



## From Inside

*A tree, or a part thereof, is something we all need at one point in time.*

Most people have paper littering their desks. When the phone rings and a number needs to be written down it is a part of a "tree" that is used. When we want to make a braai we use charcoal (processed wood), wood or gas. Trees and vegetation provide the oxygen we need every day. When the sun is going into its angry mode like it often does here in Lephale, we treasure that small piece of shade that has to cover our vehicles to prevent the paintwork from turning into blisters. Have you ever wondered what the wood of some of these trees looks like when a significant branch is cut down? Here are a few examples of what the wood looks like on the inside.



### **Tambotie / Tamboti / *Spirostachys africana***

The wood of the Tamboti tree is very sought after when it comes to making furniture. The outside light coloured section is very soft but the reddish colour inside is extremely hard and difficult to work with. The centre part contains an oily substance and it is dangerous when it gets into the eyes. Caution has to be taken when working with this wood. Even one drop of this oil can cause severe damage to the eye. The Tamboti tree is a protected species in the Limpopo Province and grows very slowly. The centre part of the wood has a distinctive smell. Making a

braai with this kind of wood will result in serious diarrhoea; need a few sick days??



### **Enkeldoring / Ankle Thorn / *Acacia robusta***



The Ankle Thorn is a fairly fast growing Acacia species. The light coloured outside part and the darker centre part has more or less the same consistency. It is certainly not the best wood for braaing but if nothing else is available it will do. Due to the fact that the tree is a relatively fast grower and has a dense canopy it is a favourite to be planted in gardens to provide shade. Although it drops less thorns compared to other Acacia species it is still a problem along driveways and streets.



### **Rooibos / Red Bushwillow / *Combretum apiculatum***

The Red Bushwillow is probably one of the most preferred woods for braaing. The light coloured



outside part is a fairly soft wood but the dark coloured centre part is hard as a rock. Often the outside section will peel from the core section when the tree or a limb on the tree dies. This results in the centre part or core being exposed. The centre part has a lot of weight to it and the braai connoisseurs will walk the extra mile to find pieces of this wood to use. The Red Bushwillow is, despite of the light outside section and the dark inside part, not a favourable wood to use for making carvings and furniture. The Red Bushwillow is a very slow growing tree.



#### **Maroela / Marula / *Sclerocarya birrea***

The Marula tree is a reasonably fast growing tree and as a result of this the wood is soft and not very durable. This feature makes the Marula tree vulnerable to insect and even termite damage. When it comes to using the wood to make a braai, it is simply good for keeping the fire burning, whilst sipping on a glass of 'Amarula'. The meat on the other hand will have to be eaten raw or burned. You will hardly get any coals from burning Marula wood.



#### **Rooiessenhout / Natal Mahogany / *Trichilia emetic***

The Natal Mahogany is a fairly fast growing tree and a very popular shady tree. The inside of the wood has a uniform colour and is fairly strong. The wood is fairly popular for making furniture and wooden ornaments or curios. This is the very same tree species that has been planted on the sidewalks and centre dividers of the Estate. The trees were planted at the end of

2009, some as 20 litre trees, and the ones on the centre dividers as 50 litre trees. The stem diameter of the 50 litre trees was 4 cm and now, two years later some of them are 15-20 cm in diameter. The wood is not very good for making a braai.



#### **Knoppiesdoring / Knob Thorn / *Acacia nigrescens***

The species can be found all over the Estate. The wood is hard and in the years gone by many farmers have used younger Knob Thorn trees for making fence posts. The wood consists of a lighter outer part that is not very hard, and is often eaten by termites and other insects. The centre part however is very hard and durable. The wood from the Knob Thorn is very good for making a braai, however, once the softer outside section of the wood is gone it can easily be mistaken for Tamboti wood. It will take a trained eye to tell the difference. The Knob Thorn is a very slow growing tree. It is the preferred species utilized by giraffe.



#### **Sekelbos / Sickle Bush / *Dichrostachys cinerea***

This species is a fast grower in the beginning but when it comes to increasing stem diameter it happens very slowly, thus creating a very strong and dense wood. The wood from a sickle bush works very well for making a braai. Even fairly thin branches will turn into great coals and they will retain heat for a reasonable time. The centre darker part, but also the outer light coloured section is fairly hard. Sickle bush can be found all over the Estate.





### Fiji Fan Palm

The palm tree trunk consists of a dense network of stiff fibres, all compacted together and making up two thirds of the inner part of the trunk. During the later stages of growth, the original soft cellular tissue through which the fibres run becomes hardened by the deposit of woody matter within the cells. This hardened fibrous structure in the trunk makes it possible for palm trees to withstand tremendous winds.



## Lightning strike

*Have you ever wondered what it looks like inside a tree trunk after it has been struck by lightning?*

It often happens that trees are struck by lightning, especially trees growing on the edge of rivers such as the Matlabas, Mogol and Limpopo River. In these areas people often build huge thatch roof mansions without realizing that the chance of lightning strikes along these rivers are 10 times more likely than away from rivers. The first thing you would usually do when lightning comes along is to run for the nearest tree. This might very well be your last bad decision. The attached picture shows what it looks like inside the tree trunk after lightning

struck a Knob Thorn tree. Note the serious burning that occurred inside the tree trunk. This activity weakened the tree trunk at the spot where the lightning strike was and when a strong wind came along the tree trunk broke at this weakened spot. This picture was taken on the Estate in the vicinity of Luphepe street.



## Ledibeng Gardening Competition - April 2012

*Ledibeng residents are reminded that there will be another gardening competition taking place on the Estate in April 2012.*

Residents that won 1st and 2nd place in last year's competition have received recognition for their efforts in the form of prizes. The gardens that achieved a 1st and 2nd place in last year's competition can unfortunately not enter in the 2012 competition.

The categories for this year's garden competition will be a 1st and 2nd place for the best grass garden and best flower garden. The terms and conditions of the competition will be made available around 22 March 2012.





## Bird Nest with Eggs Spotted

*This bird nest with three eggs was spotted by residents in the vicinity of the second traffic circle on the Estate.*

The camouflage of the nest lining and the eggs is quite something. Two of the three eggs have since hatched. The question now is which species nest is it? If you know, good for you, but if you don't know you will have to wait for the next Ledibos to find out. Sorry!!

## Incident on Ledibeng

*On the evening of 22 December 2011 a game ranger on patrol contacted the wildlife management team and reported that a waterbuck cow was spotted and that she had trouble walking and moving around.*

When the management team arrived on the scene it became evident that both her back legs were broken below the knee. This is a very strange kind of injury and is certainly not often seen. With male animals getting into a fight it is not uncommon for a leg to be broken or a shoulder or hip damaged in the process, but for a female to have both her hind legs broken, is really strange. There is always the possibility that she was hit by a vehicle such as a small car.

The wildlife management team had no option but to put her down.



Upon closer inspection of the fractures it became evident that she had been walking on her knees for a few days already due to the infection of the wounds and the state of decaying that was present. When the animal was processed it was observed that she was four months pregnant. This resulted in a double loss for the Estate.



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**We would like to hear your story!**

Should you have an event or story you would like to share, please send us your photos and a few words to **wildlife@lantic.net**

*From your Wildlife Management Team*



