

## **Background information**

One of the main reasons for having names is to "identify and remember" objects or organisms. Being able to put names to faces is part of this learning process, and by having easy to remember, descriptive names makes the whole process a lot easier. Tree Names must be scientifically accurate and politically sensitive. South Africa now has approx. 1300 named trees, many of them growing in a vast diversity of habitats and therefore forms. It is confusing for the uninitiated unless they have the facility of learning under an expert - which is not always practical. If Tree-spotting and Indigenous gardening are to be promoted - which in turn will add to the number of people contributing in some way to conservation - it is imperative to have easy to use, say and remember names.

A day long event was held at the Avis Center in Johannesburg and was in association with the National Botanical Institute. Invitations to the conference were sent out to representatives of a wide spectrum of interested people and organizations. Essentially these included: academics; artists; publishers; tree authors; botanical specialists; media; National, provincial and municipal Parks; nursery men; training institutions; Tourism industry; Tree societies and wild life organizations.

At the conference a number of speakers presented their views on the feasibility and necessity for name changes. Lively debate and discussion followed. Early on, the central role played by the Dendrological Foundation and Fried and Jutta von Breitenbach in particular was acknowledged. It was unanimously agreed that without their initial contribution the state of our naming would be significantly less efficient today, than in fact it is. The day was dedicated to Fried von Breitenbach.

Within a few hours the general feeling reflected a concerted opinion that it was in South Africa's long term interests to improve the existing names where necessary. A list of principles were drawn up to guide decisions about these changes, and small workgroups discussed the principles, prioritized them and presented their findings to the larger audience. These priorities were statistically evaluated and weighted by Prof Kevin Balkwill. After the conference each participant was given the opportunity of prioritizing the principles individually on a questionnaire, which was then included in a second statistical evaluation.

From 11 August to 8 October the elected work group met regularly to apply the principles and below is a summary of the prioritized principles and how they were applied and the suggested new names. We would like to emphasize that this project centers on Recommended English names. There is the need to distinguish between what is meant by a recommended name as opposed to a common name. A recommended name is a name recommended as the wider South African choice for publishers, the nursery and eco-tourism industries. Common names are variable: a tree may have more than one common name, depending on the area where it is found. Some common names will remain in use locally and this is how heritage is retained.

### **Below are a number of important summaries and comments**

A summary of the Principles we have used, as directed by the conference participants and through the prioritizing system voted for at the conference. Some examples of how the Work Group arrived at the decision to alter or change a name. These examples should help you to understand how seriously the task was undertaken and the depth of thought and research that

accompanied each and every name. Please read the listed principles, the procedures, and the examples, before engaging too seriously with the list itself, as we believe our explanations are critical to your understanding of the actual process that evolved.

At the end of this introductory document see the discussion of linguistic considerations by J. O. Hendry, an English editor who has worked in conservation publishing for many years. The English standards used by the group were generally in keeping with his recommendations - although he was not part of the discussion for each and every tree and cannot be held responsible for any inconsistencies!

Principles / criteria generated during workshop applied by the Workgroup - more or less in this order of priority

