

Understanding harvesting, fire and honeybush ecology

WHY CONSERVATIVE HARVESTING CYCLES ARE RECOMMENDED

C. intermedia (Bergtee) shrubs can live for about 25 years and grow up to 2 m tall. Regular fires in fynbos burn **all** aboveground growth. But, because Bergtee is able to recover by regrowing many stems from the surviving underground rootstock, it is called a **resprouter**. Because of this resprouting ability Bergtee is suited to regular harvesting, (but not too often). For healthy resprouting the plant must have a few years to build up food stores in the rootstock, flower and set seed several times. If the leaves and stems of resprouters are harvested **too often**, the food stores get used up, regrowth and flowering is poor and the plant eventually dies.

