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*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*

[Synonyms : *Osteospermum monoliferum*]

**BITOU BUSH** is a shrub or tree. Native to South Africa it has daisy-like yellow flowers. It is also known as *Boetabessie* (Afrikaans), Boneseed, Bush-tick berry, and Jungle flower. *Monilifera* is derived from Latin *monilis* (necklace, collar) and *-fer* (bearing, carrying) components meaning ‘with a necklace or strung like beads’.

The tiny fleshy purplish-black berries are enjoyed locally in Africa, particularly by children – and birds.

Bitou bush is often grown as hedging or a windbreak.

When it was introduced to Australia it was used for land-reclamation – in the process however it has spread beyond the area where it was planted. This has caused some concern as it has supplanted native vegetation in regions in eastern Australia with unquantified effects on local birds and animals – although in New South Wales at least it is now being controlled biologically. (In 1997 a particular South African moth, that in its normal habitat would feed upon the bitou bush, was released in some infested areas in Australia in the hope that its feeding habits would help to curtail the plant’s expansion.)

Cattle, foxes, rabbits and birds eat the fruit and thus unhelpfully disperse the seed.

Medicinally, local herbalists have used the leaves to ease fever.