

# Sesotho names for exotic and indigenous edible plants in southern Africa

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## ABSTRACT

A comprehensive checklist of Sesotho names of both indigenous and exotic food plants is presented, based on a literature survey and the first author's experience. The list includes the scientific names, English common names and parts of the plant that are used. Where possible, the origin or meaning of the Sesotho names is given. Exotic edible plants for which the English common names are in general use have been excluded. The list includes 164 indigenous and 39 names of exotic species.

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to compile, for the first time, a comprehensive checklist of Sesotho names of both indigenous and exotic edible plants. With diminishing vocabulary of many languages (Sesotho included), it has become necessary to preserve and update these names so that they are not lost. We believe such a list would be of value to translators and compilers of dictionaries.

The extensive use of wild plants as food in southern Africa has been well documented in a number of publications including the books of Fox & Norwood Young (1982), Peters *et al.* (1992), and Van Wyk & Gericke (2000). Lists of common names of plants in vernacular languages have also been written. For example, a comprehensive list of Setswana common names of plants by Cole (1995) is available. A list of some Zulu names has also been published (Ngwenya *et al.* 2003). Phillips (1917) and Jacot Guillarmod (1971) published Sesotho names of indigenous plants. Smith (1966) also included some Sesotho names. However, the lists are not comprehensive and do not include Sesotho names for exotic food plants.

Many of the scientific names used in these publications are now outdated and it has become necessary to update them. Furthermore, the list of Phillips (1917) is only applicable to the Leribe Plateau region in Lesotho. While Jacot Guillarmod's (1971) work is much more comprehensive, it did not include the meanings of the Sesotho names. This checklist has been compiled based on plants used by Sesotho-speaking people in southern Africa, who live mainly in Lesotho and in the Free State, South Africa.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The checklist was compiled using the available literature and the first author's own experiences while growing up in a rural area (Ha Thuube, Qacha's Nek District) in Lesotho. Authorities for scientific names are given in

Appendix 1 and are not repeated elsewhere in the text. The nomenclature follows that of Germishuizen & Meyer (2003).

The list is arranged alphabetically according to family and genus starting with the monocots. Where possible, English common names and the origin or meaning of the Sesotho names are presented. The edible parts of the plants have also been included in the list. Many exotic plants including fruits (e.g. banana, kiwi, mango, among others), nuts (e.g. almonds, cashews, macadamias, among others), spices and herbs (e.g. coriander, oregano, parsley, and others) do not have Sesotho names and are therefore excluded.

## DISCUSSION

Sesotho names of 164 indigenous and 39 exotic plant species of edible plants are given in Appendix 1.

Some Sesotho names of plants are expressed in short sentences to indicate either the habit of the plant (e.g. its appearance, striking features or size), habitat, or its use (mostly for medicinal purposes). Many exotic plants also have Sesotho names, although these names have been taken directly from either English or Afrikaans. For example, the Sesotho name *tamati* for tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) has been taken directly from the Afrikaans word *tamatie*. To highlight the typical derivation of names, some examples of plant names are given below (for full meanings see Appendix 1).

### *Names based on characteristics of the plant*

*Diospyros austro-africana*: *Ntlo-ea-lekhoaba*—the house of a crow, with reference to its flower shape.

*Empodium plicatum*: *Leihlo-la-khomo*—eye of the cow, so named because its flower resembles an eye of a cow.

*Sisymbrium capense*: *Tlhako-ea-khomo*—hoof of the cow, the shape of the leaves resembles a hoof of a cow.

*Watsonia densiflora* (and other members of Iridaceae): *Khahla*—the flower which pleases, this is because the flowers of these plants look pretty.

*Tragopogon porrifolius*: *Moetse-oa-pere*—mane of a horse, in reference to the thin, elongated leaves.

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*Names based on the size of the plant*

*Gladiolus dalenii*: *Khahla-e-kholo*—the big plant/flower which pleases.

*Hesperantha baurii*: *Khahla-e-nyenyane*—the small plant/flower which pleases.

*Hypoxis argentea*: *Leihlo-la-khomo-le-lehlo*—the big eye of the cow.

*Mentha aquatica*: *Koena-e-nyenyane*—the small crocodile.

*Names based on the habitat of the plant*

*Eulophia hians*: *Mametsana-a-manyenyane*—mother of little water, because the plants are found in wet places.

*Gladiolus cruentus*: *Khahla-ea-loti*—the mountain plant which pleases, so called because the plants usually grow in mountainous areas.

*Oxalis corniculata*: *Bolila-ba-thaba*—the sour plant of the mountain; these plants are more frequent at higher altitudes.

*Names based on the taste of the plant*

*Epilobium hirsutum*: *Letsoai-la-balisana*—salt of the shepherds, so called because the leaves taste salty.

*Nasturtium officinale*: *Liababa*—they are bitter, due to the bitter leaves.

*Oxalis* species: *Bolila*—the sour plant, because the leaves are extremely sour.

