

COLOPHON

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According to the *Bundu Book of Trees, Flowers and Grasses* (ISBN 582 57532 X) there are more than 40 species of native and introduced *Acacia* in Zimbabwe. Most of the introduced species are from Australia, and differ from the native species because they generally do not have thorns. The most common *Acacia* in southern Africa is *Acacia karoo*.

Keith Coates Palgrave's *Trees of Southern Africa* (ISBN 1 86825 171 3) lists more than a dozen commercial uses of *Acacia karoo*, including cattle fodder, tanning, antidote for cattle poisoning from tulips, a gum usable for confectionary or adhesives, needles, low-grade wood products such as furniture and textiles such as ropes or carpets. In fact, Mr. Palgrave writes that the uses of *Acacia karoo* are "almost unlimited".

However, the flat-topped silhouette of the Africa University logo is probably not an *Acacia karoo*. Instead, it is more probably an *Acacia abyssinica*, also known in English as the Inyanga Flat-top, or *Acacia rehmanniana*, the Silky Acacia. In Shona, the dominant indigenous language in Zimbabwe, these Acacia are recognised by their thorns, and so they are called *Mubayamhondoro*, a word which can be literally translated into English as "that which pierces the lion". It is also called *Muunga* in the Eastern Districts of Zimbabwe, and *Isinga* in Ndebele, the main indigenous language of Southwestern Zimbabwe.

Both *Acacia abyssinica* and *Acacia rehmanniana* can grow as tall as 15 metres, and are less widespread throughout southern Africa than *Acacia karoo*. However, they are more common than *Acacia karoo* in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe, the location of Africa University. *Acacia abyssinica* usually grows in groups in high-altitude woodland areas of Zimbabwe, and they usually flower in October or November, although occasionally later.