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SEPASAL is a database and enquiry service about useful "wild" and semi-domesticated plants of tropical and subtropical drylands, developed and maintained at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. "Useful" includes plants which humans eat, use as medicine, feed to animals, make things from, use as fuel, and many other uses.

Since 2004, there has been a Namibian SEPASAL team, based at the National Botanical Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture which has been updating the information on Namibian species from Namibian and southern African literature and unpublished sources. By August 2007, over 700 Namibian species had been updated.

Work on updating species information, and adding new species to the database, is ongoing. It may be worth visiting the web site and querying the database to obtain the latest information for this species.

Internet SEPASAL

New query

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 *Display help*In names list include: synonyms vernacular names and display: 10 names per page*Your query found 1 taxon***Brachiaria nigropedata (Ficalho & Hiern) Stapf [2182]**

Family: POACEAE

Synonyms

Panicum melanotylum Hack.

Panicum nigropedatum Ficalho & Hiern

Brachiaria melanotylo (Hack.) Henrard

Vernacular names

Afrikaans (Namibia)	swartvoetjie [5115] [5116], wurmpiesgras [2259]
Afrikaans (South Africa)	swartvoetjiegras [5117], haasgras [2259], krulgras [2259], soetgras [2259], wurmpiesgras [2259], wurmsinjaalgras [2259]
Afrikaans (Southern Africa)	wurmsinjaalgras [2182]
English	black-footed brachiaria [2259]
English (Namibia)	black-footed brachiaria [2259] [5116], spotted brachiaria [5115] [5116]
English (South Africa)	black-footed signal grass [5117], spotted false paspalum [2259], spotted signal grass [2259], sweet grass [2259]
English (Southern Africa)	spotted signal grass [2182]
English (Zimbabwe)	black-footed brachiaria [2259], spotted false paspalum [2259]
German (Namibia)	Schwartzfüßchen [2259] [5115] [5116]
Jul'hoan (Namibia)	beye-llxui-doa [5115], glam (-si) [5115], glaqm [5083]
Kxoe (Namibia)	beyellxui-doa [5083]
Thimbukushu (Namibia)	muranganandho [5115], muranganandhohoro [5083]
Tonga (Zimbabwe)	chiDyashana [2259]
Unknown (Angola)	Txuá [2259]

Distribution

Plant origin	Continent	Region	Botanical country
Native	Africa	East Tropical Africa	Kenya [1362] [2259], Tanzania [2259]
		South Tropical Africa	Angola [5126], Mozambique [2259] [5104] [5127], Zambia [2259], Zimbabwe [2259] [5125]

Southern Africa

Botswana [2259], Cape Province [2259], Lesotho [5131], Namibia s.l. [2259] [5115] [5116], Natal [5104], Orange Free State [2182] [2259] [5104], Swaziland [2259] [5104], Transvaal [2259]

ISO countries: South Africa [2182] [2259] [5104]

Descriptors

Category	Descriptors and states
DESCRIPTION	Herb [2255]; Tussock Forming/Tufted/Caespitose [2182] [5116] [5117]; Terrestrial [2255]; Rhizomatous [2182] [2259] [5117]; Perennial [2182] [5115] [5116]; Plant Height 0.3-1.2 m [2182] [5104]
CLIMATE	Tropical Summer Rains [2182] [2259] [5115]; Subtropical, Hot and Arid [2259] [5115] [5116] [5117]; Annual Rainfall 300-1000 mm [2255]
SOILS	Well Drained [2182] [5116] [5117]; Boulders/Rocky [2182] [5117]; Gravels/Stony [5117]; Sandy [2182]; Dry [5117]
HABITAT	Pioneer Species [2259]; Shrubland/Bushland/Scrub [1362] [5117]; Grassland/Forb-Land [2259]; Wooded Grassland [2259] [5101]; Hillsides/Slopes [2182] [5117]; Semi-Desert [2182] [5117]; Vlei/Dambo/Seasonally Flooded Grassland [2259]; Altitude 100-1600 m a.s.l. [5104]
PHYSIOLOGY	C4 [940] [2182]; Drought Tolerant [2255]
PRODUCTION AND VALUE	Potential Animal Food Uses [2259] [5116] [5117]
SOURCES OF PLANTING MATERIAL	Other Seed Sources [5181]
FURTHER DATA SOURCES	Dot Distribution Map [5115] [5116]; Botanical Illustration [2259] [5116]; Regional Distribution Map [2182] [2259] [5117]; Botanical Photograph [5117]
SEPASAL DATASHEET STATUS	All Data Transferred from SEPASAL Paper Files; Nomenclature Checked
CHEMICAL ANALYSES	Poisonous Compounds - sap/leaf sap [1340]; Nutritional Analyses - aerial parts [940] [5251]; Polysaccharides - 'roots' [5128]