The replacement of indigenous food plants with seemingly more attractive exotic ones is just one aspect of a broader pattern of aculturation that affects many aspects of Sesotho culture. The impoverishment of Sesotho plant nomenclature is very evident in rural areas

where only the elderly still know and use the traditional names of plants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1.—List of edible plants; their common names (Sesotho and English); the parts that are used for food; and references

Taxon	Sesotho name	Origin or meaning	English name	Parts used	Reference
<b>Monocotyledons</b>					
<b>Alliaceae</b>					
* <i>Allium cepa</i> L.	<i>Eiee/ Hanyanese</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>ui</i>	onion	bulb	5, 6
<i>Tulbaghia acutiloba</i> Harv.	<i>Motsuntsunyane</i>	unknown		young plants	1–4
<i>alliecia</i> L.f.	<i>Moelela</i>	unknown	wild garlic	leaves	1–4, 6
<i>leucantha</i> Baker	<i>Sefotha-fotha</i>	unknown		young plants	2, 4
<b>Amaryllidaceae</b>					
<i>Cyrtanthus stenanthus</i> Baker	<i>Lepontoane</i>	unknown	golden star	bulb	2, 4
<b>Anthericaceae</b>					
<i>Chlorophytum fasciculatum</i> (Baker) Kativu	<i>Lehaohao</i>	unknown		roots	1, 2
<b>Araceae</b>					
<i>Zantedeschia aethiopicum</i> (L.) Spreng.	<i>Mothebe</i>	unknown	arum lily	leaves, stems	2–4, 6, 7
<i>albomaculata</i> (Hook.) Baill. subsp. <i>albomaculata</i>	<i>Mohalalitoe</i>	unknown	spotted-leaf arum	leaves	2–4, 6
<b>Asparagaceae</b>					
<i>Asparagus africanus</i> Lam.	<i>Lerara-tau/ Lelala-tau</i>	one who watches ( <i>lelala/ lerara</i> ) the lion ( <i>tau</i> )	asparagus	young shoots	1–4, 6
<i>setaceus</i> (Kunth) Oberm.	<i>Lehonyeli</i>	unknown (general name for species of <i>Asparagus</i> )	feathery asparagus	young shoots	3, 6

\* exotic taxa; 1, Phillips (1917); 2, Jacot Guillarmod (1971); 3, Fox & Norwood Young (1982); 4, Peters *et al.* (1992); 5, Masefield *et al.* (1969); 6, Van Wyk & Gericke (2000); 7, Jacot Guillarmod (1966). Author abbreviations according to Brummitt & Powell 1992.

APPENDIX 1.—List of edible plants; their common names (Sesotho and English); the parts that are used for food; and references (cont.)

