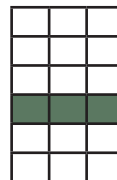


Euphorbia abyssinica

Euphorbiaceae



Indigenous

Am: *Kulkual*

Or: *Adami*

Ecology

A spiny tree euphorbia which grows in moist montane forest, humid woodlands and scrub savannah only in Somalia, the Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, it usually grows in steep rocky hillsides, and sometimes used for live fencing at high altitudes. It performs well in Dry, Moist and Wet Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones in Tigray, Gonder, Gojam, Shoa, Harerge and Sidamo, 1,400–2,400 m, usually above 1,900 m.

Uses

Firewood, timber (roofing, matches, boxes, local tables, wooden saddles).

Description

A succulent, leafless tree up to 10 m high, the crown almost flattened. The thick main trunk, woody with age, usually has more than 5 angles or ribs, often 8-sided. The mass of upturned green branches has taken over the function of leaves. The 3–8 thick ribs may be winged and the stems are narrowed or constricted at intervals making segments. Along the ribs are small rounded shields from which grow pairs of straight spines, to 1 cm, leaves and flowers. LEAVES: Develop only on seedlings, soon falling, later only scales. FLOWERS: In crowded groups at the tips of branches, each with 5 bright yellow glands. FRUIT: Capsules, large and rounded when fresh,

to 2 cm across, about 1 cm high, stalked, green at first then deep red with white lines (*E. candelabrum* smaller, more deeply lobed). The 3-part capsule dries to release small plain grey seeds.

Propagation

Cuttings.

Seed

Treatment: Not applicable

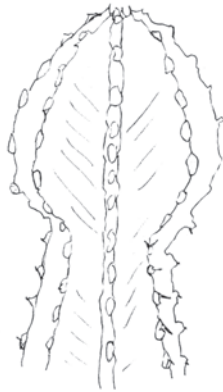
Storage: Not applicable

Management

Plant the cuttings when the rain is about to stop. It does not prefer wet conditions during establishment.

Remarks

The soft yellow wood is perishable and very light but durable. It is suitable for roofing as well as matches, etc. There is considerable variation between northern and southern populations of *E. abyssinica*. This species closely resembles *E. candelabrum* but the latter normally grows below 1,700 m. The white latex can be used to kill ticks on cattle.



A.B.



DAMTEW T.