

The Pocket Field Guide for Wild Flower Harvesting

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FIELD GUIDE FOR WILD FLOWER HARVESTING



Introducing The Pocket Field Guide for Wild Flower Harvesting

Many people in the Overberg earn a living from the region's wild flowers, known as fynbos. Some pick flowers for markets to sell, some remove invasive alien plants, and others are involved in conservation and nature tourism. It is important that people who work in the veld know about fynbos plants. This Pocket Field Guide for Wild Flower Harvesting describes 41 of the most popular types of fynbos plants that are picked from our region for the wild flower market. It also provides useful information to support sustainable harvesting in particular and fynbos conservation in general.

Picking flowers has an effect or impact on the veld. If we are not careful, we can damage, or even kill, plants. So, before picking flowers, it is important to ask:

- What can be picked?
- How much can be picked?
- How should flowers be picked?

This guide aims to help people understand:

- the differences between the many types of fynbos plants that grow in the veld; and
- which fynbos plants can be picked, and which are scarce and should rather be left in the veld.

This field guide is available in all three main languages of the Western Cape, namely Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa.

South Africa's plants

South Africa has a significant number of indigenous (or native) plant species: about 20,000 in total. The Red List of South African Plants (<http://redlist.sanbi.org/redcat.php>) tells us which of these species are under threat. About three quarters (or 75%) of South Africa's threatened plants live in the Fynbos Biome.

Fynbos is a type of vegetation or veld. The name comes from a Dutch word 'fijnbosch', meaning 'fine bush', and refers to how the plants look. Most fynbos plants have small (or fine) leaves and are shrubs (or bushes) rather than trees.

The Fynbos Biome is a natural region that stretches from Vanrhynsdorp in the west to Grahamstown in the east, in a 100 to 200 kilometre-wide strip along the coast. This region has a Mediterranean climate, with cold, wet winters and hot, dry summers. In most of the rest of South Africa, the rain falls in summer and the winters are dry. Fynbos plants have to be tough to survive the long summer droughts.

Fynbos is predominantly found in nutrient poor, highly leached soils. This is another characteristic of fynbos, as very few plants choose to live on such harsh soils. Fynbos has adapted to these soil conditions, allowing it to grow in areas where many other plants cannot.

Fires are common in fynbos during the hot, dry, windy summers. In fact, fynbos needs to burn every 15 years or so. Fire helps to renew the veld because it removes the old plants, and the smoke from the fire causes seeds in the ground to germinate and grow into new plants.

Fynbos plants are threatened by:

- destruction of their habitat – due to urban, agricultural and industrial development;
- the spread of invasive alien plants;
- inappropriate agricultural practices;
- unsustainable picking;
- too frequent fires.

Picking fynbos with care

Here are some things to think about:

- When fynbos flowers are removed from the veld, we prevent these flowers from making seeds that will grow into new plants. This is why we should always leave some flowers in the veld.
- If we do not know which plants can be picked, we could pick rare species that are in danger of becoming extinct.
- If we allow invasive alien plants to grow in the veld, they could shade the fynbos plants beneath them, and stop them from growing. We should remove these alien plants from the veld.
- Because fynbos is so valuable, it is protected by law (including the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 2004). For example, it is illegal to plough or clear fynbos veld that has never been cleared before (e.g. to plant another crop in its place). We need to know and respect the rules that protect fynbos.
- It is illegal to pick fynbos without the correct licences from the conservation authorities, such as CapeNature. These licences provide guidelines to help us look after the fynbos.

Understanding how harvesting affects the veld helps us to look after the veld more effectively. After all, if we pick all the fynbos this year, there will be no fynbos to pick in the future. This can have a negative impact on livelihoods.

What are the Principles of Sustainable Harvesting?

The Flower Valley Conservation Trust has worked with CapeNature, botanists, market experts and the fynbos industry over a period of ten years to develop the Sustainable Harvesting Programme (SHP). The SHP provides fynbos harvesters and suppliers with an SHP Toolkit to help them pick fynbos in a responsible manner. A key component of the Toolkit is The Sustainable Harvesting Programme Code of Best Practice for Wild Harvesters.