Taxon	Sesotho name	Origin or meaning	English name	Parts used	Reference
<b>Asphodelaceae</b>					
<i>Kniphofia</i> spp.	<i>Leloele</i>	unknown	red-hot poker	flower; nectar	1–4, 7
<b>Cyperaceae</b>					
<i>Cyperus</i> <i>esculentus</i> L.	<i>Monakalali</i>	unknown		bulb	1–4, 6
<i>usitatus</i> Burch.	<i>Monakalaki</i>	same as above	Indian grass	bulb	1–4, 6, 7
<b>Hyacinthaceae</b>					
<i>Albica maxima</i> Burm.f.	<i>Mototse</i>	unknown	soldier in the box	bulb	1, 3, 4
<i>Dipcadi</i> <i>marlothii</i> Engl.	<i>Morotoana</i>	the small urine (from <i>moroto</i> which means urine)		bulb	2–4
<i>viride</i> (L.) Moench	<i>Morotoana-phokoana</i>	the small urine of the young male goat ( <i>phokoana</i> )	green bells	bulb	1–4, 7
<i>Empodium plicatum</i> (Thunb.) Garside	<i>Leihlo-la-khomo</i>	the eye ( <i>leihlo</i> ) of the cow ( <i>khomo</i> )	ifafa lily	bulb	2–4
<i>Ornithogallum tenuifolium</i> F. Delaroché subsp. <i>tenuifolium</i>	<i>Moretele-o-monyenyane</i>	the small ( <i>monyenyane</i> ) one which causes the body to become itchy and reddish (from the word <i>retela</i> )	wild onion	bulb	1, 3
<b>Hypoxidaceae</b>					
<i>Hypoxis argentea</i> Harv. ex Baker	<i>Leihlo-la-khomo-le-leholo</i>	the large ( <i>leholo</i> ) eye ( <i>leihlo</i> ) of the cow ( <i>khomo</i> )	small yellow star	rootstock	1–4
<b>Iridaceae</b>					
<i>Gladiolus</i> <i>cruentus</i> T. Moore	<i>Khahla-ea-loti</i>	the mountain ( <i>loti</i> ) flower which pleases ( <i>khahla</i> )		flowers	2–4, 7
<i>dalenii</i> Van Geel	<i>Khahla-e-kholo</i>	the big ( <i>kholo</i> ) flower which pleases		flowers	3, 4
<i>ecklonii</i> Lehm.	<i>Khahla</i>	the flower which pleases		flowers	1–4, 7
<i>Hesperantha baurii</i> Baker	<i>Khahla-e-nyenyane</i>	the small ( <i>nyenyane</i> ) flower which pleases ( <i>khahla</i> )		bulbs	1–4
<i>Moraea</i> <i>simulans</i> Baker	<i>Teele</i>	unknown		corns	2, 4
<i>stricta</i> Baker	<i>Qekoe</i>	unknown		corns	2, 4
<i>Watsonia densiflora</i> Baker	<i>Khahla</i>	the flower which pleases	Natal watsonia	corns	1, 2, 4, 7
<b>Orchidaceae</b>					
<i>Eulophia hians</i> Spreng. var. <i>nutans</i> (Sond.) S. Thomas	<i>Mametsana-a-ma-nyenyane</i>	the small ( <i>nyenyane</i> ) mother (' <i>Ma</i> ) of little water ( <i>metsana</i> from <i>metsi</i> which means water)		tubers	1–3
<i>Neobolusia tysonii</i> (Bolus) Schltr.	same as above	the small ( <i>nyenyane</i> ) mother (' <i>Ma</i> ) of little water ( <i>metsana</i> from <i>metsi</i> which means water)		tubers	1, 2
<b>Poaceae</b>					
<i>Eleusine coracana</i> (L.) Gaerth. subsp. <i>africana</i> (Kenn.-O'Byrne) Hilu & de Wet	<i>Moseli</i>	the one who searches for food (from verb <i>ho sela</i> which means to look for food)	African finger millet	grain	2–7
<i>Eragrostis</i> <i>chloromelas</i> Steud.	<i>Seritsoana</i>	unknown		grain	1–3, 6
<i>cilianensis</i> (All.) Vignolo ex Janch.	<i>Moseeka</i>	unknown		grain	2, 4, 6
<i>curvula</i> (Schrad.) Nees	<i>Moseeka</i>	unknown	weeping lovegrass	grain	1–5
<i>planiculmis</i> Nees	<i>Tsane/ Mofethe</i>	unknown		grain	2–4
<i>Hermathria altissima</i> (Poir.) Stapf & C.E. Hubb.	<i>Marotlo-a-mafubelu</i>	unknown	quick grass	rhizome	3, 4, 7
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i> (L.) Raeusch.	<i>Mohlaba-lerumo</i>	the one who pierces ( <i>hlaba</i> ) with an assegai ( <i>lerumo</i> )	bedding grass	rhizome	1–4, 7
<i>Miscanthus capensis</i> (Nees) Anderson	<i>Mothala</i>	unknown		rhizome	2, 4, 7
* <i>Oryza sativa</i> L.	<i>Raese</i>	from the word rice	rice	grain	3, 5, 6
<i>Pennisetum glaucum</i> (L.) R.Br.	<i>Nyalothi</i>	unknown	pearl millet	grain	1, 2, 4, 6
<i>Phragmites australis</i> (Cav.) Steud.	<i>Lehlaka</i>	unknown (general name for all reeds)	common reed	rhizome	1, 3, 4, 6
<i>Saccharum officinarum</i> L.	<i>Tsoekere</i> (refers to sugar)	from the Afrikaans word <i>suiker</i>	sugar cane	stem	3, 6
<i>Setaria italica</i> (L.) P. Beauv.	<i>Joang-ba-lipere</i>	the grass ( <i>joang</i> ) for the horses ( <i>lipere</i> )	foxtail millet	grain	2, 4, 6
<i>Sorghum bicolor</i> (L.) Moench	<i>Mabele</i>	unknown (any sorghum-like grain)	sorghum	grain	2–6
<i>Sporobolus fimbriatus</i> (Trin.) Nees	<i>Matolo-a-maholo</i>	the big ( <i>maholo</i> from the adjective <i>kholo</i> ) knots on the stems ( <i>matolo</i> )		grain	1–4
<i>Triticum</i> <i>aestivum</i> L.	<i>Kooro</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>koring</i>	bread wheat	grain	4–6
<i>durum</i> Desf.	<i>Kooro</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>koring</i>	durum wheat	grain	4, 5
<i>Zea mays</i> L.	<i>Poone</i>	unknown	maize	grain	2, 3, 5, 6

\* exotic taxa; 1, Phillips (1917); 2, Jacot Guillarmod (1971); 3, Fox & Norwood Young (1982); 4, Peters *et al.* (1992); 5, Masfield *et al.* (1969); 6, Van Wyk & Gericke (2000); 7, Jacot Guillarmod (1966). Author abbreviations according to Brummitt & Powell 1992.

