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2024

Key to Combretums of Bicuar (as of specimens seen in plots)

The key focuses on leaf characters, as these are the easiest to get hold off throughout the year. These are best observed with a x10 hand lens. The best characters are often the venation patterns on the underside of the leaves. Bark characters are somewhat more difficult and depend on the age of the tree. Flower and fruit characters are not used here, but anyone with a serious interest in *Combretum* will need these to differentiate from species outside of Bicuar. Several species are locally referred to as Muhonjolo.

1 - Leaves usually less than 6cm, with up to 5 secondary veins …… 2
1’ - Leaves usually longer than 6cm, can have more than 5 secondary veins …… 4

2 - Plants forming an erect shrub, usually growing in woodlands. Leaves softly hairy …… *C. hereroense* (A)
2’ - Plants forming a scrambling shrub, usually growing in tickets. Leaves usually hairless (but can have many scales) …… 3

3 - Leaves mat green, usually more than 4 cm long, with conspicuous scales all over the underside and tufted domatia …… *C. celastroides* (B)
3’ - Leaves glossy green, usually less than 4 cm long, without obvious scales or tufted domatia on the underside …… *C. engleri* (C)

4 - Leaves hairless, discolor, with underside either whitish or slightly golden, petiole long and slender, usually more than 1.5cm …… *C. collinum* (D)
4’ - Leaves with at least some hairs, concolor, petiole usually shorter than 1.5 cm …… 5

5 - Leaves with conspicuous ladder-like tertiary veins …… 6
5’ - Leaves without conspicuous ladder-like tertiary veins …… 7

6 - Leaves with soft indumentum, giving the leaf a mat green-grey colour, upper side secondary veins slightly sunken, underside with prominent secondary veins covered in conspicuous white hairs …… *C. molle* (E)
6’ - Leaves usually with scally indumentum, giving the leaf a shiny green colour and rasp touch, upper side secondary veins not sunken, underside veins not prominent, sometimes with hairs along veins, but not conspicuously white…… *C. apiculatum* (F)

7 - Underside tertiary venation conspicuously raised to form a dense reticulate network. Bark of second year’s growth peeling cylindrically to reveal orange colour …… *C. psidioides* (G)
7’ - Underside tertiary venation not raised or if so, not forming dense reticulate network. Bark sometimes peeling longitudinally. Second year’s growth greyish …… *C. zeyheri* (H)

A – *Combretum hereroense* Schinz
Mainly found in plot 16.



B – *Combretum celastroides* Welw. ex M.A.Lawson
Mainly found in thickets



C – *Combretum engleri* Schinz, De Wild. & T.Durand
Mainly found in thickets or in small stems of other plots. Fruits are green and surprisingly large compared to the leaves.



D – *Combretum collinum* Fresen.
Found throughout Bicuar. One of the easier species to identify, due to is lack of hairs, long petioles and different coloured underside of leaf.



E – *Combretum molle* G. Don

Dominant Combretum species in plot 16. This species had not been previously recorded.



F – *Combretum apiculatum* Sond.

Found throughout Bicuar. Best to use a hand lens to see the scally indumentum.

Sometimes difficult to distinguish from C. molle, with which it is said to hybridise.



G – *Combretum psidioides* Welw.
Found throughout Bicuar. The conspicuous orange new growth and dense reticulate venation is a killer combo for this one. Fruits tend to mature to deep red.



H – *Combretum zeyheri* Sond.
Found throughout Bicuar. Quite variable in leaf shape and indumentum. If present, the large green – straw coloured fruits > 5 cm are a good clue for this species.