

## Plants

[Red List statistics methodology](#)

[Summary of recent changes Glossary](#)

[National Red List categories](#)

[Assessment](#)

### Browse

- [Genera: A](#)
- [Genera: B](#)
- [Genera: C](#)
- [Genera: D](#)
- [Genera: E](#)
- [Genera: F](#)
- [Genera: G](#)
- [Genera: H](#)
- [Genera: I](#)
- [Genera: J](#)
- [Genera: K](#)
- [Genera: L](#)
- [Genera: M](#)
- [Genera: N](#)
- [Genera: O](#)
- [Genera: P](#)
- [Genera: Q](#)
- [Genera: R](#)
- [Genera: S](#)
- [Genera: T](#)
- [Genera: U](#)
- [Genera: V](#)
- [Genera: W](#)
- [Genera: X](#)
- [Genera: Y](#)
- [Genera: Z](#)

[Home](#) >> [Genera: E](#) >> [Genus: Encephalartos](#)

## Giant Eastern Cape Cycad

### Taxonomy

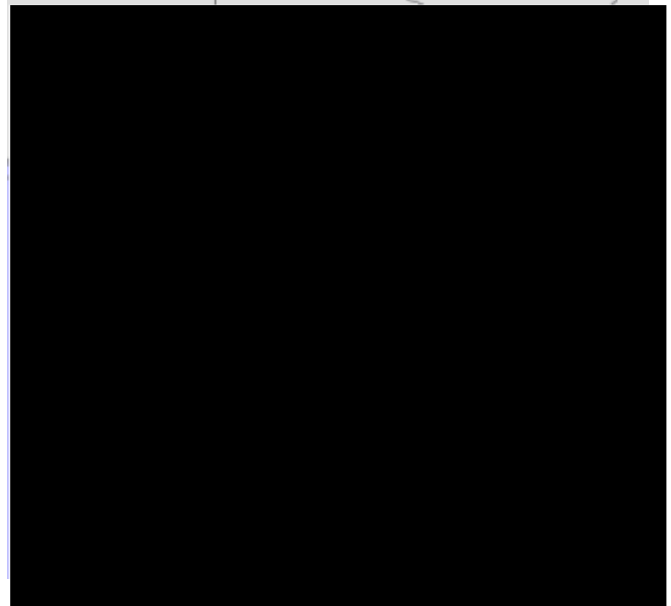
<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Encephalartos altensteinii</b> Lehm.
<b>Higher Classification</b>	Gymnosperms
<b>Family</b>	ZAMIACEAE
<b>Common Names</b>	Bread Palm (e), Broodboom (a), Eastern Cape Cycad (e), Giant Eastern Cape Cycad (e), Isundu (x), Kafferbrood (a), Kafferbroodboom (a), Oos-kaapse Broodboom (a), Umguza (x), Umphanga (x)

### National Status

<b>Status and Criteria</b>	<b>Vulnerable A2acd; C1</b>
<b>Assessment Date</b>	2009/10/31
<b>Assessor(s) Justification</b>	J.S. Donaldson Total estimated remaining population is <10 000 mature individuals. Repeat photography of sites first photographed between 1906-1950 and photographed again between 1996-1998 showed >30% decline (but less than 50%). The removal of large numbers of plants to gardens has been corroborated by arrests of poachers and documented removal from specific sites, e.g. 438 plants removed from near Tamara in 1995.

### Distribution

**Endemism** South African endemic



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**Provincial distribution Range** Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal  
Eastern Cape and southern KwaZulu-Natal coast, inland to the Amathole Mountains.

## Habitat and Ecology

**Major system** Terrestrial  
**Major habitats** Bhisho Thornveld, Eastern Valley Bushveld, Scarp Forest, Umtiza Forest Thicket, Fish Valley Thicket, Buffels Valley Thicket, Albany Valley Thicket  
**Description** Open shrubland, steep, rocky slopes and forests near the coast. Often along river banks.

## Threats

Habitat destruction has been a significant problem in coastal habitats where resort developments in the main estuaries have displaced cycad habitat. Removal by collectors has also been a significant problem, especially in rural areas near King Williams Town. Bark harvesting for traditional medicinal use is endemic in the region, but has increased in recent years so that it is not uncommon to find up to 10% mortality at any one time.

## Population

Subpopulations occur in at least 10 river valleys extending from the Bushmans river in the south, through the Kariega, Kowie, Riet, Fish, Kap, Biga, Buffalo, Mpetu, Kei, Keiskamma, and Mbashe rivers. The total population of *E. altensteinii* is estimated to be near 10 000 individuals. Subpopulations that have been surveyed for assessing the impacts of collecting, typically number about 500 plants, although subpopulations of up to 2 000 mature individuals have also been recorded.

**Population trend** Decreasing

## Conservation

Conserved in several protected areas.

## Assessment History

Taxon assessed	Status and Criteria	Citation/Red List version
Encephalartos altensteinii Lehm.	VU A2acd C1	Raimondo et al. (2009)

Encephalartos **Vulnerable** Hilton-Taylor  
altensteinii (1996)  
Lehm.  
Encephalartos **Rare** Hall et al.  
altensteinii (1980)  
Lehm.

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## Citation

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