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Taxon	Sesotho name	Origin or meaning	English name	Parts used	Reference
<b>Dicotyledons</b>					
<b>Amaranthaceae</b>					
<i>Amaranthus deflexus</i> L.	Theepe	unknown		young shoots	4, 6
* <i>hybridus</i> L.	Theepe	unknown	pigweed/ red amaranth	young shoots	1–3, 6, 7
<i>thunbergii</i> Moq.	Theepe-ea-bokone	unknown	Cape pigweed	young shoots	1–4, 6, 7
<b>Anacardiaceae</b>					
<i>Rhus</i>					
<i>dentata</i> Thunb.	Mabelebele	much grain (derived from <i>mabele</i> )	nana berry	fruits	1–4, 7
<i>discolor</i> E.Mey. ex Sond.	Mohlohloane	thick part or swelling in a root		fruits	2, 4
<i>pentheri</i> Zahlbr.	Mabelebele	much grain (derived from <i>mabele</i> )		fruits	1, 2, 4
<b>Apiaceae</b>					
<i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urb.	Bolila-ba-linku	the sour ( <i>bolila</i> ) plant of the sheep ( <i>linku</i> )	marsh pepperwort	leaves	3
* <i>Daucus carota</i> L.	Sehoete	unknown (any carrot-like root)	carrot	roots	5
<i>Peucedanum magalismontanum</i> Sond.	Sepaile	unknown	wild parsley	leaves	1–4, 6
<i>Pimpinella caffra</i> (Eckl. & Zeyh.) D.Dietr.	Mohopu	unknown		leaves	1–3
<b>Apocynaceae</b>					
<i>Ancylobotrys capensis</i> (Oliv.) Pichon	Marapa	unknown	wild apricot/ wild peach	fruits	
<i>Asclepias</i>					
<i>aurea</i> (Schltr.) Schltr.	Mohlatsisa	one who causes vomit (from the verb <i>ho hlatsa</i> which means to vomit)		rootstock	1, 2, 4
<i>gibba</i> (E.Mey.) Schltr.	Montsoko	unknown		rootstock	1–4
<i>humilis</i> (E.Mey.) Schltr.	Sehoete	unknown (any carrot-like root)		rootstock	1, 2, 4
<i>multicaulis</i> (E.Mey.) Schltr.	Mankiling	unknown	milk bush	leaves, stems, flowers, roots	1–4, 7
<i>Aspidoglossum</i>					
<i>araneiferum</i> (Schltr.) Kupicha	Ntlhokoe	the slender one (likened to the thin stem of a grass, called <i>lehlokoa</i> )		tubers	3
<i>gracile</i> (E.Mey.) Kupicha	Sehoete	unknown		roots	2, 3
<i>interruptum</i> (E.Mey.) Bullock	Morema-phofu	the one who breaks ( <i>rema</i> ) a wild animal ( <i>phofu</i> )		roots	1–3
<i>lamellatum</i> (Schltr.) Kupicha	Sehoete-moru	unknown		roots	1–3
<i>Brachystelma</i>					
<i>circinatum</i> E.Mey.	Bohobe-ba-setsomi	the bread ( <i>bohobe</i> ) of the hunter ( <i>setsomi</i> )		tubers	1, 3
<i>foetidum</i> Schltr.	Seru	unknown		tubers	3
<i>Cynanchum virens</i> (E.Mey.) D.Dietr.	Morara-oa-moru	the creeper ( <i>morara</i> ) of the forest/ woods ( <i>moru</i> )		leaves, roots	1, 2
<i>Gomphocarpus fruticosus</i> (L.) Aiton f.	Lebejana/ Moethimolo	the milky one (referring to the milky substance protruding from the un-ripe fruit)/ the one who causes sneezing (from the verb <i>ho thimola</i> )	wild cotton/ milkweed	rootstock	2, 4
<i>Miraglosium pulchellum</i> (Schltr.) Kupicha	Sehoete-mpulutsana	the greyish ( <i>pulutsana</i> ) carrot-like root ( <i>sehoete</i> )		roots	1, 3
<i>Pachycarpus</i>					
<i>rigidus</i> E.Mey.	Phomametsu	the one who escapes ( <i>phoma</i> ) the arrows ( <i>metsu</i> )		young plants	1–3
<i>vexillaris</i> E.Mey.	Leshokhoa	unknown		leaves	2, 4
<i>Parapodium costatum</i> E.Mey.	Sehamelapoli	the one who milks for (from the verb <i>hama</i> which means to milk; <i>hamela</i> means to milk for) the goat ( <i>poli</i> )		leaves	1–4
<i>Periglossum angustifolium</i> Decne.	Sehoete-mohlaka	carrot-like root of the marsh (carrot)		rootstock	1, 2
<i>Riocreuxia torulosa</i> Decne.	Morarana-oa-moru	the small creeper ( <i>morarana</i> ) of the forest/ woods ( <i>moru</i> )		leaves	1–4, 7
<i>Sarcostemma viminale</i> (L.) R.Br.	Mabele-a-lilomo	the grain ( <i>mabele</i> ) of the cliffs ( <i>lilomo</i> )	caustic bush	stem and young fruits	1–4
<i>Schizoglossum</i>					
<i>atropurpureum</i> E.Mey.	Sehoete-moru	carrot of the forest/ woods ( <i>moru</i> )		roots	1–4
<i>linifolium</i> Schltr.	Sehoete-ntlhokoe	the slender ( <i>ntlhokoe</i> ), likened to the thin stem of a grass carrot ( <i>sehoete</i> )		roots	1, 3
<i>Xysmalobium undulatum</i> (L.) Aiton f.	Leshokhoa	unknown	milk bush	leaves	1–4, 6

\* exotic taxa; 1, Phillips (1917); 2, Jacot Guillarmod (1971); 3, Fox & Norwood Young (1982); 4, Peters *et al.* (1992); 5, Masefield *et al.* (1969); 6, Van Wyk & Gericke (2000); 7, Jacot Guillarmod (1966). Author abbreviations according to Brummitt & Powell 1992.

