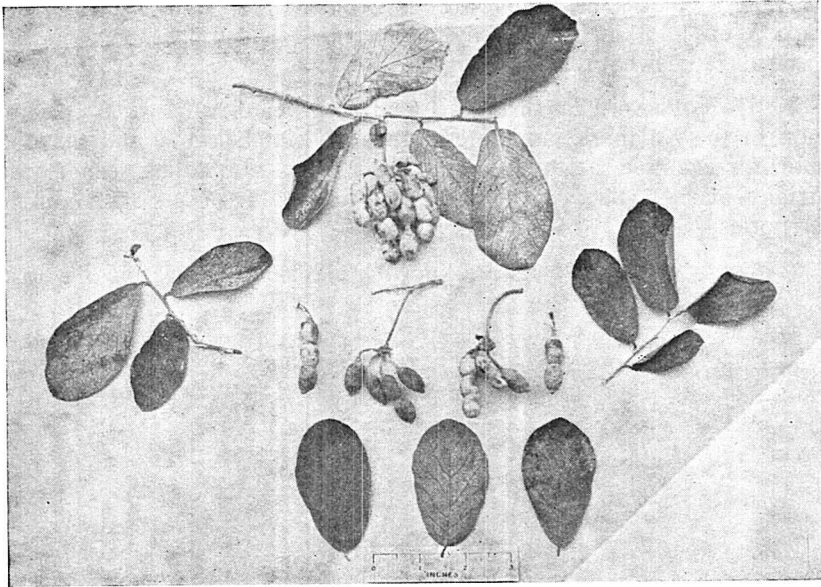
Distribution.—This shrub is found at lower elevations. It is common in the Kalahari Sand forest areas of Matabeleland and may be seen, for example, at the Victoria Falls. It is also to be seen in the vicinity of such places as Sinoia and Chikore. It occurs in adjoining territories.

Uses.—No special uses are known. The skin of the fruit is edible.



Popowia obovata
Leaves and flowers

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]



Popowia obovata
Leaves and fruits

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

Protea petiolaris Welw ex Engl.

(Proteaceae)

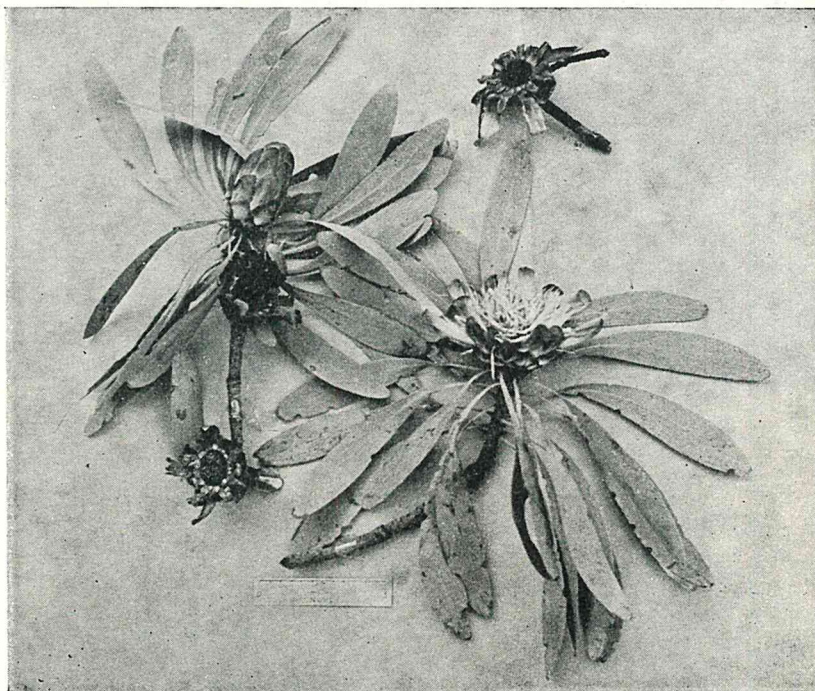
Common Name.—

Native Names.—

General Description.—There are several different species of **Protea** in Southern Rhodesia and with one exception all are shrubs or very occasionally small trees up to about 15 feet high (**P. abyssinica** already described in these notes). The exception is **P. petiolaris**, which is often to be seen as a tree about 20 feet in height and up to nearly 12 inches in diameter. Leaves are alternate, entire, leathery, stiff, hairless, narrowly oblong or oblanceolate and up to about 6 inches in length with a distinct petiole about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. The finely reticulated veins are numerous and conspicuous on both surfaces. The leaves are clustered at the ends of branchlets. Flowers partly hidden by the leaves are in dense heads and are of an attractive pinkish colour. Numerous remnants of old flower-heads are to be seen along with new flowers. The bark is dark grey to dark brown and rough.

Distribution.—This **Protea** is found in the higher rainfall areas and is to be seen in the Eastern Border and in the vicinity of Selukwe. The one appearing in the accompanying habit photo was photographed at a high part of the Old Melsetter road.

