

Acokanthera oppositifolia  
(APOCYNACEAE)

NOMENCLATURE: IDENTIFICATION:

Accepted Name: Acokanthera oppositifolia (Lam.) L.E.Codd

Approved by: GMC

References: See Bibliography\*

Synonyms: Cestrum oppositifolium Lam.  
C. venenatum Burm.  
C. venenatum Thunb.  
Acokanthera lamarckii G.Don  
A. venenata E.Mey.  
A. venenata (Burm.f.) G.Don ex A.C.Smith  
Toxicophalaea thunbergii Harv.  
T. cestroides A.DC.  
Carissa acokanthera Pichon  
C. oppositifolium (Lam.) Pichon

FRACTIONATOR:

DESCRIPTION: Shrub or small tree 2-4 m. high, evergreen; branches more or less erect, sparingly branched, glabrous or, rarely, puberulous. Leaves very coriaceous, dark green and glossy above, glabrous or minutely papillose, paler and sometimes purplish beneath, ovate-elliptic to oblong or oblong-lanceolate, 5-10 cm. long and 2-5 cm. broad, cuneate or obtuse at the base, apex acute, rarely obtuse to rounded, mucronate; secondary nerves 5-10 on each side, usually distinct; margin revolute; petiole stout, transversely wrinkled, channelled above, 2-5 mm. long. Inflorescence many-flowered, subsessile, contracted and corymbose or a short, dense raceme of cymes; bracts ovate, 1.5 mm. long, caducous. Flowers sessile, white tinged with pink, scented. Calyx small, 2 mm. long, puberulous or glabrous, sepals ovate-lanceolate, acute, often ciliate. Corolla salver-shaped; tube cylindrical, wider near the apex and slightly contracted to the throat, 8-11 mm. long, pubescent to subglabrous without, hairy within, lobes broadly ovate, abruptly acute, 2-2.5 mm. long, pubescent. Stamens 5, situated in the throat, subsessile; anthers ovate, 1 mm. long, apex almost glabrous. Ovary entire, 2-chambered, with one ovule in each locule; style filiform, 6-8 mm. long; stigma small, conical with a minutely bifid hairy tip. Fruit an ellipsoid or subglobose berry, either small, 8-12 mm. long and 6-8 mm. in diameter, or large, 1.4-2 cm. long and 1-1.5 cm. in diameter, purplish-black. Seeds 2 or 1 (by abortion), broadly elliptic in outline, flattened on one side, 6 mm. long (in small fruits) or up to 1.2 cm. long in large fruits.

ECOLOGY: Widespread in wooded places, in a variety of habitats from exposed rocky slopes to scrub forest, along watercourses and in coastal bush, occurring from southern and eastern Cape Province, through Natal and Swaziland to the Transvaal.

Acocks has it recorded under the Alexandria Forest, but its not common. Listed as more frequent in the Valley Bushveld that is characterized by Euphorbia ingens, E. tirucalli, Dombeya cymosa, Dalbergia obovata, Acacia nilotica subsp. kraussiana, Acacia robusta, Ziziphus mucronata, Vitex rehmannii and Vangueria infausta.

COMMENTS: Fairly common on hillsides and Kloofs near Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Probably not common in Mufindi where also a collection obtained was active.

USES: Has been used as an arrow poison and as an antidote to snake and spider bites. Also as an anthelmintic, to treat stomachaches, anthrax, toothaches, and colds.