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Taxon	Sesotho name	Origin or meaning	English name	Parts used	Reference
<b>Asteraceae</b>					
<i>Athrixia</i>					
<i>angustissima</i> DC.	<i>Phefshoana-e-nyenyane</i>	the small wind (from the word <i>phefo</i> which means wind)		leaves	1–3
<i>elata</i> Sond.	<i>Phefshoana-ea-basiea</i>	the small wind (see above) of the <i>Basiea</i> (one of the Basotho clans)	daisy tea	leaves	1–3, 7
<i>phylloides</i> DC.	<i>Sephomolo</i>	one who rests or relaxes (from the verb <i>phomola</i> )	bush tea	leaves	3, 6
<i>Berkheya discolor</i> (DC.) O.Hoffm. & Muschl.	<i>Sehlohlo-se-seholo</i>	unknown [the big ( <i>seholo</i> ) <i>Sehlohlo</i> ]		young plants	2–4
<i>Dicoma anomala</i> Sond.	<i>Hloenya</i>	to blush or change colour		leaves	1–3
<i>Gazania krebsiana</i> Less.	<i>Tsikitlana</i>	to become stiff (as a result of the twining of the leaves; the leaves are twined together to make a traditional skirt for girls known as <i>thethana</i> )		leaves	2, 4
* <i>Helianthus annuus</i> L.	<i>Sonobolomo</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>sonneblom</i>	sunflower	seeds	5, 6
<i>Helichrysum</i>					
<i>nudifolium</i> (L.) Less.	<i>Papetloana</i>	the flat, spreading one	Zulu tea	leaves	2–4
<i>platypterum</i> DC.	<i>Leshoetla</i>	soft, spongy part of a bone		crushed roots	1, 2, 4
<i>Metalasia muricata</i> (L.) D.Don.	<i>Sehalahala-se-seputsoa</i>	unknown [the grey <i>Erica</i> (all <i>ericas</i> or <i>Erica</i> -like plants are known as <i>sehalahala</i> )]		leaves, twigs	2, 4, 6, 7
<i>Sonchus</i>					
<i>dregeanus</i> DC.	<i>Leharasoana</i>	the ragged one		leaves	1, 3, 4
<i>integriifolius</i> Harv.	<i>Sethokonyane-se-seholo</i>	unknown [the big ( <i>seholo</i> ) <i>Sethokonyane</i> ]		leaves	1, 3, 4
<i>namus</i> Sond. ex Harv.	<i>Sentlokojane</i>	unknown	ground thistle	leaves	1, 3, 4
* <i>oleraceus</i> L.	<i>Leshoabe</i>	unknown	milk thistle	leaves	1, 3
<i>Tolpis capensis</i> (L.) Sch.Bip.	<i>Fukuthoane</i>	unknown		young plants	3, 4
<i>Tragopogon porrifolius</i> L.	<i>Moetse-oo-pere</i>	the mane ( <i>moetse</i> ) of a horse ( <i>pere</i> )	salsify	young plants	3, 7
<b>Boraginaceae</b>					
<i>Anchusa capensis</i> Thunb.	<i>Petlekheme</i>	unknown	forget-me-not	young plants	1–4
<i>Lithospermum cinereum</i> A.DC.	<i>Lefisoana</i>	small clay pot		young plants	1, 2, 4
<b>Brassicaceae</b>					
<i>*Brassica</i>					
* <i>napus</i> L.	<i>Rapa</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>raap</i>	rape	leaves	5
* <i>oleracea</i> L.	<i>Kh'abeche</i>	from cabbage	cabbage	leaves	5
* <i>rapa</i> L.	<i>Rapa</i>	same as above	turnip	leaves, roots	3, 5
<i>Lepidium</i>					
<i>capense</i> Thunb.	<i>Sebitsa</i>	it calls (from the verb <i>bitsa</i> which means to call)	pepper cress	leaves	1, 2, 6
<i>myriocarpum</i> Sond.	<i>Lerotho</i>	dimness	pepper cress	leaves	1–4, 6
<i>schinzii</i> Thell.	<i>Sebitsa</i>	it calls	birdseed	leaves	1–4, 6
* <i>Nasturtium officinale</i> R.Br.	<i>Liababa/ Mohata-metsi</i>	they are bitter (from the verb <i>baba</i> which means bitter)/ one who tramples ( <i>hata</i> ) on the water ( <i>metsi</i> )	watercress	young plants	1–3, 7
<i>*Raphanus</i>					
* <i>sativus</i> L.	<i>Sepaile</i>	unknown	radish	leaves, roots	3, 5
* <i>nudiuscula</i> Thell.	<i>Papasane</i>	unknown		young plants	
<i>Sisymbrium</i>					
<i>capense</i> Thunb.	<i>Tlako-ee-khomo</i>	hoof (thlako) of a cow ( <i>khomo</i> )	Cape mustard	young plants	1, 2, 4, 6
<i>thellungii</i> O.E.Schulz	<i>Sepatlapatla</i>	the flat one	wild mustard	leaves	1, 2, 4
<i>turczaninowii</i> Sond.	<i>Sentlokojane</i>	unknown	wild mustard	basal leaves	1, 2, 4
* <i>Turritis glabra</i> L.	<i>Lefisoana</i>	small clay pot			2, 4
<b>Bromeliaceae</b>					
* <i>Ananas comosus</i> (L.) Merr.	<i>Paeneapole</i>	from the word pineapple	pineapple	fruit	5
<b>Buddlejaceae</b>					
<i>Buddleja salviifolia</i> (L.) Lam.	<i>Lelothoane</i>	unknown	sage wood	leaves	1–3
<b>Cactaceae</b>					
* <i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> (L.) Mill.	<i>Terefeie</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>turksvy</i>	prickly pear	fruits	6
<b>Campanulaceae</b>					
<i>Wahlenbergia</i>					
<i>androsacea</i> A.DC.	<i>Tenane</i>	get tired of (from the verb <i>ho tena</i> )	harebell	young plants	1–4, 7
<i>denudata</i> A.DC.	<i>Tenane</i>	get tired of (from the verb <i>ho tena</i> )		young plants	1
<i>krebsii</i> Cham. subsp. <i>krebsii</i>	<i>Tenane</i>	get tired of (from the verb <i>ho tena</i> )		young plants	1, 2
<i>undulata</i> (L.f.) A.DC.	<i>Tenane</i>	get tired of (from the verb <i>ho tena</i> )	giant bell flower	young plants	1–3

\* exotic taxa; 1, Phillips (1917); 2, Jacot Guillarmod (1971); 3, Fox & Norwood Young (1982); 4, Peters *et al.* (1992); 5, Masfield *et al.* (1969); 6, Van Wyk & Gericke (2000); 7, Jacot Guillarmod (1966). Author abbreviations according to Brummitt & Powell 1992.