1. Every effort should be made to change as few names as possible. However, if any name does not sufficiently meet the criteria listed below, it is better to change it, and to try to do the whole list properly in a co-ordinated way.
2. Some names are in common use that are not English, but as long as they meet the criteria they should remain eg. Tamboti, Marula, Mitzeeri and Guarri. Previous direct translations into English have caused some of the least useful names, when a good non-English word existed eg Ouhout became Oldwood, Perdepis became Horsewood, Boekenhout became Beech.
3. Names should be scientifically accurate - this applies to appearance, distribution, habitat, generic classification, etc. eg. Beech, Teak, Plane are inaccurate. Outeniqua might be inaccurate for a plant with a wider distribution.
4. Names must be politically sensitive, eg. old provincial names like Natal and Transvaal.
5. If there is more than one tree in a genus, the shared second name should link them. Black Storm could thus become Leafless Wormbush. However, sometimes within genera it would be helpful to recognize sub-groups eg. Bead-beans and Bush-cherries within Maurea. Once the species in a genus share a second name, each species should have a first name.
6. Where there is an invasive alien with a similar name it is imperative to separate them. eg. the Syringas and Wattles.
7. Where there is likely to be confusion between the English names of different genera, a mechanism must be found to differentiate between them, eg. Milkwoods, Ironwoods, Stinkwoods. When too many trees share the same descriptor eg. Common, Wild, the name needs to be more informative and /or less confusing.
8. Names must be correctly spelt and punctuated in terms of standard and botanical English. Hyphens may be used where this aids clarity, eg White-stinkwood could separate members of the Celtis genus from other Stinkwoods. If a name is to be changed the above principles have been applied and the following have been taken into account:
9. As much of the original name as possible should be preserved
10. Previously used names and locally well-known names have been given priority, eg. Umdoni Waterberry.
11. New names should be descriptive of special features (to aid identification of the tree). This could be distribution, habitat or features of the leaves, fruit etc. eg. small-leaved, etc
12. New names should be easy to pronounce, easy to remember, simple, elegant and not too long.
13. If the botanical genus name is easy this may be included in the name, eg. Acacia, Albizia, Croton.
14. New names have been chosen to popularise the tree by being descriptively positive or

- interesting.
15. Names currently used in surrounding countries have been seriously considered, particularly if the trees' distribution predominantly occurs within the neighboring countries.
  16. A name used for any southern African species previously, should not be used for a different species.
  17. Wild is used with a hyphen where a species occurs elsewhere in the world with the same name but is a different genus and we are needing to differentiate our indigenous species.

### Some examples of how the principles were applied

1. The genus *Podocarpus*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for this genus?  
Yes, Yellowwood.
  - b. Is this name accurate, acceptable and consistently applied?  
Yes, thus it is not necessary to change the common name of the genus.
  - c. Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed?  
Some need to be changed: *P. falcatus*, currently known as the Outeniqua Yellowwood, occurs more widely than only in the Outeniqua region, and therefore the name Narrow-leaved Yellowwood/ Sickle-leaved Yellowwood has been proposed for this species. It has been proposed that the common name for *P. latifolius*, Real Yellowwood, be changed to Broad-leaved Yellowwood in order to match the change made to the name of *P. falcatus*. This brings about better consistency, even though the name Real Yellowwood has some historical significance as being the superior species to use for lumber.
2. The genus *Celtis*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for this genus?  
Yes, White Stinkwood.
  - b. Are there any problems with this name?  
Yes, there are other genera called Stinkwood.
  - c. What changes can resolve this? A hyphen to make White-stinkwood will differentiate *Celtis* from *Ocotea*, the Stinkwood.
  - d. Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed?  
No changes need to be made.
3. The genus *Ficus*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for this genus?  
Yes, there are two: Figs and Rock-figs.
  - b. Are these names accurate, acceptable and consistently applied?  
Mostly.
  - c. Are there any meaningful groups that should be recognized within the genus?  
Yes, those that always occur on rocks could be distinguished as Rock-figs.
  - d. Has this classification been consistently applied?  
No, there need to be some additional Rock-figs.
  - e. Are there other subgroups that could be recognized?  
Possibly: stranglers, but some individuals of species are stranglers and some are not, thus the term is difficult to apply so that it does not cause confusion; cluster figs, it is not easy to communicate whether we are talking about clusters of figs

on the specialized branches (like in *F. sur*) or clusters of figs amongst the leaves. In *F. sycamorus*, one subspecies has fruit on specialized branches, while another does not, so this name cannot be consistently and helpfully applied.

