

## Vegetation and Green Space

Nature Conservation

### Design and Implementation

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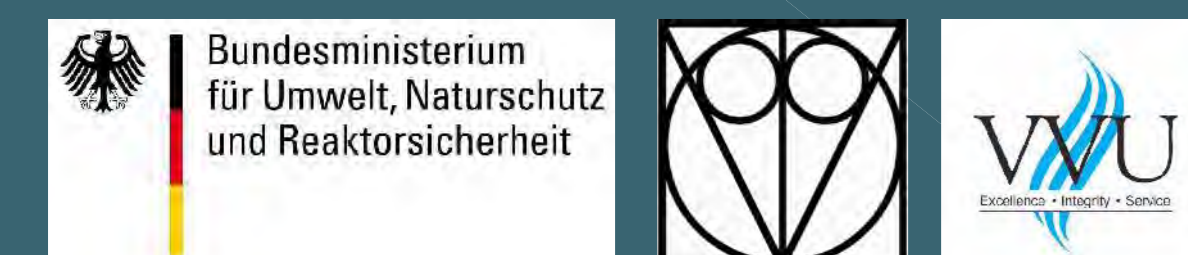
### Support Plant Identification

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## Background and aims

- VVU lies within the dry forest zone of the Accra plains; an area strongly affected by urban sprawl that does not leave much space for natural habitats. The property covers 120 ha. Considerable portions of it are yet undeveloped. This land is covered with either savannah shrubs and trees or exotic, invasive species.
- Despite the ecological goals, the further development of the university requires building activities that will claim large portions of the yet-undeveloped land. To assess the ecological value of the remaining shrubland with respect to the preservation of local natural resources and biodiversity, we carried out a floristic survey.
- Our aim was to determine priority areas for nature conservation on campus.

## Precious savannah shrubland and threats

- The floristic survey revealed a large number of 97 indigenous species typical of the natural wooded savannah. Among them are 26 shrub species, 23 climbers (lianas) and 26 tree species. Many of the recorded tree species on campus were only found in small numbers and as juvenile or coppiced individuals.
- Due to unauthorized firewood chopping by rural dwellers, occasional fires set by hunters and farmers, and a severe overgrazing of open areas by cattle, fully grown trees do almost not occur. 27 species found on campus are listed as 'endangered medicinal plants' on a national scale. Most of them are rare due to habitat destruction and overexploitation for medicinal purposes.

## Measures

- **Preservation areas** The results show that it is essential to preserve larger portions of the natural shrubland. Designated areas (18 ha) have been suggested for preservation. Conflicts with future development will be negligible.
- **Fencing** To prevent future fires, as well as unauthorized hunting, cattle-grazing and firewood-gathering a fencing of the property will be inevitable. It is also needed to protect the planted trees.
- **Security** After a severe bushfire had affected the newly planted oil palm plantation in September 09, the security staff patrols the remote parts of the property more often.
- **Giant old trees** One old Baobab tree just outside VVU and one old Kapok (Silk Cotton) tree will be preserved as natural landmarks and symbols of the sustainable development of VVU.



*Lannea barteri* - a rare savannah tree



*Gardenia ternifolia* - a savannah shrub



*Scadoxus multiflorus* - Fire Ball Lilly



Giant Baobab tree at VVU border



*Clausena anisata* - Mosquito plant



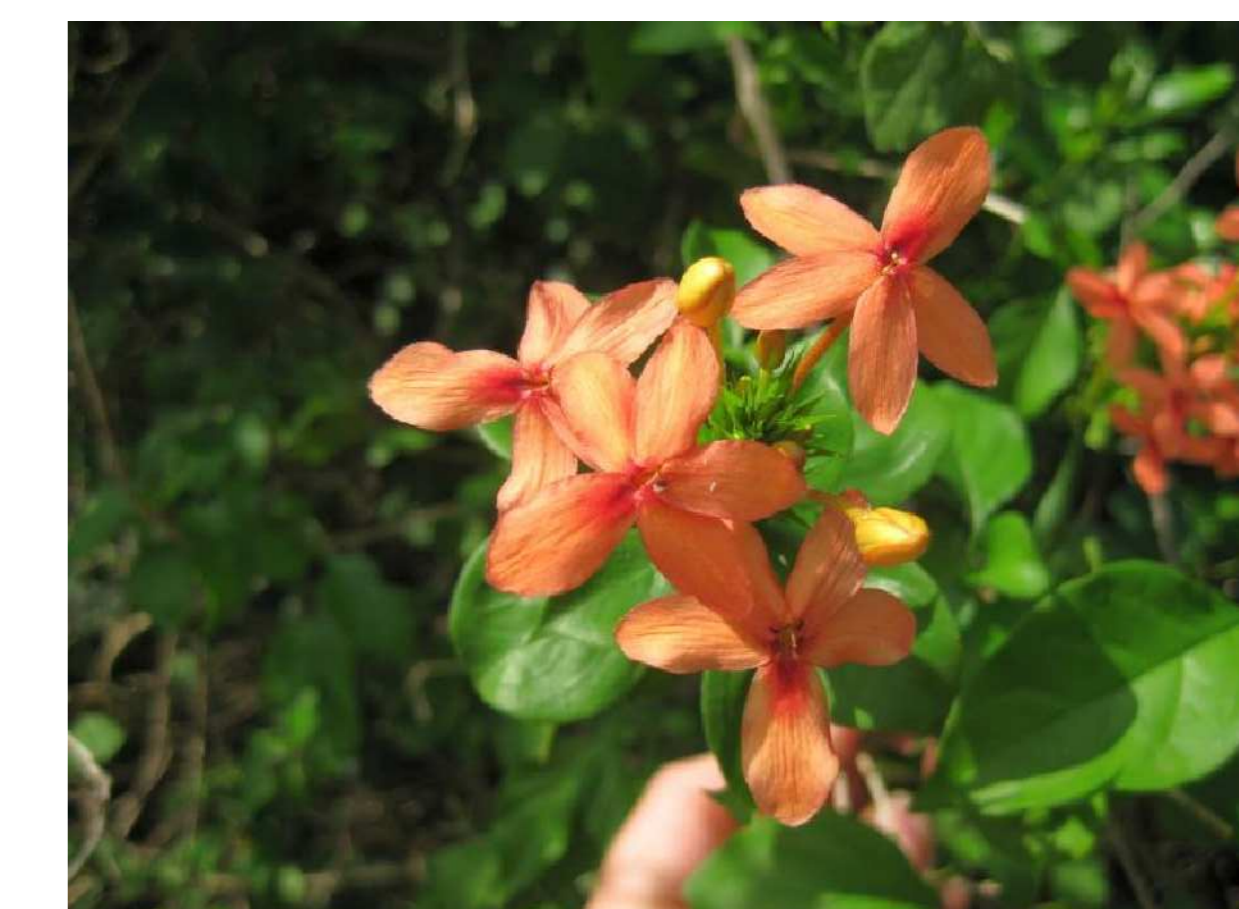
*Ximenia americana* - Wild Lime



Location of proposed Preservation areas



*Eulophia cristata* - a savannah orchid



*Ruspolia hypocrateriformis* - a savannah shrub



Giant Silk Cotton /Kapok tree at VVU border

All pictures were taken at VVU - Examples of indigenous savannah plants