ACTIVITY DATA IN SPECIES OF Acokanthera:

<u>A. longifolia</u>	KB, PS	D	Kingston
<u>A. oblongifolia</u>	KB	C	Kapadia
<u>A. oppositifolia</u>	KB	C	Jordaan
<u>A. schimperi</u>	KB	C	Wall

REFERENCES:

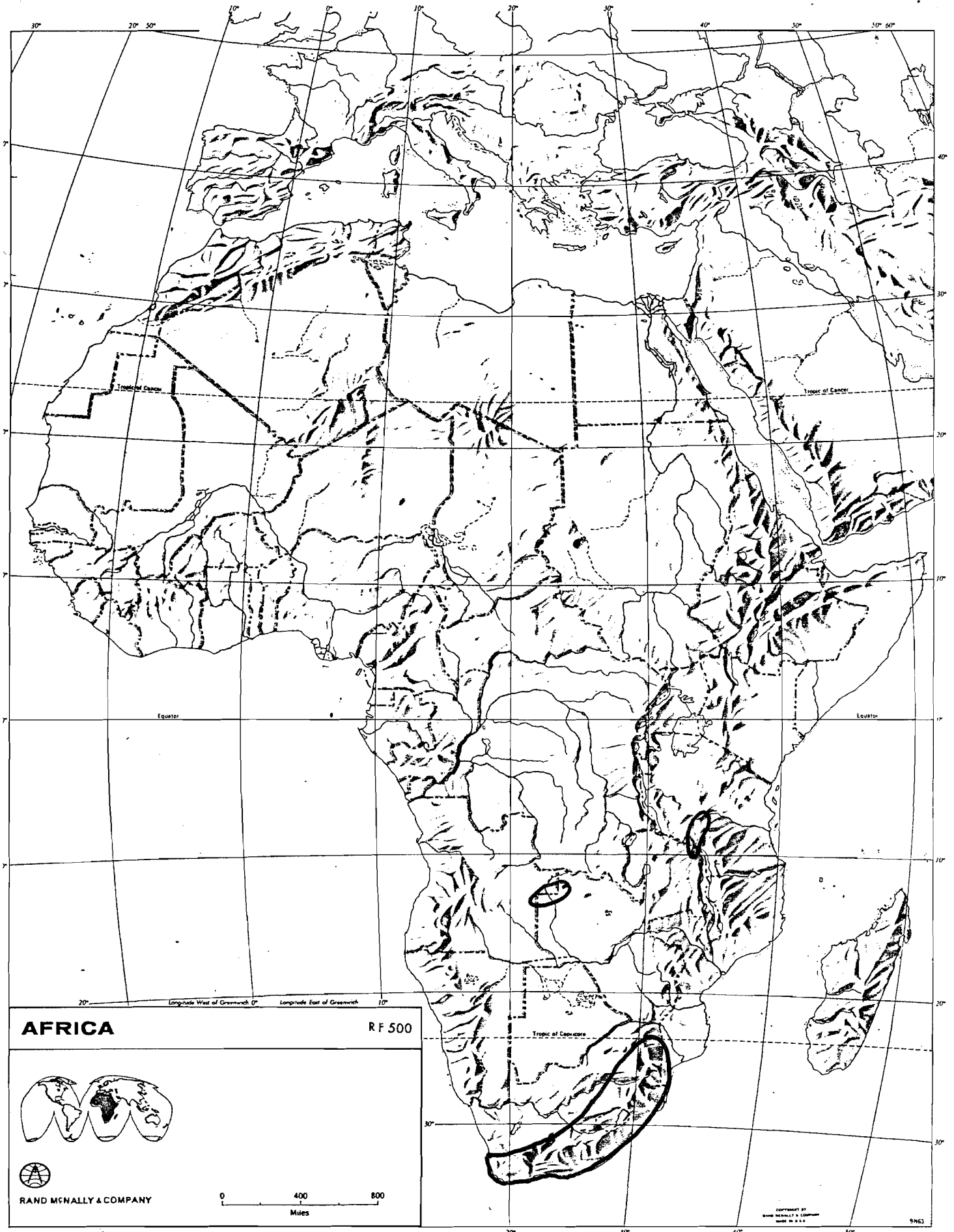
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Palmer, E. & N. Pitman, 1972. Trees of Southern Africa. A.A. Balkema/Cape Town; pp. 1895-1898.

PREPARED BY: R. W. Spjut DATE: May 18, 1977

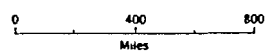


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