4. The genus *Protea*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for this genus?  
Yes, Sugarbush.
  - b. Is there a problem with this name?  
Yes. Sugarbush is the direct translation from the Afrikaans "Suikerbos". In South Africa and elsewhere, the genus is far better known as Protea.
  - c. What changes can resolve this?  
The generic name Protea can be used as the common name.
  - d. Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed?  
Some changes need to be made, but we will refer to the Protea Atlas Group for their input.
5. The genus *Cadaba*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for this genus?  
Yes, Worm-bush.
  - b. Is the name consistently applied to all species?  
No, Blackstorm, although relatively well known to a small group, does not show the generic relationship, nor is it descriptive for wider audiences in
  - c. What changes can resolve this?  
It will be helpful to have an all-embracing second name.
  - d. Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed?  
No, we could change Blackstorm to Leafless Worm-bush.
6. The genera *Acacia* and *Albizia*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for these genera?  
Yes, Thorn and False-thorn.
  - b. Is there a problem with this name?  
Yes, the name includes the Spike-thorns and Buffalo thorns. Also, False-thorn is misleading because the members of the genus have no thorns.
  - c. What changes can resolve this?  
The botanical names *Acacia* and *Albizia* can be used.
  - d. Do all the species descriptors conform to the principles or do any need to be changed? Some need attention. It was debated whether the names Candle Thorn or Candle Pod are correct. In this case, Candle pod was considered more accurate because it is the pod and not the thorns that are being described.  
The name Knobthorn was retained (with hyphenation) because the thorn is on a knob. In the case of the name Flaky Bark, bark was necessary to maintain accuracy. The Fever tree is very well known, but there is another Large Leafed Fever Tree (*Anthocleista grandiflora*), which on name alone, is confusing. Adding Acacia to the hyphenated Fever-tree dispels all doubt in print form - although in colloquial conversation it is likely that the *Acacia xanthophlea* will remain simply the favorite Fever-tree.
7. The genus *Pittosporum*
  - a. Is there currently an accepted common name for this genus?  
Yes, Cheesewood, or Kasuur.
  - b. Is there a problem with this name?

Yes, the name of Cheesewood is rather ambiguous on its own because it allows confusion with other members of the genus which are invasive weeds.

d. What changes can resolve this?

It is proposed that the name be changed to Lover's Cheesewood. The Afrikaans name Kasuur originates from the word Kersuur which means candle hour (referring to the 'opsitkors' of bygone days) and was so named in allusion to the time when the Cheesewood flowers exude their scent.

8. The genus *Rhus*

a. Are there commonly accepted words for this genus?

Yes, there are 6: Currants, Karree, Crowberry, Kuni-bush, Rub-rub Berry, Nana-berry.

b. Are these names accurate, acceptable and consistently applied?

No However the following is generally true: Karree was mainly applied to those with a leaflet length to width ratio of 3 or more. Kuni-bush was applied to those with obovate leaflets with wavy margins and a waxy surface. Currant was applied mainly to those with the broader leaflets. There appear to be no distinguishing features for what are known as Crow-berries. Rub-rub Berry and Nana-berry were applied to a single species each.

c. Are these meaningful groups that can be used throughout the genus?

Yes. With a few alterations to existing "incorrect" karrees, currants and kunis, and the inclusion of crowberries, rub-rub and nana according to their leaf-shapes, we propose to endeavor to recognise the groups by keeping many of the same names.

However, these sub-groups clearly belong within the genus *Rhus*. *Rhus* is a short name that has been recognized and used world-wide for over two thousand years, being mentioned by Pliny in Latin writings and appearing in modern English dictionaries. As a compromise between recognising the infra-generic (within) and showing the relationship of all the members of the genus, we opted for Karree-rhus, Kuni-rhus and Currant-rhus. A few people have responded that this is cumbersome and unnecessary, but the group still feel there is merit and invite specific feedback please.

**The following notes are generally much briefer and NOT a complete list of all alterations and changes - but are useful. The number is the accepted SA Tree number**

This section gives an idea of how the working group arrived at some of their decisions.

