

Table 1: Abbreviations of OTUs and number of specimens used

No	OTUs	Number of specimens	Sampling location	District	Altitude zone
1	IB	13	Bigogwe	Nyabihu	Highland
2	IG	17	Busogo	Musanze	Highland
3	IR	17	Rutsiro	Rutsiro	Highland
4	IH	7	Kinihira	Ruhango	Midland
5	IM	3	Muhanga	Muhanga	Midland
6	IW	4	Shyogwe	Muhanga	Midland
7	IJ	7	Barija	Nyagatare	Lowland
8	IZ	3	Zaza	Rwamagana	Lowland
TOTAL		72			

Key: IB is specimens from Bigogwe; IG from Busogo; IR from Rutsiro; IJ from Barija; IH from Kinyihira ; IM from Muhanga; IW from Shyogwe; and IZ from Zaza.

Table 2: Descriptive morphological features of the common stinging nettle plant samples

Variable	Class	Altitude zones		
		Highland	Midland	Lowland
		Frequency (n)	Frequency (n)	Frequency (n)
Plant height (m)	0-2	14	2	2
	2-4	0	1	0
	4-6	0	3	0
	Mean	1	3.3	1
	Std	0	1.97	0
Leaf width (cm)	0-4	6	0	0
	5-9	4	0	1

	10-14	1	4	1
	15-19	3	2	0
	Mean	7.85	13.33	9.5
	Std	10.64	2.6	3.54
Leaf length (cm)	0-4	10	1	0
	5-9	2	0	0
	10-14	0	0	0
	15-19	2	5	2
	Mean	5.14	16.17	19
	Std	5.91	6.94	0
Root length (cm)	0-2	12	2	2
	3-5	0	0	0
	6-8	0	1	0
	9-11	2	3	0
	Mean	2.29	6.67	2
	Std	3.27	4.42	0
Flower size (cm)	0-2	4	8	2
	3-5	1	0	5
	6-8	1	1	0
	Mean	2.5	1.67	3.14
	Std	2.51	4.38	2.02

Table 3. Measurements of leaf morphological differences of collected stinging nettle samples.

Zone	Sample site	OTUs	MV (cm)	LBV (cm)	RBV (cm)	WLR (cm)
Highland	Bigogwe (IB)	Mean	14.44	7.83	7.69	7.40
		Max	16.25	9.40	8.65	9.51
		Min	11.74	7.27	7.23	6.16
		Std	1.37	0.73	0.53	0.92
Highland	Busogo (IG)	Mean	8.92	5.19	4.87	5.19
		Max	10.50	5.87	6.14	6.30
		Min	7.08	4.27	3.81	4.39
		Std	0.92	0.55	0.70	0.49
Highland	Rutsiro (IR)	Mean	13.76	7.37	7.21	7.59
		Max	16.07	8.61	8.67	8.85
		Min	9.86	5.40	4.96	5.51
		Std	1.61	0.80	0.91	0.88
Lowland	Barija (IJ)	Mean	10.27	5.71	5.38	5.31
		Max	11.61	6.45	6.00	6.48
		Min	8.32	4.83	4.82	4.04
		Std	1.12	0.59	0.45	0.91
Midland	Ruhango (IH)	Mean	13.43	7.51	7.34	6.81
		Max	17.72	9.13	10.13	8.42
		min	10.15	5.32	5.27	5.26
		Std	2.80	1.49	1.78	1.18
Midland	Muhanga (IM)	Mean	18.09	7.39	8.00	10.37
		Max	19.23	7.65	8.87	11.71
		Min	16.84	6.97	6.80	9.17
		Std	1.20	0.37	1.07	1.28

Midland	Shyogwe (IW)	Mean	26.78	12.28	13.81	18.58
		Max	28.62	14.23	15.24	20.30
		Min	24.96	11.25	12.64	17.13
		Std	1.52	1.33	1.13	1.31
Lowland	Zaza (IZ)	Mean	22.22	9.83	10.80	15.93
		Max	23.55	10.62	12.73	16.53
		Min	21.16	9.10	9.25	15.14
		Std	1.22	0.76	1.77	0.71

Key: - Abbreviations in the brackets were used for analyzing morphospace in OTUs. As defined in Figure 2, MV (Main vein-AB); LBV (left branched vein -AC); RBV (right branched vein-AD) and WLR (width of the leaf - CD); and Std (standard deviation).