

1.5 AT8 Kowie Thicket

The Kowie Thicket Vegetation Unit is found on mainly steep and north facing (dry) slopes. It is characterised by tall thickets dominated by succulent euphorbias and aloes with a thick understorey composed of thorny shrubs, woody lianas (*Capparis*, *Secamone*, *Rhoicissus*, *Aloe*), and shrubby succulents (Crassulaceae, Asphodelaceae). Moister south-facing slopes support thorny thickets dominated by low evergreen trees (*Cussonia*, *Euclea*, *Hippobromus*, *Pappea*, *Ptaeroxylon*, *Schotia*) and shrubs (*Azima*, *Carissa*, *Gymnosporia*, *Putterlickia*) with fewer succulent shrubs and trees. The herbaceous layer is poorly developed (Mucina & Rutherford 2006).

STEP (Vlok & Euston-Brown 2002): Albany Valley Thicket

The water drainage areas of all the rivers between the Sundays and Fish rivers are here included in the Albany region. Of these rivers, only the Bushmans River extends for some distance into the inland. Albany Thicket differs from comparable Thicket units in the west in having the woody component well developed, with succulence and spinescence generally poorly developed even in the Albany Valley Thicket, while its floristic component differentiates it from corresponding units towards the east. In some areas it is structurally similar to those of a forest, but the species present and the lack of clearly defined strata in these Thicket units differentiate it from a true forest. Only a narrow strip of Albany Spekboomveld along the southern perimeter of the Fish River water drainage area. It differs from most other Spekboomveld units in being rich in species. Many species are endemic to the Albany Thicket and its mosaic units.