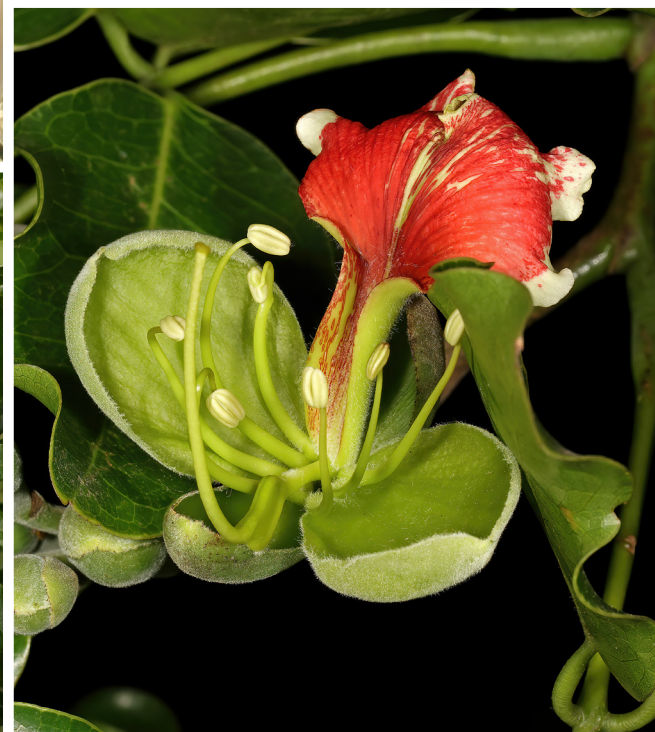
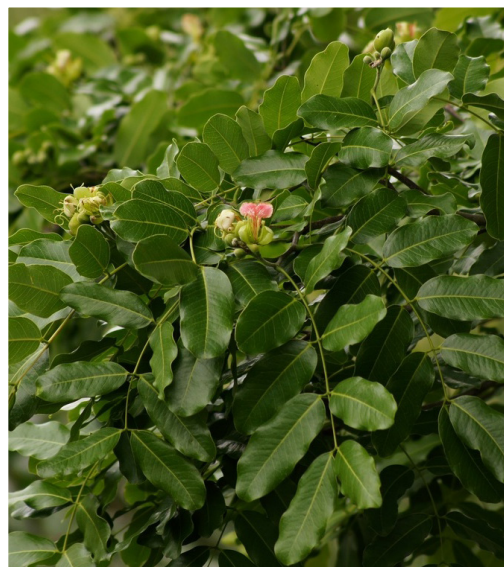


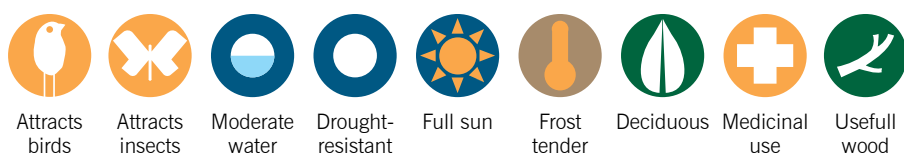
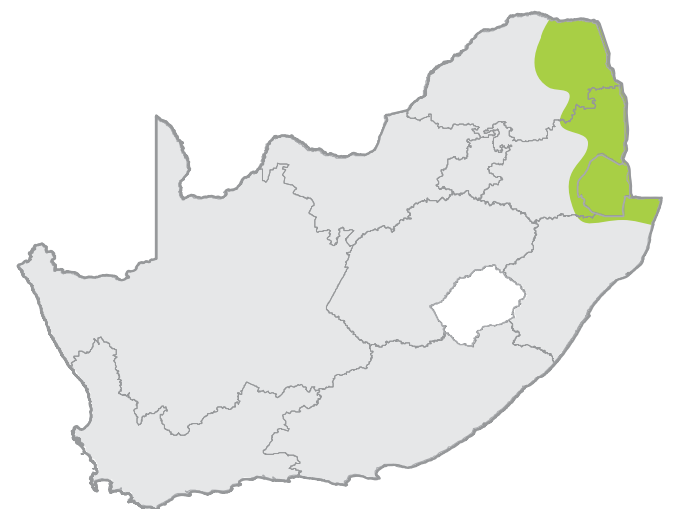
Afzelia quanzensis

Family: Fabaceae
Common names: pod mahogany, lucky bean tree (English); *peulmahonie* (Afrikaans); *inkehli* (isiZulu).

National
tree number:
207



A medium to large tree up to 35 m high with spreading crown. The bark is greyish, flaking to leave pale yellowish-brown patches. New leaves are an attractive coppery colour, turning green (dark green above and paler below) with age and yellowing in autumn. The sweetly scented flowers are green with pinkish-red petals and yellow veining, only one flower open at a time. Fruits are large, thickly woody, flattened pods that splits open to release seeds. The seeds are a shiny black with a bright red aril covering one third of the seed. Pods contain up to 10 seeds.



