Figure 1: *Kigelia africana* (commonly known as sausage tree). Multiple parts of the *K. africana* tree have been used in traditional healing systems in the treatment of a variety of medical conditions and complaints. The powdered mature fruit is used to treat wounds, abscesses, and ulcers, whilst the green fruit is used to treat syphilis and rheumatism.\(^1\)\(^-\)\(^3\) An infusion made from the ground bark and fruit is used to treat stomach problems in children.\(^1\)\(^-\)\(^3\) Roots and bark are used to treat pneumonia.\(^1\) In West Africa, leaves and twigs are used to treat wounds, dysentery, stomach and kidney disorders, snakebite, and rheumatism.\(^4\) The fruit is used to treat constipation, gynaecological disorders, haemorrhoids, lumbago and dysentery.\(^4\) Slices of mature baked fruits are used to ferment and flavour traditional African beer.\(^5\) Extracts prepared from the bark have cytotoxic activities and have shown promising results in treating melanoma and renal carcinoma.\(^6\) Bark and root solvent extracts have been reported to inhibit the growth of *Escherichia coli*, *Enterobacter aerogenes*, *Klebsiella pneumonainae*, *Salmonella typhi*, *Proteus vulgaris*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Bacillus cereus*.\(^7\) In a similar study, solvent extracts prepared from stem and root bark have also been shown to inhibit growth of *E. coli*, *P. aerugi nosa*, *S. aureus* and *Candida albicans*.\(^8\),\(^9\) Other studies have also reported antibacterial activity for *K. africana* leaf\(^10\)\(^-\)\(^11\) extracts of particular interest, polar *K. africana* leaf extracts have been shown to inhibit the growth of the bacterial trigger of rheumatoid arthritis.\(^10\) Extracts prepared from the *K. africana* fruit inhibited the growth of a panel of Gram positive and Gram negative bacteria.\(^11\),\(^12\) Furthermore, extracts from various parts of the *K. africana* plant have been shown to have high antioxidant contents,\(^13\),\(^14\) further indicating the therapeutic potential of this species. This photograph was taken Windhoek Botanical Gardens, Namibia in 2012 by Dr Ian Cock.
Figure 2: *Syzygium cordatum* leaves and fruit. *Syzygium* is a large genus of evergreen flowering plants of the family Myrtaceae which consists of approximately 500 species. Plants of this genus are widespread, occurring in tropical and subtropical regions of South-East Asia, Australia and Africa. Many *Syzygium* species produce edible fruits and berries. *S. cordatum* is used to treat respiratory ailments, tuberculosis, gastro-intestinal disorders, diarrhoea and dysentery. Recent studies have confirmed the antibacterial activity of *K. africana* leaf extracts of particular interest was the potent growth inhibitory of the extracts against the bacterial trigger of rheumatoid arthritis. Many other *Syzygium* species internationally also have documented uses in traditional medicine. In the commercially most important species *Syzygium aromaticum* (clove), the unopened flower bud is used as a spice. This plant also has uses in traditional medicine due to its anaesthetic properties. The antibacterial activity of *S. aromaticum* is also well known. Numerous studies have reported on the antibacterial and antifungal activities of oils and extracts from this plant. Other *Syzygium* species from South East Asia (*Syzygium jambos*), India (*Syzygium lineare* and *Syzygium cumini*) and Australia have also been shown to have antimicrobial activity. Recent reports have also highlighted *Syzygium australis* (Bush Cherry) and *Syzygium lehmannii* (Riberry) extracts as having exceptionally high antioxidant contents. Antioxidants have been associated with the prevention of cancer, cardiovascular disease and neurological degenerative disorders. They are also linked with anti-diabetic bioactivities and have been associated with the reduction of obesity. Antioxidants can directly scavenge free radicals, protecting cells against oxidative stress related damage to proteins, lipids and nucleic acids. Thus the *Syzygi ums* have potential in the treatment of a significant number of diseases and medical conditions related to cellular redox state. This photograph was taken in St Lucia, South Africa in 2013 by Dr Ian Cock.

**REFERENCES**