The SHP Code of Best Practice for Wild Harvesters has four principles that protect the environment:

1. **Conserve biodiversity**
2. **Use wild fynbos sustainably**
3. **Comply with national and provincial regulations**
4. **Have a property management plan**

These principles are outlined in more detail in the accompanying Field Guide for Wild Flower Harvesting.

Picking teams should follow the principles of good harvesting, as captured in the SHP, when picking flowers in the veld. The diagrams on the following page illustrate some of the key principles.

Fynbos plants of the Agulhas Plain and beyond

The rest of this Pocket Field Guide for Wild Flower Harvesting describes 41 species (or types) of fynbos plants that grow on the Agulhas Plain. These species were selected as they are the most commonly harvested species. Many of these plants also grow in other parts of the Cape Floral Kingdom. They are all harvested for flowers or greens.

The Agulhas Plain is a biodiversity hotspot. Many of the plants that grow here are vulnerable (at risk) because of invasive alien plants, urban and agricultural development, and harvesting. Many plants are endemic (unique) to the area. If they die out here, they cannot be replaced.

The 41 indigenous plant species belong to eight plant families. The plants are grouped first by their family in alphabetical order, starting with the Asteraceae and ending with the Rutaceae. They are then listed by their genus and species names, in alphabetical order.

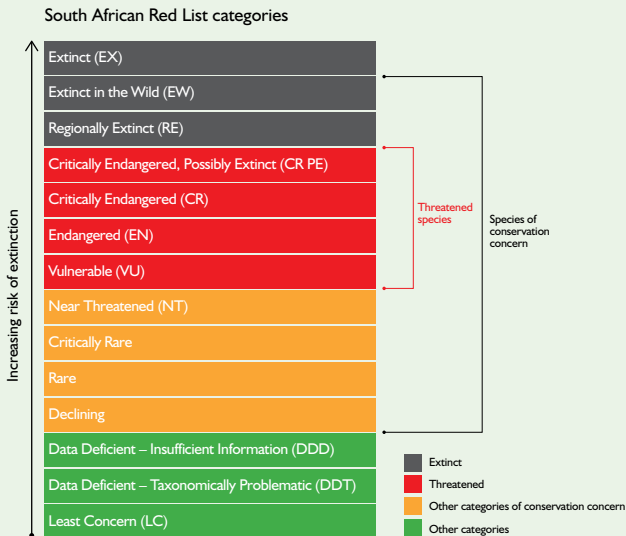
Each plant species has a description and a photograph to help you recognise it in the veld. You will find out where each species is most likely to grow. You will also learn which species are common and can be harvested, and which are threatened and should be left in the veld.



Plant descriptions and Key

Each of the plant descriptions includes:

- A colour photograph of the flower;
- The name of the family to which the plant belongs;
- The scientific name of the plant (the genus and species);
- Common names of the plant;
- The height of the plant;
- Where the plant grows;
- How the plant is used,
- Conservation information, as listed in the Red List of South African Plants, which assesses the conservation status of South Africa's entire flora.



Plant descriptions and Key

Red Data List:

- **Green label** – this plant is common (least concern), so it may be picked for the market, with the relevant CapeNature licences.
- **Orange label** – this species is declining. It can be picked with the relevant CapeNature licences.
- **Orange label** – this species is near threatened. It can be picked, with authorisation from CapeNature.
- **Red label** – this species is vulnerable. It can be picked, with authorisation from CapeNature.

The Agulhas Plain, was the pilot site for the SHP. A Vulnerability Index (VI) has been developed which tells us the extent to which harvesting increases the vulnerability of species found on the Agulhas Plain. Not all the species in this guide have this information. This is because some of these species are not found naturally on the Agulhas Plain. However, they may be present and be harvested if they have been artificially sown.

The Vulnerability Index scoring:

- 1 – 4: **Common species;**
- 5 – 6: **Species that should be monitored;**
- 7 – 8: **Species that are a priority to monitor;**
- 9 – 11: **No-go species that should not be picked.**

The following refers to the Geographical Range where the species occurs:

- **Widespread** means the plant occurs on more than 500km² of land.
- **Localised** means the plant occurs on less than 500km² of land.