APPENDIX 1.—List of edible plants; their common names (Sesotho and English); the parts that are used for food; and references (cont.)

Taxon	Sesotho name	Origin or meaning	English name	Parts used	Reference
<b>Capparaceae</b>					
<i>Boscia</i>					
<i>albitrunca</i> (Burch.) Gilg & Gilg-Ben	<i>Mopipi</i>	unknown	emigrant's tea/ caper bush	roots, fruits	3, 4
<i>foetida</i> Schinz. subsp. <i>rehmanniana</i> (Pestal) Toelken	<i>Mphephi</i>	unknown	old woman's bush	roots	3, 4
<b>Caryophyllaceae</b>					
<i>Cerastium capense</i> Sond.	<i>Mollo-oa-nku/</i> <i>qoqobala</i>	the bleating (from the verb <i>lla</i> which means cry) of a sheep ( <i>nku</i> )		young plants	1, 2, 4, 7
<i>Pollichia campestris</i> Aiton	<i>Monokotsoai-oa-</i> <i>makhoaba</i>	the bramble ( <i>Monokotsoai</i> ) of the crows ( <i>makhoaba</i> )	waxberry	fruits	1–3, 7
<b>Chenopodiaceae</b>					
* <i>Beta vulgaris</i> L.	<i>Biti</i>	from the word beet	beetroot	leaves, roots	5
* <i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	<i>Seruoe</i>	unknown	goosefoot	young plants	1–4, 6, 7
* <i>Spinacea oleracea</i> L.	<i>Sepinichi</i>	from the word spinach	spinach	leaves	5
<b>Convolvulaceae</b>					
<i>Ipomoea</i>					
* <i>batatas</i> (L.) Lam.	<i>Patata</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>patat</i>	sweet potato	tubers	3, 5, 6
<i>bolusiana</i> Schinz	<i>Seakhoe</i>	unknown	wild potato	rootstock	2, 4
<i>crassipes</i> Hook.	<i>Maimie</i>	the heavy one (from the adjective <i>boima</i> )	wild potato	roots	1–4, 7
<i>oblongata</i> E. Mey. ex Choisy	<i>Mothokho</i>	traditional medicine	wild potato	roots	1, 3
<i>simplex</i> Thunb.	<i>Seakhoe</i>	unknown	wild potato	roots	1, 3
<b>Cucurbitaceae</b>					
<i>Citrullus</i>					
<i>lanatus</i> (Thunb.) Matsum. & Nakai (wild form)	<i>Tjoto</i>	unknown	bitter melon/ tsama melon	young leaves	1–4, 6
* <i>lanatus</i> (Thunb.) Matsum. & Nakai (cultivated form)	<i>Lehapu</i>	unknown	watermelon	fruits	2–4
<i>Coccinia sessilifolia</i> (Sond.) Cogn.	<i>Borobahlolo</i>	the one who breaks (from the verb <i>roba</i> which means break) the rock-rabbit ( <i>hlo</i> )		fruits, leaves	3, 4, 6
<i>Cucumis myriocarpus</i> Naudin	<i>Monyaku</i>	unknown	bitter apple	leaves	1–4
* <i>Curcubita pepo</i> L.	<i>Mokopu</i>	unknown	pumpkin	fruits and young leaves	3–6
<i>Langenaria siceraria</i> (Molina) Standl.	<i>Sehoana</i>	unknown	bottle guard	fruits, leaves	3, 4
<i>Momordica balsamina</i> L.	<i>Moholu</i>	stomach	African cucumber	leaves	3, 4, 6
<b>Ebenaceae</b>					
<i>Diospyros austro-africana</i> De Winter	<i>Ntlo-ea-lekhoaba</i>	the house ( <i>ntlo</i> ) of the crow ( <i>lekhoaba</i> )		fruits	2, 4
<i>Euclea crispa</i> (Thunb.) Gürke	<i>Mohlakola</i>	the one who wipes (from the verb <i>hlakola</i> which means to wipe)	bush guarri	fruits	1–4
<b>Euphorbiaceae</b>					
<i>Euphorbia</i>					
<i>clavarioides</i> Boiss.	<i>Sehlooko</i>	unknown	lion spoor	stems	2–4, 7
<i>striata</i> Thunb.	<i>Mohlatsisa</i>	the one who causes vomit (from the verb <i>hlatsa</i> which means to vomit)	milk weed	roots	1–4, 7
<b>Fabaceae</b>					
* <i>Arachis hypogaea</i> L.	<i>Makotomane</i>	unknown	ground nuts/ peanuts	seeds	3, 5
<i>Argyrolobium tuberosum</i> Eckl. & Zeyh.	<i>Tsoetla-e-nyenyane</i>	unknown [the small ( <i>nyane</i> ) <i>tsoetla</i> ]		roots	1–4, 7
<i>Dolichos angustifolius</i> Eckl. & Zeyh.	<i>Tsoetla</i>	unknown		roots	2–4, 7
<i>Elephantorrhiza elephantina</i> (Burch.) Skeels	<i>Mositsane</i>	unknown	elephant's root	seeds	1–4, 6, 7
* <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> L.	<i>Leoka</i>	unknown	honey locust	fruits, seeds	3, 7
* <i>Lens esculenta</i> L.	<i>Lensisi</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>lensie</i>	lentils	seeds	5
* <i>Pisum sativum</i> L.	<i>Lierekisi</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>ertjie</i>	garden peas	seeds	5
* <i>Phaseolus vulgaris</i> L.	<i>Linaoa</i>	unknown [any bean-like seed is referred to as <i>naoa</i> (plural <i>linaoa</i> )]	kidney beans	seeds	3, 5
<i>Rhynchosia</i>					
<i>hirsuta</i> Eckl. & Zeyh.	<i>Monya-talane</i>	the one who defecates ( <i>monya</i> ) unripe grain ( <i>talane</i> )		roots	1, 2, 4
<i>totta</i> (Thunb.) DC.	<i>Sebalibetloa</i>	unknown		roots	1–4
<i>Trifolium</i>					
<i>africanum</i> Ser. var. <i>africanum</i>	<i>Moqopolla-thupa</i>	unknown	Cape clover/red	inflorescences	1–4