1. Grassland describes the difference in habitat of the Tree-ferns.

10. Natal is politically incorrect and Kwazulu-Natal is cumbersome. Giant is the best name we could think of for it, but it may not be the biggest cycad.

19 & 21. The *Widdringtonias* are closer to cypresses than cedars. Wood has the smell and texture of cypress.

23 & 24. The common names of the *Hyphaenes* did not reflect their relationship. They become Lala-palms and Northern and Southern separates them on distribution.

28.3. *Aloe alooides* is not confined to Graskop. The group is split on Drooping-leaves vs. Weeping.

29.1. *Aloe dolomitica* is not restricted to the Wolkberg.

36.1. Natal is politically incorrect. Flute comes from the Afrikaans name.

72.1 & 2. Bottlebrush is misleading because of the commonly grown garden plant. Pagoda comes from the shape of the inflorescence.

83-85.1. *Leucospermums*: " tree" has been dropped because all those which qualify for the tree list attain tree size.

117.1. *Dahlgrenodendron* is made a Wild-laurel to differentiate it from the *Cryptocarya*, which are Wild-quinces. Relic refers to its rarity, while Natal is politically incorrect.

142-144. These all become Witch-hazels as this is what other members of the family are known as internationally. The Green could be replaced by Splendid - far more apt for a stunning tree than Green.

147. Becomes the African Almond. Almond because it is in the genus *Prunus*, the only species in Africa. Stinkwood leads to confusion with *Celtis* and *Ocotea*.

191. Wattle leads to confusion with the alien invader *Acacias*. Lebombo is inappropriate as it is common on the sandy flats rather than the mountains. It also occurs north of the Lebombo Mountains.

213. *Senna* is preferred rather than pod because lots of plants in *Fabaceae* have pod in the name.

219. *Calpurnia* is preferred over laburnum as it does not belong to the same genus. Calpurnius copied the works of Virgil. Showy *Calpurnia* is suggested for *Calpurnia aurea* due to its beauty.

229. Sandforest Peawood to separate it from *Craibia brevicaudata* - Mountain Peawood.

248-250. "Tree" is dropped to avoid confusion with the Koko-tree in Maytenus.

262. Wild-mandarin: the fruit looks like a small mandarin. Wart-berry is the Zimbabwean name, but there is a concern that this may be a denigrating name.

307. Coastal Coalwood, descriptive of the distribution, to separate it from the Rock Coalwood.

311-312. Potato-bush *Phyllanthus*, Woody *Phyllanthus*, Forest *Phyllanthus* - all show the genus relationship.

397. Cape Holly, distribution is wider. Suggest African Holly.

421. Has no thorns. Suggest Thornless *Cassinopsis* and Spiny *Cassinopsis*.

425. Suggest African False-currant because it is more widespread and because the fruit is not black.

423. Small False-currant referring to the fact that the leaflets (and leaves) are smaller than in 425.

429. Natal is politically incorrect. Suggest Forest Krantz-ash.

430. Suggest Coastal because not restricted to dunes.

430.1. Suggest Northern because Transvaal is not politically correct.

130 & 131.1. Caper instead of Caper-bush as capers come from plants of the same genus.

68.1 Looking for a name because it seems that mature leaves do not have velvet hairs. Also *nigropunctata* (blackspots) may only apply to dry specimens.

93. There are other white *Proteas* therefore we suggest looking for an additional descriptor.

93.1. Suggest Narrow-leaved *Protea* as per Rebelo.

94. Bredasdorp vs. Limestone (as per Rebelo)?

86 Waboom *Protea*. Waboom is the name it is well known as. See discussion on *Proteas* and sugarbushes covered above

129.2. Grey-leaves to distinguish from *Cadaba natalensis*.

160. It is the pods that are red, therefore Flame-pod is suggested.

209. African Camel's Foot to differentiate between this tree and those exotic *Bauhinias* called Camel's Foot. Some of these escape from cultivation.