The following refers to how abundant the species is:

- **Common** means that the species occurs in dense populations within a range greater than 500km².
- **Localised** means the species occurs in small, scattered groups over a range less than 500km².

Plant descriptions

Family	Genus & Species
1 Asteraceae	<i>Phaenocoma prolifera</i>
2	<i>Stoebe plumosa</i>
3	<i>Syncarpha vestita</i>
4 Bruniaceae	<i>Berzelia abrotanoides</i>
5	<i>Berzelia lanuginosa</i>
6	<i>Brunia albiflora</i>
7	<i>Brunia laevis</i>
8	<i>Brunia noduliflora</i>
9	<i>Staavia radiata</i>
10 Ericaceae	<i>Erica coccinea</i>
11	<i>Erica imbricata</i>
12	<i>Erica plukenetii</i>
13 Proteaceae	<i>Aulax umbellata</i>
14	<i>Leucadendron confiferum</i>
15	<i>Leucadendron laureolum</i>
16	<i>Leucadendron linifolium</i>
17	<i>Leucadendron meridianum</i>
18	<i>Leucadendron muirii</i>
19	<i>Leucadendron platyspermum</i>
20	<i>Leucadendron rubrum</i>
21	<i>Leucadendron salicifolium</i>

Plant descriptions

Family	Genus & Species
22 Proteaceae	<i>Leucadendron xanthoconus</i>
23	<i>Leucospermum cordifolium</i>
24	<i>Leucospermum truncatulum</i>
25	<i>Mimetes cucullatus</i>
26	<i>Protea compacta</i>
27	<i>Protea cynaroides</i>
28	<i>Protea eximia</i>
29	<i>Protea longifolia</i>
30	<i>Protea neriifolia</i>
31	<i>Protea obtusifolia</i>
32	<i>Protea repens</i>
33	<i>Protea scolymocephala</i>
34	<i>Protea speciosa</i>
35	<i>Protea sulphurea</i>
36	<i>Protea susannae</i>
37 Restionaceae	<i>Thamnochortus insignis</i>
38 Rhamnaceae	<i>Phyllica ericoides</i>
39 Rubiaceae	<i>Anthospermum aethiopicum</i>
40 Rutaceae	<i>Acmadenia heterophylla</i>
41	<i>Agathosma betulina</i>

Plant attributes key



Plant height



Reproduction



Flowering season



Where



Usage



Conservation status



Geographical range



Abundance

Family: Asteraceae
Genus: *Phaenocoma*

Species: *prolifera*
Common name: Cape everlasting,
Rooisewjaartjie, Strooiblommetjie



Cape Peninsula to Bredasdorp	
1.2m	Least concern
September to March	VI= 4
Seeder, insects	Widespread
Dried industry	Common

Family: Bruniaceae
Genus: *Berzelia*

Species: *abrotanoides*
Common name: Blood kol-kol



Clanwilliam to Port Elizabeth	
1.5m	Least concern
April to October	VI= 4
Seeder, insects and re-sprouter	Widespread
Fresh industry	Localised

Family: Asteraceae
Genus: *Stoebe*

Species: *plumosa*
Common name: Slangbos



Cape Floristic Region	
1m	Least concern
April to June	VI= 3
Seeder, insects, wind	Widespread
Fresh and dried industries, medicine	Common

Family: Bruniaceae – the Brunia family
Genus: *Berzelia*

Species: *lanuginosa* – meaning ‘woolly’
Common name: Kol-kol



Clanwilliam to Bredasdorp	
2m	Least concern
June to November	VI= 6
Seeder, insects	Widespread
Fresh industry	Localised

Family: Asteraceae
Genus: *Synкарpha*

Species: *vestita*
Common name: Sewejaartjie, Strooiblommetjie,
Matras Sewejaartjie



Cape Peninsula to George	
90cm	Dried industry
November to January	Least concern
Seeder, insects	VI=5

Family: Bruniaceae
Genus: *Berzelia*

Species: *albiflora*
Common name: Knopbossie, Koffiebossie,
Stompies, Coffee-scented Brunia



Hottentots Holland to the Klein River Mountains	
3m	Fresh industry
March, April	Least concern
Seeder, insects	

