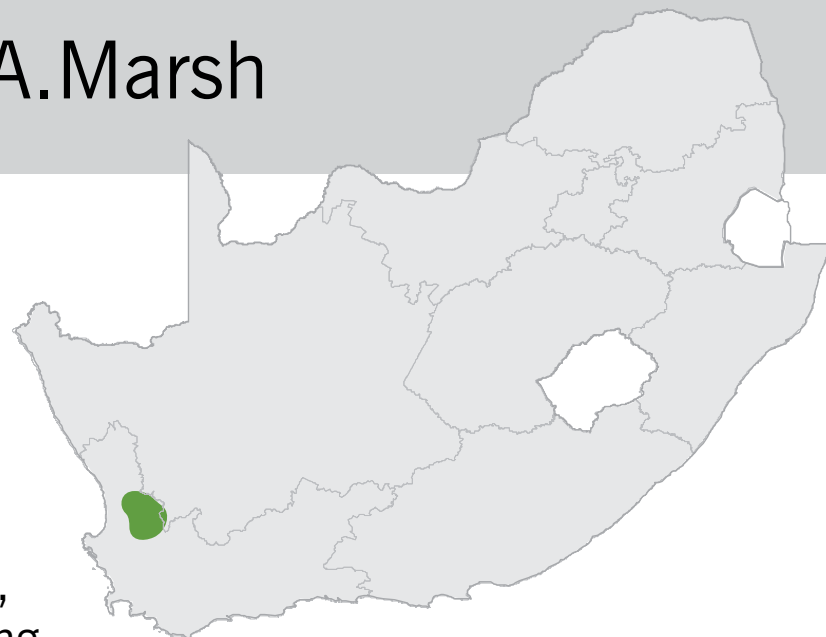




Widdringtonia cedarbergensis J.A.Marsh

Family: Cupressaceae
National tree number: 19
Common names: Clanwilliam cedar (English);
clanwilliamseder (Afrikaans)



Shrub or small tree, up 20 m high; crown conical when young, becoming broad and open with age. Trunk massive, gnarled. Bark thin, fibrous, reddish grey, flaking. Young leaves narrow, needle-shaped, spirally arranged. Mature leaves small, acute, lying flat along branches in pairs. Male and female cones produced on same tree, between scale-like leaves on twig ends; male cones small, produced in autumn; female cones often clustered in whorls of 4, dark brown, rough, woody. Seeds ovoid, black to brown with narrow wings.





Widdringtonia cedarbergensis J.A.Marsh

Family: Cupressaceae
Common names: Clanwilliam cedar (English); *clanwilliamseder* (Afrikaans)

General appearance

A Critically Endangered shrub or small tree, up to 7 m high, can grow up to 20 m high; crown conical when young, becoming broad and open with age. Trunk massive, gnarled. Bark thin, fibrous, reddish grey, flaking. Young leaves narrow, needle-shaped, spirally arranged. Mature leaves small, acute, lying flat along branches in pairs. Male and female cones produced on same tree, between scale-like leaves at twig ends; male cones small, up to 2 mm long, produced in autumn; female cones often clustered in whorls of 4, dark brown, rough, woody, up to 25 mm in diameter, develop in April and remain on trees for almost 3 years before ripe seeds are released in late summer. Seeds ovoid, black to brown with narrow wings.

Distribution and habitat

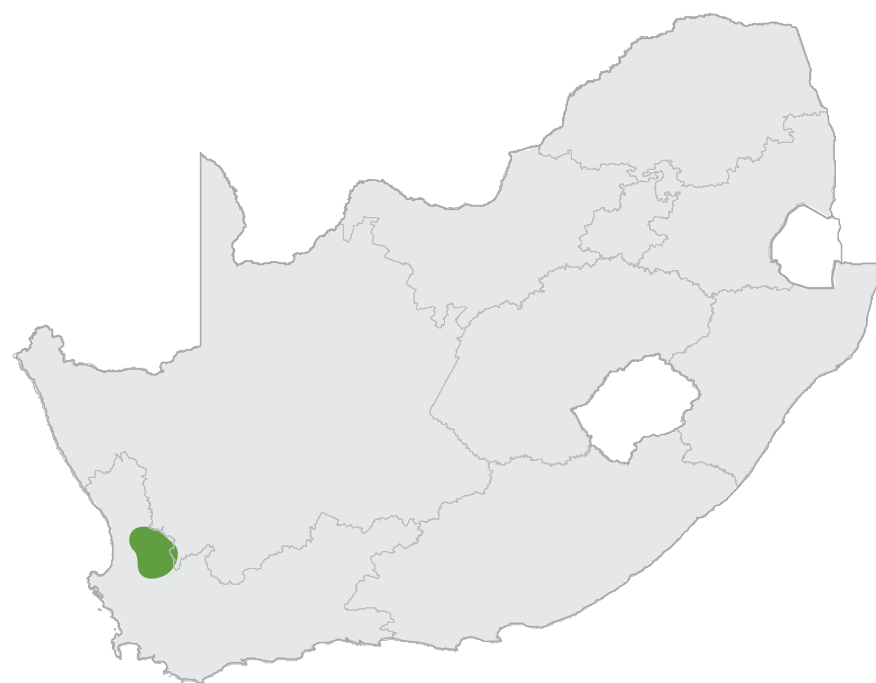
The Clanwilliam cedar is restricted to the Cederberg in the Western Cape. Trees grow on cliffs and often mist-cloaked mountains of 1 000–1 980 m a.s.l. Trees grow in shallow, infertile soils, and can withstand harsh weather conditions, including summer droughts, frost and snow in winter.

Meaning of name

Widdringtonia honours Edward Widdrington of the late 1700s and early 1800s, a Royal Navy captain, conifer botanist and author of a book on European pines; *cedarbergensis* is in reference to the Cederberg.

Ecology and uses

Trees are destroyed by too hot and frequent fire, as they have a high resin content and therefore burn fast with very little resprout-



ing after fire. Ironically, fire plays an important role in seedling establishment and seed release.

As a garden tree

Trees can be propagated from seed, which should be sown in autumn in well-drained sandy soil. Germination takes 3–4 weeks and seedlings should be grown to a size that can survive hot and dry summers before they are planted out. Seedlings are susceptible to root fungi and should be grown in sterile soil with root disturbance kept to a minimum. Saplings prefer semi shade and should be moderately watered. This is a slow growing tree and may only bear a significant crop of seeds after 30 years.