Uses

Major use	Use group	Specific uses
ANIMAL FOOD	Aerial Parts	unspecified aerial parts, game mammals, browse [5117]; unspecified aerial parts, grazing [2182] [2259] [5116] [5117]; unspecified aerial parts, cattle, grazing [2255] [5129] [5132] [5133]; game mammals, browse [5117]; fodder [5130]; grazing [2182] [5116] [5117]; unspecified aerial parts, mammals, grazing [5525]
MATERIALS	Fibres	unspecified aerial parts, matting, mats [5088]
	Other Materials/Chemicals	leaves, other material types, adhesives [5088]
SOCIAL USES	'Religious' Uses	leaves, ritual/religion/magic [5088] [5101]; unspecified aerial parts, ritual/religion/magic [5088]

ENVIRONMENTAL USES	Erosion Control	other environmental materials, eroded land [5128]
	Revegetators	copper-rich soils [5134]
	Indicators	rangelands [5116] [5117]

Picture

None recorded

Notes

VERNACULAR NAMES

"Sweet grass" and "soetgras" refers to its palatability [[2259](#)].

DISTRIBUTION

Botswana:

Widespread in the Kalahari sandveld areas [[5130](#)].

Namibia:

Uncommon to common [[5115](#)].

Southern Africa, south and east tropical Africa [[5115](#)].

Southern Africa:

Mainly southern tropical Africa with interrupted northern extensions. [[2182](#)] [[2259](#)].

Angola:

Occurs in the Cunene, Huíla, Moxico and Namibe provinces [[5126](#)].

Botswana:

Occurs in the Ngamiland, Central, Chobe, Ghanzi and Southern Districts [[5186](#)].

Lesotho:

Occurs in the Mountain and Sengu valley zone [[5131](#)].

Mozambique:

Occurs in the Maputo and Nampula provinces [[5127](#)].

DESCRIPTION

Leaves:

The leaves are bright or dull green, the blades flat, straight and firm, rough on the margins, usually velvety hairy on the surface. They taper to a very fine point and curl when old [[2259](#)].

Habit:

Perennial, tufted, with an oblique, shortly creeping rhizome. Culms usually glabrous except at the shortly hairy nodes [[2259](#)].

IDENTIFICATION

Distinguished from other species by the typical short black pedicel of every spikelet [[5117](#)].

ANIMAL FOOD - AERIAL PARTS

Game mammals, browse:

Preferred by sable antelope [[5117](#)].

Grazing value very high [[5117](#)].

Fodder:

In Botswana the fodder value is rated as desirable [[5130](#)].

Palatable pasture (with good forage value) [[2182](#)].

South Africa:

A palatable grass with high leaf production, which is well used by grazers [5117] .

Valuable, palatable climax grass [5116] .

Widely regarded as having good forage value, this grass is palatable [2259] .

Unspecified aerial parts, mammals, grazing:

It is a sweet grass much relished by all stock [5525] .

MATERIALS - FIBRES

Unspecified aerial parts, mats:

In Namibia young hunters of the Jul'hoansi who have returned from their first successful hunt are initiated as such by sitting on a mat made of this grass [5088] .

MATERIALS - OTHER MATERIALS/CHEMICALS

Leaves, adhesive, arrows:

In north-eastern Namibia the leaves are sometimes mixed with those of *Hermannia tomentosa*. The mixture is then added to a black sticky paste smeared on the sinews tying arrows together for example. This black paste forms an important part of hunting equipment [5088] .

SOCIAL USES - 'RELIGIOUS' USES

Aerial parts, ritual:

In Namibia after successfully targeting an animal with a poisoned arrow, the hunter (of the Jul'hoansi people) lies down to rest on a mattress made of this grass, and waits. This ritual is believed to make the poison in the animal's body more powerful [5088] .

Leaves:

Before the hunt begins, the hunter (in north-eastern Namibia) rubs the grass (leaves) on his arms to improve his strength and archery skills [5088] [5101] .

Leaves, arrows:

In Namibia the Zu'hoasi people wrapped poison grubs in dry and wet leaves and held them above a fire. The thick smoke that arises is believed to soften the grubs for mixing of arrow-poison [5101] .

ENVIRONMENTAL USES - EROSION CONTROL

Roots, eroded land:

Roots exude polysaccharides so that root hairs form a rhizosphere with soil particles [5128] .

ENVIRONMENTAL USES - REVEGETATORS

Heavy metal tolerance:

Found on copper outcrops [2255] [5134] .

ENVIRONMENTAL USES - INDICATORS

Rangelands:

Regarded as an indicator of veld in good condition. One of the first grasses to disappear from the veld as a result in overgrazing [5116] [5117] .