Family: Bruniaceae – the Brunia family
Genus: *Brunia*

Species: *laevis* – meaning ‘smooth’
Common name: Silver Brunia

Family: Ericaceae
Genus: *Erica*

Species: *coccinea*
Common name: Hangertjies, Vlaktheide



- 📍 Caledon to Bredasdorp
- 🌿 90cm
- ⚠️ Least concern
- ⚙️ August to January
- ⚠️ VI= 6
- 🌱 Seeder, insects (resprouts after fire)
- 🎯 Restricted
- 🏠 Fresh and dried industries
- 🌿 Localised



- 📍 Cederberg in the west, to the Cape Peninsula, Agulhas Plain and the Kamanassie Mountains
- 🌿 1.2m
- ⚠️ Least concern
- ⚙️ Throughout year
- ⚠️ VI= 2
- 🌱 Seeder, birds (resprouts after fire)
- 🎯 Widespread
- 🏠 Fresh industry
- 🌿 Localised

Family: Bruniaceae
Genus: *Brunia*

Species: *noduliflora*
Common name: Knopbossie

Family: Ericaceae
Genus: *Erica*

Species: *imbricata*
Common name: Kêr-kêr



- 📍 South-western and Southern Cape
- 🌿 50cm-1.5m
- ⚠️ Least concern
- ⚙️ March to June
- ⚠️ VI= 2
- 🌱 Seeder, insects (resprouts after fire)
- 🎯 Widespread
- 🏠 Fresh and dried industries
- 🌿 Common



- 📍 Gifberg to Port Elizabeth
- 🌿 80cm
- ⚠️ Least concern
- ⚙️ June to December
- ⚠️ VI= 4
- 🌱 Seeder, insects
- 🎯 Widespread
- 🏠 Fresh industry
- 🌿 Common

Family: Bruniaceae
Genus: *Staavia*

Species: *radiata*
Common name: Glasogies, Altydbossie

Family: Ericaceae
Genus: *Erica*

Species: *plukenetii*
Common name: Hangertjie



- 📍 Malmesbury to Riversdale
- 🌿 90cm
- ⚠️ Least concern
- ⚙️ September to December
- ⚠️ VI= 3
- 🌱 Seeder, insects (resprouts after fire)
- 🎯 Widespread
- 🏠 Fresh industry
- 🌿 Common

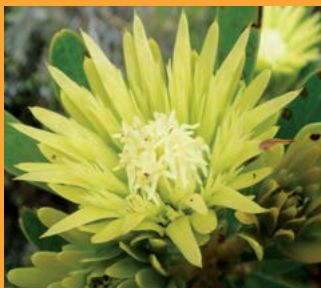


- 📍 Cape Floristic Region
- 🌿 1m
- ⚠️ Least concern
- ⚙️ Throughout year
- ⚠️ VI= 3
- 🌱 Seeder, birds
- 🎯 Widespread
- 🏠 Fresh industry
- 🌿 Common

n.b. E. plukenetii subsp. lineata is threatened and has a VI of 8

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Aulax*

Species: *umbellata*
Common name: Krismisblom,
Broad-leaf Featherbush



Kogelberg to Still Bay	
2.5m	Near Threatened
September to February	VI= 2
Seeder, insects	Widespread
Fresh and dried industries	Common

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *limfolium*
Common name: Line-leaf Conebush



Cape Peninsula and Overberg	
2m	Vulnerable
September, October	VI= 4
Seeder, insects	Widespread
Fresh and dried industries	Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *coniferum*
Common name: Duinegeelbos, Geelbos,
Dune Conebush



Agulhas Plain, coastal areas of the Cape Peninsula, and Betty's Bay	
4m	Vulnerable
August, September	VI= 5
Seeder, wind	Widespread
Fresh industry	Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *meridianum*
Common name: Geelbos, Limestone Conebush



Gouritz River mouth to the Agulhas Plain	
2m	Least concern
July and August	VI= 7
Seeder, insects	Restricted
Fresh and dried industries	Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *laurteolum*
Common name: Louriertolbos,
Golden Sunshinebush



Cape Peninsula to Potberg and inland to the Paarl	
2m	Least concern
June to August	VI= 3
Seeder, insects and resprouter	Widespread
Fresh industry	Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *mutrii*
Common name: Kruiphout, Silver-ball Conebush