\* exotic taxa; 1, Phillips (1917); 2, Jacot Guillarmod (1971); 3, Fox & Norwood Young (1982); 4, Peters *et al.* (1992); 5, Masfield *et al.* (1969); 6, Van Wyk & Gericke (2000); 7, Jacot Guillarmod (1966). Author abbreviations according to Brummitt & Powell 1992.

## APPENDIX 1.—List of edible plants; their common names (Sesotho and English); the parts that are used for food; and references (cont.)

Taxon	Sesotho name	Origin or meaning	English name	Parts used	Reference
<b>Fabaceae (cont.)</b>					
<i>Trifolium burchellianum</i> Ser.	Moroko	unknown	African clover		
* <i>Vicia faba</i> L.	Linaoa	See <i>P. vulgaris</i> above	wild clover broad beans	inflorescences seeds	1, 2, 4 3, 5
<b>Geraniaceae</b>					
<i>Geranium incanum</i> Burm.f.	Ngope setšoha	an idiom meaning something that rarely happens	carpet geranium	leaves	1–3, 7
<i>multisectum</i> N.E.Br.	Bolila-ba-likhomo	the sour ( <i>bolila</i> ) one of the cows ( <i>likhomo</i> )		leaves	2, 4
<i>Pelargonium bowkeri</i> Harv.	Khoara	derived from <i>lekhoara</i> (a stony ridge; the plant grows near rocks)		leaves	1–4
<b>Gunneraceae</b>					
<i>Gunnera perperna</i> L.	Qobo	favourite of the chief	river pumpkin	stems and flower stalks	1–4, 7
<b>Lamiaceae</b>					
<i>Mentha aquatica</i> L.	Koena-e-nyenyane	a small ( <i>nyenyane</i> ) crocodile ( <i>koena</i> )	wild mint	leaves	1–4
<i>longifolia</i> (L.) Huds.	Koena	a crocodile ( <i>koena</i> )	wild mint	leaves	1–4
<b>Lobeliaceae</b>					
<i>Cyphia elata</i> Harv.	Lenkoto	unknown		roots	1–4
<i>Lobelia erinus</i> L.	Moroho-oa-likonyana	the vegetables ( <i>moroho</i> ) of the lambs ( <i>likonyana</i> )	wild lobelia	young plants	1, 2, 4
<i>preslii</i> A.DC.	Mahlo-a-konyana	the eyes ( <i>mahlo</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )		young plants	1, 2, 4
<i>Monopsis decipiens</i> (Sond.) Thulin	Malana-a-konyana	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )	butterfly lobelia	young plants	1, 2, 4
<b>Myricaceae</b>					
<i>Morella serrata</i> (Lam.) Killick	Monna-e-motšo	the black ( <i>motšo</i> ) man ( <i>monna</i> )	lance-leaf wax berry	fruits	3, 4
<b>Myrtaceae</b>					
* <i>Psidium guajava</i> L.	Koafa	from guava	guava	fruits	5
<b>Onagraceae</b>					
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> L.	Letsoai-la-balisana	salt ( <i>letsoai</i> ) of the shepherds ( <i>balisana</i> )		leaves	1, 3, 4, 7
<b>Oxalidaceae</b>					
<i>Oxalis corniculata</i> L.	Bolila-ba-thaba/ bolila-ba-litšoene	the sour plant ( <i>bolila</i> ) of the mountain ( <i>thaba</i> )/ the sour plant of the monkeys ( <i>litšoene</i> )		whole plant	1–4
<i>semiloba</i> Sond. <i>setosa</i> E.Mey. ex Sond.	Bolila Bolila	the sour plant same as above	sorrel sorrel	leaves, roots leaves	2–4 1, 3
<b>Papaveraceae</b>					
<i>Papaver aculeatum</i> Thunb.	Sehlohlo	the one who causes anger	wild poppy	young plants	1–4
<b>Plantaginaceae</b>					
<i>Plantago major</i> L.	Bolila-ba-lipoli	the sour ( <i>bolila</i> ) plant of the goats ( <i>lipoli</i> )	broadleaf plantain	leaves, roots	2, 3
<b>Polygonaceae</b>					
<i>Rumex sagittatus</i> Thunb. <i>woodii</i> N.E.Br.	Bolila-bo-boholo Bolila-ba-likhomo	the big ( <i>boholo</i> ) sour ( <i>bolila</i> ) plant the sour ( <i>bolila</i> ) plant for the cows ( <i>likhomo</i> )	climbing sorrel	leaves leaves	1–4 1–4
<b>Portulacaceae</b>					
* <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L.	Selèlè	slippery	common purselane	leaves, stems	2–4, 7
<i>Talinum caffrum</i> (Thunb.) Eckl. & Zeyh.	Khutsana	an orphan		leaves	2–4, 6
<b>Ranunculaceae</b>					
<i>Thalictrum minus</i> L.	Lefokotsane	the small feeble one		young plants	1, 2, 4, 7

