



## Article

# National Herbarium Plant Collecting Programme reveals new country and provincial distribution records from South African National Parks (Apocynaceae, Asteraceae & Xanthorrhoeaceae: Asphodeloideae)

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## Abstract

New country and provincial distribution records for South Africa of specimens collected mainly in various South African National Parks are reported on here. The taxa included in this contribution are of *Orphanthera albida* (Apocynaceae), *Doellia cafra* (Asteraceae), *Bulbine ophiophylla* (Xanthorrhoeaceae: Asphodeloideae) and *Trachyandra asperata* var. *basutoensis* (Xanthorrhoeaceae: Asphodeloideae).

## Introduction

A comprehensive collection representing the range of the distribution and as much as possible of the morphological variation of indigenous and naturalized plant taxa, is a prerequisite for high standards in the taxonomic, phytogeographic and morphological studies undertaken by staff of the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI).

However, to indiscriminately expand the collection of the National Herbarium (PRE), Pretoria (South Africa), could result in an excess of specimens from certain areas or in only some taxa being well represented in the Herbarium. To this end, the *National Herbarium Plant Collecting Programme* (NHPCP) was established at the Pretoria campus of the former National Botanical Institute (NBI), now SANBI. This programme uses the PRE Computerised Information System (PRECIS) database to identify areas of poor specimen representation in PRE. The aim of the NHPCP is to obtain a complete record of the Flora of southern Africa (FSA), to record accurate distribution data for all taxa, to record plant biodiversity in a defined area, to record variation in plant species and to obtain a record of plants that flower at times other than at the peak season.

In 2005 a facet of the NHPCP was undertaken that focus specifically on selected South African National Parks (SANParks). Priority collecting in the SANParks include areas of poor representation at PRE, inadequately known taxa, unique habitats, remote and inaccessible areas and plants flowering at irregular times, especially after events such as fire or unusual and good rains, and plants flowering throughout the year. Numbers of species per quarter degree square, using PRECIS information, shows that many areas of South Africa and especially in the targeted SANParks, are critically under-sampled and poorly represented at PRE (Figure 1). This contribution reports a number of new records and range extensions resulting from collecting efforts in the SANParks of the Northern Cape Province.