Bredasdorp and the Agulhas Plain to Still Bay	
2m	Least Concern
November, December	VI= 7
Seeder, wind	Restricted
Dried industry	Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *platyspermum*
Common name: Platy, Platy Star, Tol,
Tolle, Plate-seed Conebush



- Kleinmond to Villiersdorp and the Agulhas Plain

- 1.7m Vulnerable

- September VI= 7

- Seeder, insects Restricted

- Fresh and dried industries Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *xanthococcus*
Common name: Blinkblaartolbos
Sickle-leaf Conebush



- Cape Peninsula to Potberg

- 2m Least concern

- August VI= 2

- Seeder, insects Widespread

- Fresh and dried industries Common

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *rubrum*
Common name: Spinning Top



- Cape Floristic Region

- 2.5m Dried industry

- August, September Least concern

- Seeder, wind

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucospermum*

Species: *cordifolium*
Common name: Luise, Luisies, Speldekussing,
Pincushion



- Kogelberg, Groenlandberge, Houwhoek, Caledon Swartberg, Kleinrivierberge, Akkedisberg and Bredasdorp mountains, and Soetansyberg

- 1.5m Near threatened

- August to January VI= 4

- Seeder, birds Widespread

- Fresh industry Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucadendron*

Species: *salicifolium*
Common name: Geelbos, Strictum,
Common Stream Conebush



- Olifants River to the Langeberg Mountains at Riversdale

- 3m Fresh and dried industries

- July to September Least concern

- Seeder, wind VI=5

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Leucospermum*

Species: *truncatum*
Common name: Buxi, Buxifolium,
Oval-leaf Pincushion



- Kogelberg to Agulhas

- 2m Near threatened

- August to December VI= 6










- Seeder, insects Widespread

- Fresh and dried industries

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Mimetes*

Species: *cucullatus*
Common name: Common Pagoda









 Cederberg to the Kogelberg and Agulhas Plain to the Kouga Mountains	
 2m	 Least concern
 August to March	 VI= 2
 Seeder, birds	 Widespread
 Fresh industry	 Common

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

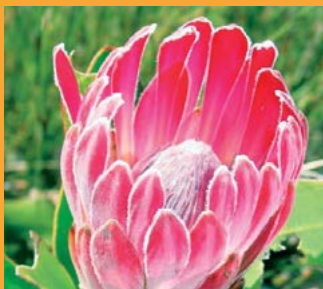
Species: *eximia*
Common name: Broad-leaf Sugarbush












 Worcester, via Van Stadensberg, to Port Elizabeth	
 5m	 Fresh industry
 July to December	 Least concern
 Seeder, birds	

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *compacta*
Common name: Bot River Sugarbush












 South-western Cape Coast: Kleinmond, Houwhoek, Hermanus, Elim, Napier, Bredasdorp and Struisbaai	
 3.5m	 Near threatened
 April to September	 VI= 7
 Seeder, birds	 Widespread
 Fresh and dried industries	 Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *longifolia*
Common name: Swartbaard, Long-leaf Sugarbush












 Hottentots Holland, Du Toitskloof Mountains, to the Agulhas Plain	
 1.5m	 Vulnerable
 May to September	 VI= 3
 Seeder, birds	 Widespread
 Fresh industry	 Common

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

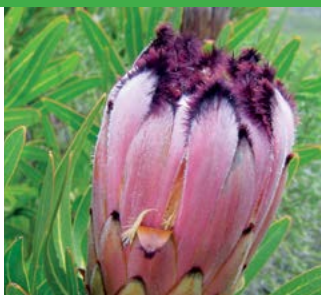
Species: *cynaroides*
Common name: Koningsprotea, King Protea












 Cape Floristic Region: Cederberg to Grahamstown	
 2m	 Least concern
 Throughout year	 VI= 4
 Seeder, birds	 Widespread
 Fresh industry	 Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *neriifolia*
Common name: Narrow-leaf Sugarbush



 Cape Town to Port Elizabeth	
 3-5m	 Least concern
 February to November	 VI= 3
 Seeder, birds	 Widespread
 Fresh industry	 Common