236. Wild Teak is wrong. Suggest Bloodwood because the cut wood has a red sap; or suggest Real because this is THE Kiaat. Mukwa is widely used in Africa and will be the Zimbabwean name.

283. Sweet-root Corkwood is suggested because many *Commiphoras* have green stems.

371. Weeping Resin-tree refers to the drooping foliage.

479. Plane *Ochna* refers to the bark, which bears some resemblance to *Platanus*, the true Plane.

581. Transvaal is not politically correct. Suggest Stamvrug with or without Milkplum. Milkplum

shows the relationship with 582.

602-611. *Diospyros* are separated into Jackal-berries and Star-apples on the basis of their fruits.

606. Added Ebony as a descriptor with reference to its wood.

314. Golden-haired Ironplum is preferred to Forest as it is not the only Ironplum which grows in the forest.

315. Suggest Blue-leaved and Lowveld should be considered instead of Sand.

313. Water is incorrect. The group struggled to find a name and eventually came up with Small, referring to the small size of the tree.

314.1. Rare or Tonga were preferred to False Forest.

317. Sand Red-heart is suggested to describe where the tree grows and to differentiate it from *H. acida*, which grows mainly in Miombo.

320. Umzithi is preferred to False Tamboti, which we think is the name used both in SE Zimbabwe and Maputaland.

322. This is not a hickory, which are *Carya*. We felt that *Cavacoa* is quite easy and shouldn't present problems as this is an uncommon tree.

332.2. False Bead-string is preferred to Common bead-string. False refers to the fact that the true Bead-strings are *Alchornea*.

333. Zulu does not describe the full distribution of this species. Due to the fact that it is confined to only a few forests, Relic is suggested.

335. River Macaranga describes the habitat and gets away from the incorrect association with the poplars.

338. Pigskin refers to the leaf surface and is preferred to Common.

339. Large is suggested as an option because all 3 species do occur in forest, whilst *S. procera* is the largest.

341.2. Southern is preferred to Coastal as this more accurately describes its distribution relative to *bussei*.

342. *Sapium sebiferum* is the Chinese tallow tree from which a wax is extracted. Suggest that tallow replaces tree.

365. *Loxostylis* is suggested as Tarwood is probably an incorrect translation.

367. Pain-bush is suggested in reference to the sap, which causes severe skin irritation.

437. The Sand-olives can be separated on broad and narrow leaves.

452. Dogwood is *Cornus* of a different family. Suggest Shiny-leaf or African-dogwood.

456.3,4 & 5. Suggest drop forest as *revoilii* is probably not a true forest creeper and *digitata* does occur in forest. By dropping forest, the name is shortened.

456.5. Suggest Heart-leaved instead of Common. This is the only one with simple, heart-shaped leaves.

456. Green is added to separate the plant from *C. juttae*.

444-446. Suggests Greyia to distinguish from the Australian Bottle-brushes, which are widely grown. Glossy and Woolly are suggested over Natal and Transvaal.

464. Lagoon Hibiscus is suggested as the tree is restricted to such habitat.

465. Small-leaved is preferred to Wild. It has smaller leaves than *T. populnea*, which occurs in Mozambique.

478. Cola instead of Coshwood is an alternative suggestion. The Coshwoods are used for sticks, but Cola is easy to remember. Southern could be used as a descriptor for *natalensis*.

484. Small-leaved is useful to separate *H. revolutum* from *H. roeperianum*.

486. African is preferred as it is not confined to Lowveld.

489.1. Pocketed Violet-bush refers to the hairy pockets in the vein axils. An alternative is to use Sandstone. This refers to the fact that it is a sandstone endemic.

505. Albino-berry more accurately describes the fruit.

507-511. Sourberry is probably not accurate as many have sweet fruit. Apricot is also wrong, so Kei-apple is suggested to hold the genus together.

