Clausena anisata Rutaceae

Indigenous

Common names: Boran: Siska; Digo: Mnyapala, Chinyapala; Giriama: Kathimi kapala; Kamba: Kithiw'a, Muthungwa; Kikuyu: Mutathi; Luhya (Bukusu): Kumunyabubi; Luhya: Shingulutsi, Shisimbari; Luo: Siunya; Maasai: Olmatasia; Marakwet: Munyinyia, Cheboinoiywa; Meru: Mukithia; Sanya: Arawithargi.

DESCRIPTION: A deciduous shrub or small tree with very strongly aromatic leaves which are dotted with glands. Usually 3–4 m in height, but occasionally reaching 10 m under ideal conditions. BARK: Smooth, grey-green, changing to brownish with age and becoming mottled. LEAVES: Compound, up to 30 cm long; leaflets 11–37, arranged alternately along the main leaf stalks, oval, to 2.5 cm long, edges sometimes scalloped, gland dots clearly visible, particularly when viewed against the light. Young leaflets and shoots purplish red. FLOW-ERS: Small, white or cream to almost yellowish, fragrant, in axillary sprays about 10 cm long. FRUIT: Small, rounded or in 2 sections, about 1 cm across, shiny red-purple, turning purple-black when ripe.

Ecology: Distributed in West, Central, East and southern Africa, also in tropical Asia. Common in semi-arid or dry localities, savanna bush and at forest edges throughout East Africa. In Kenya, found in moist or dry forest margins, secondary bushland, riverine; in Western Kenya sometimes found in wooded grassland, 0–2,200 m. Agroclimatic Zone III. Flowers in March–June, September–November and seeds in July–September, December–January in Bungoma.

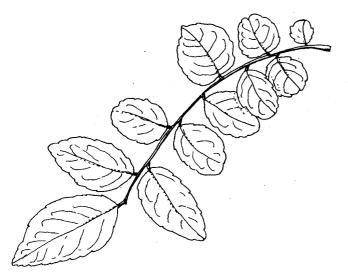
Uses: Firewood, charcoal, posts, drink (leaves used as tea leaves), medicine (leaves and roots), bee forage, riverbank stabilization, toothbrushes, leaves are aromatic (used as mattresses by Maasai moran).

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, direct sowing at site, cuttings.

SEED: A prolific seeder.

MANAGEMENT: Fair to fast growing. Coppicing.

REMARKS: The wood is hard, strong and elastic. Honeybees forage frequently for the abundant nectar and pollen from the flowers.



FURTHER READING: Backes and Ahenda, 1998; Beentje, 1994; Blundell, 1987; Fichtl and Adi, 1994; Kokwaro, 1993; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Sommerlatte and Sommerlatte, 1990.