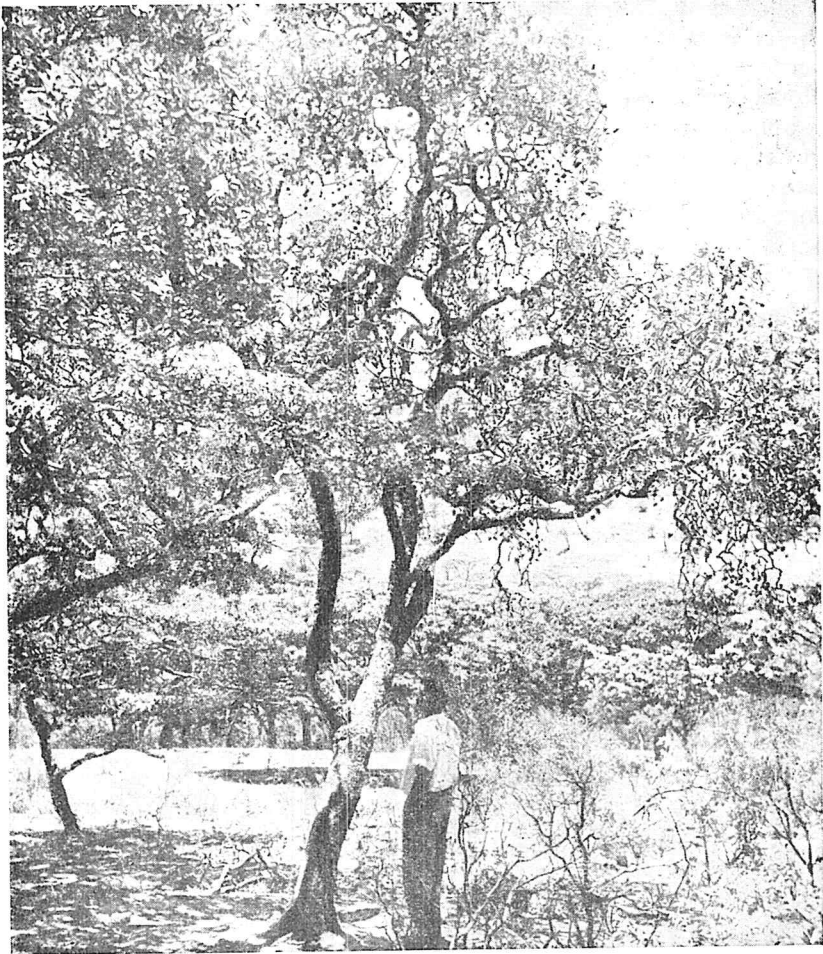
Uses.—No special uses are known.



Protea petiolaris

Leaves, flowerheads and remains of old flowerheads

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]



Protea petiolaris
Habit photo

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]

Strychnos stuhlmannii Gilg.
(Loganiaceae)

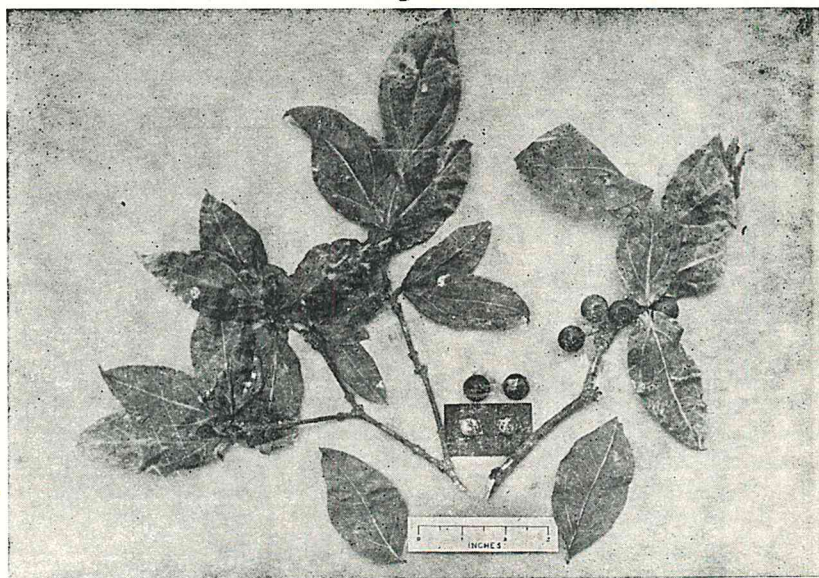
Common Name.—
lombe (Chis.).

Native Names.—Muliya, mulombe-

General Description.—This is a small, or medium-sized, deciduous tree up to about 30 feet high belonging to the same genus as the Kaffir orange tree, and is one of the spineless members of this genus. Leaves are opposite, simple, entire, fairly stiff and somewhat thin, glabrous, of a more or less oval shape with pointed tips and may be up to 6 inches in length, but more usually are about 3-4 inches long. Mid-ribs and veins are conspicuous on the lower surfaces, and four main side veins, of which two are particularly prominent, spring from the mid-ribs a little above the base of each leaf. Petioles are very short. The greenish-white flowers, which are to be seen during the earlier part of the rainy season, are small and in axillary cymes. The fruits are round, thin-skinned, up to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter and single-seeded. They are blackish-purple in colour when ripe. The bark is smooth and of a grey colour.

Distribution.—As a scattered and rather uncommon tree *S. stuhlmannii* is fairly widely distributed in Southern Rhodesia. It is, however, frequently found in the vicinity of low veld rivers. It may be seen at the edge of *Baikiaea* forests in the Victoria Falls area. It occurs also in adjoining territories.

Uses.—No special uses are known. It has been suggested in Mr. O. B. Miller's Bechuanaland Protectorate Check-list that as marks of baboon teeth are frequently seen on the bark, the bark might be taken by baboons as a stimulant. The fruits are stated to cause acute strychnine poisoning and crushed fruits are used to kill fish.



Strychnos stuhlmannii
Leaves and fruits

[Photo by: A. A. Pardy.]