511. Oval refers to the fruit shape or sour to the taste of the fruit.

509. Small refers to small leaves and the general small size of the shrub.

491. Not a peach because the fruit is a capsule. Rawsonia was used in Palgrave.

494. Wild Peach is a concern because it in no way resembles a peach. The group struggled to find an alternative, although the suggestion Caterpillar Food was made.

495-498. Thorn-pear is suggested as a better name to describe the genus, as they mostly all have spines. Waxy is suggested as a descriptor for 498.

496.1. It is felt that Wakkerstroom is more descriptive as it is unclear what Pongola refers to.

496. The group got stuck on *S. mundii* for some time, and decided to call it Tuesdii Red-pear.

499. False Thorn-pear as the suggested name for *Scolopia* is Thorn-pear.

501. Add Giant to Brown-ironwood to separate from the other Homaliums.

503. Round-leaved Wild-mulberry adds a useful descriptor to the name.

521. The group felt that Pompom is the more widely used spelling.

523.1. This is not a Privet as it is in its own endemic family. Suggest Nicholson's Tree to honour Hugh Nicholson who rediscovered the tree more than 80 years after it was last collected.

525. Indian is not correct. Suggest Tagal which is the Tamil name for the tree.

529. Layered or Forest Onionwood. Layered refers to growth habit, while Forest describes the habitat.

559. Suggest create the name Cape-gum as there are many plants called Myrtle. Cape Myrtle could not be used because it is used for *Myrsine*.

560. Natal can't be used, so Small-leaved separates it from *bachmannii*.

571. This is not a Cranberry, which has red fruit. The proper Blueberry is *Vaccinium*. There is only one *Vaccinium* in Africa. Suggest use Blueberry.

572. Suggest Tree-erica instead of Tree Heath. Tree Heath is *Erica arborea* which is European.

612. There are Jasmines in SA so Wooden-pear is preferred.

621. Replace Transvaal with Narrow-leaved and Real with Broad-leaved to assist in differentiating the species.

57. *F. natalensis* is not restricted to KwaZulu-Natal.

161. Black Monkey Acacia refers originally to the black faces of Vervet Monkeys. Refer to CA Smith.

301. Natal Mahogany is very well known so we make an exception and use Natal here.

362. Kanniedood is used for *Commiphora* as well.

438. The label on the original specimen of Hippobromus referred to the smell of horse urine. The label had presumably been misplaced from *Clausena*.

448. *pubescens* is also thornless and riverine in habitat.

623. The Monkey-oranges are large with hard skins, while the Bitter-berries are small and soft-skinned.

640. Suggest Sandpaper Poison-bush as an option.

639. Spine-tipped describes a feature, which may be used to separate the tree from *oblongifolia*.

640.4. Suggest simple-spined as it is the only species with single thorns.

640.2. Lowveld describes the distribution of this species and Forest the habitat of 640.1. Carissa is also suggested as a possible alternative common name for the genus.

640.3. Suggest Amatungulu Num-num as the tree is well known as this.

644. Warty as a descriptor .

647.2. Forest describes the habitat and is more useful than common.

649. Halfmens is well known.

651-655. Suggest Saucer-berry as the name for the genus.