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<b>Rhamnaceae</b>					
<i>Ziziphus mucronata</i> Willd.	<i>Mokhalo</i>	unknown	buffalo thorn	fruits	3, 4, 6
<b>Rosaceae</b>					
* <i>Malus domestica</i> Borkh.	<i>Apole</i>	from apple	apple	fruits	5
* <i>Prunus armeniaca</i> L.	<i>'Mabolilana</i>	the sour fruit	apricot	fruits	5
* <i>Persica</i> (L.) Batsch.	<i>Perekisi</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>perske</i>	peach	fruits	5
* <i>Pyrus communis</i> L.	<i>Pere</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>peer</i>	pear	fruits	5
* <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> L.	<i>Khunoane</i>	unknown		fruits	7
<i>Rubus</i>					
<i>idaeus</i> L.	<i>Monokotsoai</i>	bramble	raspberry	fruits	5
<i>ludwigii</i> Eckl. & Zeyh.	<i>Monokotsoai- balisana/ basali</i>	the bramble of the shepherds ( <i>balisana</i> ) or of the women ( <i>basali</i> )	wild bramble	fruits	1-4
<i>rigidus</i> Sm.	<i>Monokotsoai- oa-banna</i>	the bramble of the men ( <i>banna</i> )	bramble	fruits	1-4
<b>Rutaceae</b>					
<i>Citrus</i>					
* <i>limon</i> (L.) Burm.f.	<i>Surulamunu/Surul amuni</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>suurlemoen</i>	lemon	fruits	5
* <i>sinensis</i> Osbeck	<i>Lamunu/ Lamuni</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>lemoen</i>	sweet orange	fruits	5
<b>Scrophulariaceae</b>					
<i>Diascia</i> spp.					
	<i>Bolao-ba-litoeba</i>	the love philtre ( <i>bolao</i> ) of the mice ( <i>litoeba</i> )		young plants	1, 2, 4
<i>Halleria lucida</i> L.	<i>Lebetsa</i>	the one who throws at (from the verb <i>ho betsa</i> which means to throw at)	white olive	fruits	1-4, 7
<i>Nemesia</i>					
<i>albiflora</i> N.E.Br.	<i>Malana-a-konyana</i>	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )		young plants	1, 2
<i>caerulea</i> Hiern	<i>Malana-a-konyana</i>	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )		young plants	2
<i>fruticans</i> (Thunb.) Benth.	<i>Malana-a-konyana</i>	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )	wild nemesia	young plants	1-3
<i>floribunda</i> Lehm.	<i>Malana-a-konyana</i>	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )		young plants	1, 2
<i>pubescens</i> Benth.	<i>Malana-a-konyana</i>	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )		young pants	1, 2
<i>rupicola</i> Hilliard	<i>Malana-a-konyana</i>	the small intestines ( <i>malana</i> ) of the lamb ( <i>konyana</i> )		young plants	1, 2
<i>Zaluzianskya peduncularis</i> (Benth.) Walp.	<i>Lememèè</i>	unknown		young plants	1-3
<b>Solanaceae</b>					
* <i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i> Mill.	<i>Tamati</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>tamatie</i>	tomato	fruits, seeds	5
* <i>Physalis viscosa</i> L.	<i>Mokusebere</i>	from the word gooseberry	gooseberry	fruits	2, 3, 7
<i>Solanum</i>					
* <i>nigrum</i> L.	<i>Seshoa-bohloko</i>	the one who dies ( <i>shoa</i> ) painfully ( <i>bohloko</i> )	black nightshade	fruits and young plants	1-4, 7
<i>retroflexum</i> Dunal	<i>Seshoa-bohloko</i>	same as above	nightshade	fruits, leaves	3, 4
* <i>tuberosum</i> L.	<i>Tapole</i>	from the Afrikaans word <i>aartappel</i>	irish potato	tubers	2, 5, 6
<b>Urticaceae</b>					
<i>Urtica</i>					
* <i>dioica</i> L.	<i>Bobatsi</i>	unknown	small nettle	young leaves	1-3
<i>lobulata</i> Blume	<i>Bobatsi</i>	unknown		young leaves	1
<b>Verbenaceae</b>					
<i>Lantana rugosa</i> Thunb.	<i>Joala-ba-linonyana</i>	alcohol ( <i>joala</i> ) of the birds ( <i>linonyana</i> )	chameleon's berry	fruits	2-4
<b>Vitaceae</b>					
<i>Rhoicissus</i>					
<i>tomentosa</i> (Lam.) Wild & R.B.Drumm.	<i>Moaparo</i>	unknown	bush grape	fruits	3, 4, 6
<i>tridentata</i> (L.f.) Wild & R.B.Drumm.	<i>Morara</i>	the one who creeps	bushman's grape	fruits	2-4, 6, 7
* <i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	<i>Morara</i>	same as above	grape	fruits	5
<b>Zygophyllaceae</b>					
<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> L.	<i>Tšehlo</i>	unknown		leaves	2, 7

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