

Assessment of *Androstachys johnsonii* Prain. stem utilization in Matshena village, Mutale Local
Municipality, Limpopo Province

BY

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ABSTRACT

Androstachys johnsonii Prain, is a tree species belonging to the family Euphorbiaceae. It is a gregarious species that occurs only in selected areas in Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Madagascar. It is mostly valued for its wood and is also used for construction purposes.

The study was done in order to verify what was going on in terms of the population dynamics of *Androstachys johnsonii*, seeing that the plants species are being overharvested. The study took place in Matshena village in Mutale Municipality in Limpopo Province, South Africa. At the study area, 10 transects of 100 m by 5 m were constructed using a measuring tape. Two methods were employed; (1) line intercept method used to document population dynamics, and (2) an ethnobotanical survey to verify the use of this plant species.

The study revealed that the status of crown health was generally good; about 70% of *A. johnsonii* plant occurred in the 0-5 m height class. The majority of the studied plants fall under 0-10 cm on the stem size- classes. It was found that the community uses the plant for fencing their homesteads along with other structures. The most common part used from *Androstachys johnsonii* was the stem. About 70% of this species was used, which emphasize availability status.

Keywords: *Androstachys johnsonii*, Mutale, Plant population, Species, Harvested, Utilization, Population dynamics.