Text: Robetta Kandawire and Mashiane Mothogoane. Maps: Hester Steyn. Design and editing: SANBI Graphics & Editing. Photographs: Alex Winch (bark), SAplants (tree and flower), Tatiana Gerus (leaves) and Wynand Uys (pod).



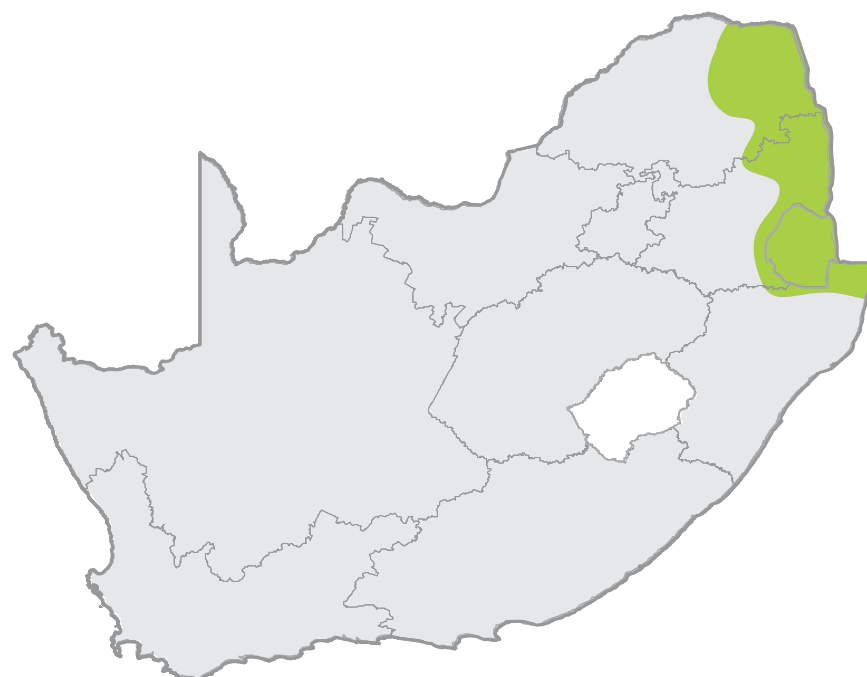
Afzelia quanzensis

Welw.

Family: Fabaceae
Common names: pod mahogany, lucky bean tree (English); *peulmahonie* (Afrikaans); *inkehli* (isiZulu).

General appearance

The pod mahogany is a medium to large tree up to 35 m high with a dense, spreading crown. The bark is greyish, flaking to leave pale yellowish-brown patches. Branchlets are slightly hairy becoming smooth with age. New leaves are an attractive coppery colour, turning green (dark green above and paler below) with age and yellowing in autumn. The leaves are evenly compound with 4–6 pairs of leaflets each. The sweetly scented flowers are green with pinkish-red petals and yellow veining, arranged in an elongated cluster of 4–7 flowers, opening one flower at a time from the bottom of the cluster to the tip. The flowers appear between July and November, and are followed by the fruit – large, flattened, woody pods. It takes approximately a year for the fruits to mature after flowering. The pods, each containing up to 10 seeds, split open to release the seeds. The seeds are a shiny black with a bright red aril covering one third of the seed.



Distribution and habitat

Pod mahogany is widespread and its distribution stretches from northern KwaZulu-Natal, through to Limpopo, Zimbabwe and other neighbouring countries up into the Horn of Africa. It is mostly found in lowveld woodlands and dry forests, commonly in deep, well-drained sand. It doesn't tolerate waterlogging.

Meaning of name

The genus name *Afzelia* honours Swedish botanist Adam Afzelius of Uppsala. The species name *quanzensis* refers to the Cuanza River in Angola, where the tree was first discovered.

Ecology and uses

- Leaves are browsed by livestock and game including eland, elephant and grey duiker towards the end of dry season.
- Butterflies breed on the leaves.
- Seeds are eaten by hornbills and rodents.
- The seeds are used for ornaments and as charms often used in necklaces.
- An infusion of roots and bark is believed to bring huntsmen luck when they bathe with it.

- The wood is termite and borer resistant.
- The wood is hard and durable and used for making furniture, flooring and panelling.
- Fallen flowers are eaten by livestock.
- The sweetly scented flowers attract insects and birds.
- The flowers are pollinated by honeybees.
- Powdered bark mixed with body lotion is believed to get rid of bad luck and attacks.

As a garden tree

Pod mahogany is easily propagated from seeds. It germinates easily with a germination rate of 80%. The seeds can be collected when the pods are mature; remove the aril before sowing. Seeds should be planted in seedling trays filled with river sand mixed with compost. Press the seed into the mixture and cover with a thin layer of sand and keep moist. Germination begins at 1.5–4.0 weeks after sowing. The seedlings will grow 50–60 cm in height during the first year. Transplant the seedlings into pots or nursery bags after they reach the two-leaf stage with four pairs of leaflets per leaf, or after 4–6 months. Protect the plant in the first two seasons from cold as this is a frost sensitive plant. At about seven years, the young trees develop a distinct stem and spreading crown. The tree is susceptible to fire.