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *obtusifolia*
Common name: Limestone Sugarbush

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *speciosa*
Common name: Bruinbaard Suikerkan,
Brown-bearded Sugarbush



📍 Stanford to Cape Agulhas, Still Bay and to the Gouritz River mouth

🌿 2-3m ⚠️ Near threatened

☀️ April to September ⚠️ VI= 7

🍌 Seeder, birds 🎯 Restricted

🏠 Fresh industry ⚙️ Localised



📍 Cape Peninsula to the Agulhas Plain

🌿 1.2m ⚠️ Least concern

☀️ June to January ⚠️ VI= 7

🍌 Seeder, birds (resprou) 🎯 Restricted

🏠 Fresh and dried industries ⚙️ Localised

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *repens*
Common name: Suikerkan, Common Sugarbush

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *sulphurea*
Common name: Skaamroos, Sulphur Sugarbush



📍 South-western Cape to east of Grahamstown

🌿 2.5m ⚠️ Least concern

☀️ All year ⚠️ VI= 3

🍌 Seeder, birds 🎯 Widespread

🏠 Dried industry ⚙️ Common



📍 Hex River Mountains to the Swartberg and Waboomsberg

🌿 50cm 🏠 Fresh and dried industries

☀️ April to August ⚠️ Least concern

🍌 Seeder, small mammals (rodents)

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *scolymocephala*
Common name: Skollie, Scoly, Thistle Sugarbush

Family: Proteaceae
Genus: *Protea*

Species: *susannae*
Common name: Stinkblaarprotea,
Stink-leaf Sugarbush



📍 Olifants River to the Cape Peninsula and through the Overberg to Hermanus

🌿 1.5m 🏠 Fresh and dried industries

☀️ July to November ⚠️ Vulnerable

🍌 Seeder, insects



📍 Stanford to Albertinia

🌿 2-3m ⚠️ Near threatened

☀️ April to September ⚠️ VI= 7

🍌 Seeder, birds 🎯 Restricted

🏠 Fresh industry ⚙️ Localised

Family: Restionaceae
Genus: *Thamnochortus*

Species: *insignis*
Common name: Mannetjies Riet, Albertinia, Dekriet, Albertinia Thatching Reed, Thatchreed



📍 Southern Cape (also roadsides from Port Elizabeth to the Cederberg)

🌿 2.5m 🚫 Least concern

⚙️ March to April 🚫 VI= 3

🍃 Seeder, wind 🎯 Restricted

🏠 Thatch 🌱 Localised

Family: Rutaceae
Genus: *Agathosma*

Species: *betulina*
Common name: Boegoe, Buchu, Rondebelaarboegoe



📍 Calvinia, through the Cederberg, Tulbagh and Ceres, to the Piketberg

🌿 2m 🏠 Medicine

⚙️ June to November 🚫 Declining

🍃 Seeder, insects (resprouts post fire)

Family: Rhamnaceae
Genus: *Phyllaea*

Species: *ericoides*
Common name: Hardebos



📍 Saldanha Bay to Port Elizabeth

🌿 90cm 🚫 Least concern

⚙️ All year 🚫 VI= 3

🍃 Seeder, flies 🎯 Widespread

🏠 Fresh industry 🌱 Common

Family: Rutaceae
Genus: *Acmadenia*

Species: *heterophylla*
Common name: Buchu, Boegoe



📍 Bredasdorp, Caledon and Mossel Bay

🌿 2m 🏠 Fresh industry

⚙️ September to March 🚫 Least concern

🍃 Seeder, insects

Family: Rubiaceae
Genus: *Anthospermum*

Species: *aethiopicum*
Common name: Seeroogbossie, Katstert



📍 Cape Floristic Region

🌿 2m 🚫 Least concern

⚙️ August to January 🚫 VI= 3

🍃 Seeder, wind 🎯 Widespread

🏠 Fresh industry 🌱 Common

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This abbreviated version of the Field Guide for Wild Harvesters is available online at:

<http://www.flowervalley.org.za/fieldguidecardsA6.pdf>

A more detailed version of the Field Guide for Wild Harvesters is available online at:

<http://www.flowervalley.org.za/fieldguidebooklet.pdf>

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