681.9-723.1. Rubiaceae a difficult family to learn, so start off with opposite leaves and inter-petiolar stipules then go on to fruits. Three types of fruits: Gardenia, Coffee, *Vanqueria*.  
656.1. Stamperwood - the wood is hard and used for assegai and grain stamps.  
668. Very descriptive of flowers and in line with the name of the cultivated plants.  
669.4. Bitter-apple genus name. Healing leaf - medicinal uses.  
674. Pomegranate Rhigozen fruit. Doesn't look like pomegranate Rhigozen has been in Palgrave for 22 years.  
681. Well known as Mackaya in Nurseries.  
688. Wild-pomegranate - Buffalo horns? Mabberly gives as Buffalo wood.  
696.1. Hatpins - False-loquat: the leaves do somewhat resemble the cultivated loquat, descriptive of the flowers.  
706. *C. spinosum* can't be coastal, spiny or thorny because several species have spines.  
711. Quar old name for *P. obovatum* used as generic name for *Psydrax*.  
714. *Keetia* need a descriptor.  
719.1. Brides-bush: all *Pavettas* have glands so *P. edentula* cannot be gland-leaf tree.  
723.3. Bitter-tear is a contrived name derived from the earlier name Blue-tea. Veronica is better known.  
723.3. Not the most likely riverine species of this genus.  
736. Too many daisy-bushes. Salad-bush is an older name.  
737. Not confined to the Suurberg. Donkey-ears is an old name.  
439-443. Too many "white", and it is not an Ash. *Bersama* is easy to use and say and is an Ethiopian vernacular name for a species of *Bersama*.

## Linguistic aspects

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## RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE USE OF INITIAL CAPITALIZATION AND THE HYPHEN

### PREAMBLE

H.W. Fowler in *Modern English Usage* makes the following general comments:

In the matter of the hyphen its infinite variety defies description. No two sets of style rules give consistently the same advice. Capital letters their present use is almost as anarchic as hyphens. Uniformity is lacking - no two sets of style rules would agree in every respect.

These comments make it clear that there is considerable flexibility in the range of 'correct' usages, and that (within the limits of certain agreed broad principles) usage can be determined by the user to meet specific needs.

### THE USE OF INITIAL CAPITAL LETTERS

In very broad terms, the capital is used to indicate a specific as opposed to a common object; a particular example (African Hoopoe), as opposed to a class of things (bird).

In the case of proper names of particular species of trees, there can be little room for debate: Maroela must be capitalized, as must Magic Guarri and Coast Silver Oak. The principle is strengthened by consideration of names such as Scrambling Fig, which means something quite different from scrambling Fig or even scrambling fig, the capitals in such cases serving to prevent the confusion that is possible in the two latter examples. Similarly, it is possible to see a whole lot of tawny eagles without ever spotting a Tawny Eagle.

The case of species names is not as clear-cut, and may be the area in which agreement needs to be reached. The context seems to be of especial importance, that is the fact that the book in question is a specialist 'tree book'. So, it would be inappropriate for Robert Frost to write in his poem: He is all Pine and I am apple-orchard - and indeed he does not capitalize 'pine'. The capitalization would be equally inappropriate in a context in which it is not the writer's objective to draw specific and particular attention to the name of the tree: The two gunmen slipped quietly into the protective shadows of the towering oak, and settled down for a long wait. In a specialist book, however, the trees must be considered the central characters, and there seem to be convincing reasons for using initial capitals even for generic names, to reflect their importance and to draw attention to them: an unusually large member of the Fig family yet another of the many kinds of Pine tree that are abundant in the area.

The overall recommendation, then, would be to use an initial capital every time a tree is mentioned by name, or even by its family name.

## **THE USE OF HYPHENATION**

Fowler makes the fundamentally important point that the hyphen is not an ornament but an aid to being understood, and should be employed for that purpose. He makes it clear that the primary function of the hyphen is to indicate that two or more words are to be read together as a single word with its own meaning. So the hyphenation alone determines the difference between a 'stick in the mud' and a 'stick-in-the-mud'. More specifically, hyphens show, when there is room for ambiguity, which words are to be associated, thus providing the distinction between an 'Italian-shoe salesman' and an 'Italian shoe-salesman'.

The use of hyphenation in species names was well established by Roberts who used it in names such as the Red-breasted Cuckoo and the Short-tailed Pipit, but deliberately not in the case of the Little Spotted Woodpecker. Newman later dropped the hyphens to make single words of compound names: Redbilled Francolin, Blackrumped Buttonquail and Yellowbilled Kite. This seems to be a step too far: Fowler points out that words are usually first hyphenated and then made into a single word, emphasizing the fact that there is a process of historical development in the progress of a compound noun from two words to a single concept: the vehicle began, for example, as a 'space ship', became in time a 'space-ship', and is now regarded as a 'spaceship' because the concept is commonly recognized and accepted.

