

Nuxia congesta

R. Br. ex Fresen.

Loganiaceae

LOCAL NAMES

Afrikaans (witblomsalie, broshout, bergsalie); English (brittle-wood, bogwood); Zulu (umkhobeza, isiphofane)

BOTANIC DESCRIPTION

Nuxia congesta is a shrub or small tree, 3-15 m high. The stem is 20-60 cm in diameter. Bark grey or brown, rough and stringy, young twigs often red. Slash ivory-like in colour and texture.

Leaves very variable, 1-8 cm long and 0.6-3.8 cm wide, arranged in whorls of 3 around the nodes. Leaf stalks short.

Flowers borne on branched broad or flat and dense heads; small, tubular, white or cream with purplish tint and fragrant. Flowers persist on tree.

Fruit a hairy capsule protruding from calyx.

The basis of its specific name 'congesta' are the dense/crowded flowers. *N. congesta* is a very variable species and its long list of synonyms attests this nomenclatural fact.

BIOLOGY

N. congesta is monoecious, flower buds appear in autumn and develop slowly before blooming.



A rounded evergreen shrub or small tree. A widespread species, here growing in exposed conditions. (Ellis RP)



A shrub or medium-sized evergreen tree. The flowers are in dense, congested terminal heads, small, white and fragrant. (Botha AD)

ECOLOGY

N. congesta is a pioneering tree on edges of light upland or lower montane forest, bamboo zone and on hilltops above the forest margin as part of succession towards forest. *Nuxia* is also common on rocky ridges. In lower montane forest *Nuxia* is normally associated with *Olea africana*.

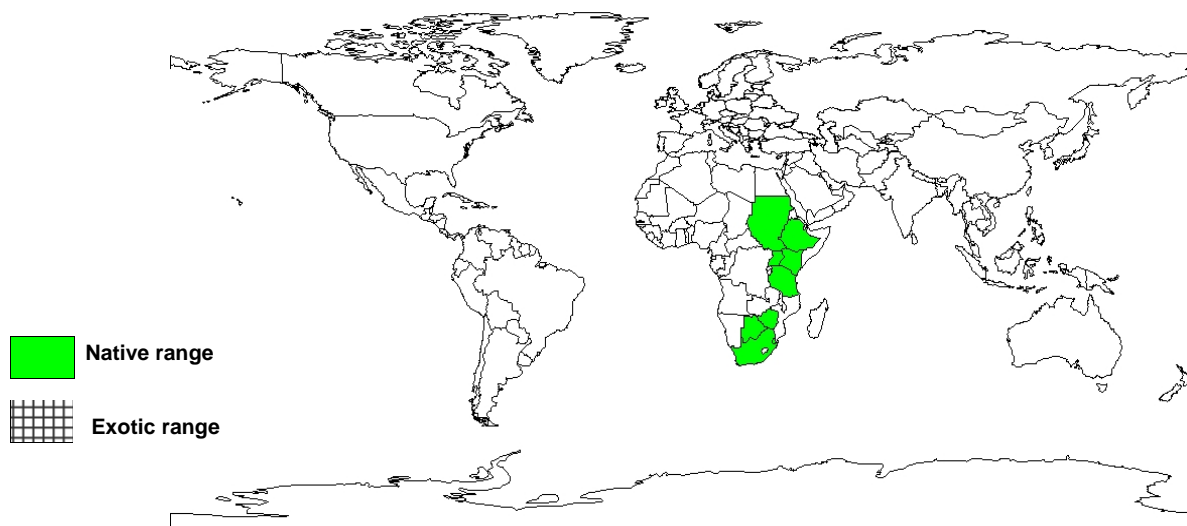
BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS

Altitude: 1 500-2 500 m, Mean annual rainfall: 1 400-2 500 mm, Mean annual temperature: 14-26 deg.C

DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION

Native: Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Exotic:



The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

PRODUCTS

Apiculture: *N. congesta* is a good bee fodder tree.

Fuel: The branches are used as firesticks.

Timber: Wood is soft, white with little difference between sap and heartwood. The wood is used for building.

SERVICES

Erosion control: The species protects loose soil on rocky sites.

Shade or shelter: *N. congesta* is a shade tree.

Reclamation: This is a hardy species suitable for marginal areas and rocky soils.

Ornamental: An attractive species in flower, floral fragrance appealing.

Boundary or barrier or support: *N. congesta* wood makes excellent, durable fence posts.

TREE MANAGEMENT

Suckers frequently when managed with burning.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Asteridiella nuxiae, a pathogenic fungus is reported on N. congesta in Kenya.

FURTHER READNG

Mibey RK, Kokwaro JO and Mukunya DN. 1996. Four new species and some new records of Meliolaceous fungi from Kenya. *Mycotaxon*. 57: 87-95.

Palmer E, Pitman N. 1972. *Trees of Southern Africa Vol. 2*. A.A. Balkema Cape Town.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Orwa C, Mutua A , Kindt R , Jamnadass R, Simons A. 2009. *Agroforestry Database:a tree reference and selection guide version 4.0* (<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/af/treedb/>)