NUTRITIONAL VALUE

Aerial parts:

Sept 1976 IVDMD 35.7%, CP 3.2%, P 0.04%, Ca 0.39%, moisture 18.5%. Nov. 1976 IVDMD 40.2%, CP 4.4%, P 0.03%, Ca 0.41%, moisture 21.2%. Feb. 1977 IVDMD 44.2%, CP 12.3%, P 0.13%, Ca 0.38%, moisture 66.4%.

April 1977 IVDMD 36.3%, P 6.3%, Ca 0.40%, moisture 53.8%. June 1977 IVDMD 37.4%, CP 4.0%, P 0.05%, Ca 0.36%, moisture 25.7%. Feb. 1978 IVDMD 41.1%, CP 7.0%, P 0.12%, Ca 0.27%, moisture 64.7%. July 1978 IVDMD 31.9%, CP 2.9%, P 0.03%, Ca 0.50%, Nov. 1978 IVDMD 45.6%, CP 2.7%, P 0.02%, Ca 0.46%, moisture

11.6%. Feb.1979 IVDMD 53.8%, CP 10.4%, P 0.13%, Ca 0.31%, moisture 66.0%. May 1979 IVDMD 50.7%, CP 4.6%, P 0.06%, Ca 0.39% [940] .

Good forage value [2182] .

Leaves, entire plant, crude protein, Ca, P, OM, DM, crude fibre, ADF, NDF, ADL, fat, in vitro digestibility, metabolizable energy, gross energy:

In Namibia 13 samples that included the leaves, the whole plant as well as samples taken which imitated sheep, were analysed. The following results are a summary of the tests presented as ranges (minimum to maximum). Crude protein 2.82-7.50%, P 0.01-0.09%, Ca 0.13-2.09%, OM 85.97-93.42%, DM 91.56-99.48%, crude fibre 27.00-35.27%, ADF 34.36-51.20%, NDF 58.63-72.90%, fat 0.75-1.64%, in vitro digestibility. 35.10-48.50%, metabolizable energy 4.40-6.20 MJ/kg, gross energy 16.08 MJ/kg [5251] .

TOXICITY/POISONOUS COMPOUNDS

Sap:

In Southern Zimbabwe the juice of *B. nigropedata* is said to produce serious poisoning when taken internally and to burn the skin when applied to it [1340] .

CHEMICAL ANALYSES - MISCELLANEOUS

Roots, carbohydrates, polysaccharides:

Roots exude polysaccharides so that root hairs form a rhizosphere with soil particles [5128] .

CONSTRAINTS - MISCELLANEOUS

Sap:

In Southern Zimbabwe the juice of *B. nigropedata* is said to produce serious poisoning when taken internally and to burn the skin when applied to it [1340] .

RAINFALL

Kenya:

700-1000 mm [2255] .

Southern Africa:

Grows in higher rainfall tropical areas [2259] .

TEMPERATURE

Seasonal variation:

Maximum 20-25°C and minimum 0-10°C [2255] .

TOPOGRAPHY/SITES

Zimbabwe:

Common around disturbed vleis [2259] .

SOILS

Texture:

On rocky slopes or among rocks, usually on sandy or well-drained soils [2182] .

Texture:

Poor red sand [2255] .

VEGETATION

Grows in a variety of habitats, ranging from open grassland to woodland savanna, especially in the higher rainfall tropical areas [2259] .

Namibia:

Abundant in the open Tree Savanna of the Kaukaveld (Tsumkwe area) [5101] .

Namibia:

It forms thick stands in natural climax veld in association with *Antheophora pubescens* and *Schmidtia pappophoroides* [5116] .

Southern Africa:

Common (usually scattered but sometimes forming dense stands) [2182] .

Southern Africa:

Kalahari desert [2255] .

Southern Africa:

Savanna and Nama-Karoo [2182] [5117] .

Zimbabwe:

Common around disturbed vleis in Rhodesia but also found in undisturbed veld [2259] .

Botswana:

Widespread in the Kalahari sandveld areas [5130] .

Namibia:

A valuable palatable climax grass [5116] .

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS - MISCELLANEOUS

Can remain green throughout drought [2255] .

Namibia:

Under injudicious management practices this species is one of the first grasses to disappear as a result of selective grazing [5116] .

South Africa:

One of the first grasses to disappear from the veld as a result of overgrazing (decreaser) [5117] .

FLOWERING/FRUITING/SEED SET

Flowering, Southern Africa:

November to April [2182] [5117] .

YIELDS

South Africa:

A palatable grass with high leaf production, which is well used by grazers [5117] .

SEED/GENE BANK SOURCES

National Plant Genetic Resources Centre, National Botanical Research Institute, Private Bag 13184, Windhoek, NAMIBIA .

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Updated for Namibia by E.Irish; checked by A. Jarvis; SEPASAL Namibia, National Botanical Research Institute, February 2005 .

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