'Archaic' hyphenation is actually an identifying characteristic of 'old writing', showing the age of a text by using hyphens between words that have subsequently developed in the intervening years into acceptable single compound nouns. Harry Wolhuter (*Memories of a Game Ranger*, pub 1948) refers to the 'Low-veld'. It is time and common acceptance that have produced the

compound single word 'Lowveld'. By contrast, Blackrumped and Yellowbilled cannot be said to have the same general currency as 'spaceship', or 'watchdog', and, in fact, Newman's non-hyphenation creates some extremely long words that are difficult to read and comprehend, and therefore for a number of reasons seems to go beyond what is justified and advisable.

Certain tree species have reached, through long and common usage, the same linguistic status as 'spaceship' and 'Lowveld': Yellowwood, for example, and Stinkwood. It is, however, a process that should not be forced simply for the sake of typographical consistency, and in general there remains an important function for the hyphen in the naming of many tree species.

Because of the flexibility mentioned in the Preamble, it is entirely appropriate for a publisher (once again, within the limits of certain agreed broad principles, which hopefully have now been clearly described) to use the hyphen according to the publisher's particular needs, to achieve the clarity of description that appropriate hyphenation can provide. This is, in fact, one of the ways in which language usage changes naturally and accountably, and is how language develops via the strategies adopted by responsible users of the language to meet changing needs.

Language, however, does not determine meaning; it reflects meaning. Therefore, in the context of a 'tree book', language policy decisions must be strongly influenced, if not led, by the 'tree people' in the project, not 'by the language people', because only the tree people can give the necessary guidance to meaning that language must reflect. The hyphen can, for example, reveal the absence of any family relationship between a Stinkwood and a White-stinkwood (which must be pointed out initially by the tree experts) that is not revealed if the hyphen is omitted; and so although there are no established rules that specify such use of the hyphen, it falls within the 'agreed broad principles' and is an entirely acceptable, and indeed very imaginative, application.

Similarly, if a Fig tree is biologically sufficiently different from a Rock Fig tree to warrant a distinguishing name, such a distinction is not achieved by calling it, for example, Namaqua Rock Fig; but it is achieved by calling it a Namaqua Rock-fig, as opposed to a Sycamore Cluster Fig. It is important to note that whereas the latter would appear in the book's index under F, no doubt also under S, and possibly even under C, the Namaqua Rock-fig would appear in the index under R and probably under N, but definitely not under F, to reinforce the fact that it is Rock-fig, not a Fig.

In the case of hyphenated names, only the first part of the hyphenated element takes a capital letter: so, Rock-fig is preferred to Rock-Fig, and Large-leaved Dragon Tree is preferred to Large-Leaved Dragon Tree; on the principle that if a word is hyphenated into a single naming concept, only the beginning of that name needs initial capitalization.

**J.O. HENDRY B.A. M.Ed. - Additional comments at a meeting with the Workgroup**  
September 1999

When scientists create new recommended names, linguists have to make the new name work. Sometimes hyphenation comes about through trying to retain names or descriptions. Hyphens actually show that conservatism has been used, ie that there has been a desire to retain a name or description within a new idea or name. Hyphens solve the problem of making new names work within the constraints of linguistic acceptability. An important part of a linguist's job is to apply rules consistently so that there is not confusion. ie if hyphenation has been used in a certain situation, it should be used consistently whenever that situation arises.

The question of combining English and Afrikaans names. SA is such a multicultural and multilingual country that words like vlei and berg have become completely familiar to English speakers as to be part of SA English. Thus, from a linguists point of view, mixing the two languages in a name like Vlei-acacia is perfectly acceptable.

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