# Grewia bicolor

A.Juss.

Tiliaceae

LOCAL NAMES
Afrikaans (basterrosyntjie,basterrosyntjiebos); Amharic (teye,somaya,sefa); Arabic (abu inderaba,abu umm drab,abu underab,basam,basham al-bayad); English (false brandy bush,two-coloured grewia,false brandybush,bastard brandy bush); French (greuvier); Somali (debhi,depi,tebi,debi); Swahili (mfukufuku,mkone); Tigrigna (dawa,aba,leshem); Zulu (umHlabampunzi)

BOTANIC DESCRIPTION
Grewia bicolor is usually a many-stemmed shrub, occasionally small tree up to 7 m in height; bark dark grey, deeply fissured and peeling away in strips in older specimens, grey to reddish-grey, and smooth when young.

Leaves elliptic to elliptic-oblong or lanceolate, 1.5-7 x 1-3.2 cm, dark, dull green above, almost silvery white with fine hairs below; the leaves are held horizontally or slightly drooping; apex tapering to rounded; base broadly tapering to rounded, asymmetric, or almost symmetric; margin finely toothed, occasionally almost entire; petiole very short.

Flowers yellow, 1.5 cm in diameter, axillary, often produced in profusion; the central mass of stamens characteristic of the genus.

Fruit single, or 2-lobed, each lobe about 6 mm in diameter, reddish-brown when mature, edible, sweetish but astringent. Fruits are often parasitized and develop a shaggy appearance.

The genus was named after Nehemiah Grew (1641-1712), one of the founders of plant physiology. The specific name means 2-coloured; referring to the leaves; from the Latin ‘bis’ (two) and ‘color’ (colour).

BIOLOGY
Flowering and fruiting occur during the rainy season. Deciduous leaves fall during the dry season. During drought years, it comes into leaf later, leaf production is lower, and leaves are retained for a shorter time.

ECOLOGY
Occurs most frequently in dry deciduous woodland at low altitudes, on sandy flats and rocky mountain slopes; also at medium altitudes in high-rainfall areas, often associated with termite mounds and frequently found in riverine fringes. Tropical summer rainfall and subtropical arid climates are suitable. G. bicolor is very drought resistant.

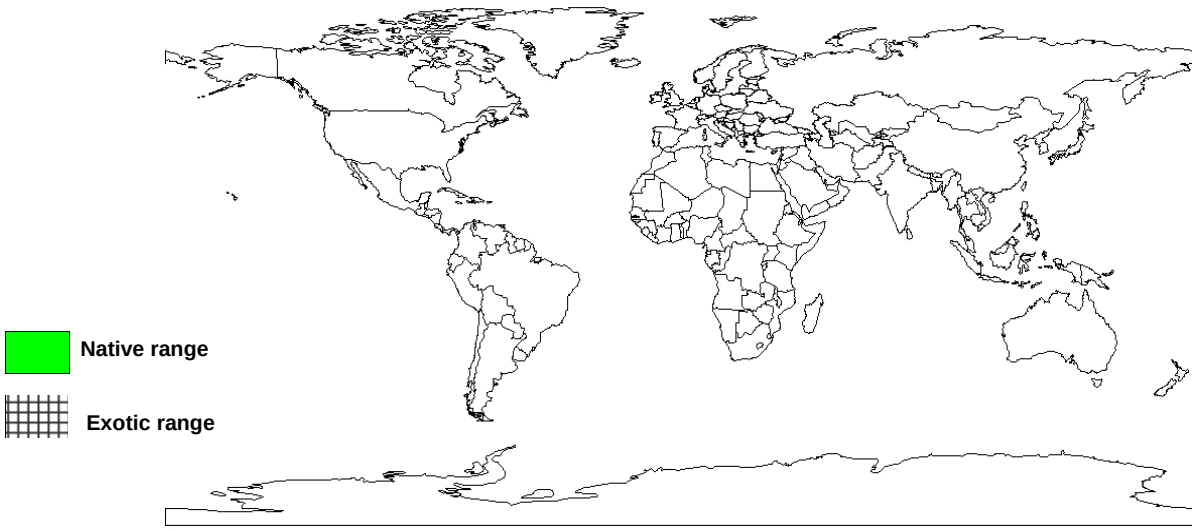
BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS
Altitude: 800-2 000 m, Mean annual rainfall: (200) 400-900 mm

Soil type: Prefers rich, shallow sands, occasionally on clay in the more northerly part of its natural distribution.

## DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION

Native: Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Republic of, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Exotic:




The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

PRODUCTS
Food: Fruits edible, sweetish, but also astringent. The pulp is eaten fresh or dried and juice is drunk fresh. A mixture of the fruit is used to coat leather bottles containing new butter to improve flavour. Mucilaginous leaves used as binding agents for sauces. Fibres used to make 'lalo' a glutinant for giving couscous a smooth consistency. Bark is essential in brewing of 'dolo' in Burkina Faso, it cleans and removes bitterness.

Fodder: Livestock and game browse on the fresh or dried leaves and young stems. It is favoured more by sheep and goats than by horses, donkeys and cattle. Nutritional value of leaves is average to good but varies according to age. Fruit is also a suitable forage.

Fuel: Sought as a firewood only in certain areas, for example Senegal and Tanzania, but less valued elsewhere.

Fibre: Bark fibres can be stripped and used for string, rope and cordage.

Timber: Wood used for walking sticks and canes, tool handles, weapons, hut frames and nomadic tent posts, and picture frames.

Alcohol: The fruit of G. bicolor can be fermented into beer and distilled into liquor.

Medicine: Leaves are used as an arbortifacient in Burkina Faso. Roots and leaves help in the treatment of pain in the intercostal area. Roots part of a remedy for chest complaints and colds, for gonorrhoea and female fertility, in poultice form they treat pustulous skin lesions, and they can be taken as tranquilizers. A decoction of roots is given on indication of delayed afterbirth to expel the placenta in humans, and sometimes cattle. Fruit taken for strength; wood said to be anthelmintic and bark used for boils and sores, inflammation of the intestines, syphilis, and as a vermifuge, diuretic and laxative. A decoction of the fruits makes an esteemed drink, a remedy for 'igandi' a deficiency disease.

Other products: Ashes of leaves or leaves themselves used as a soap substitute for washing clothes.

SERVICES
Other services: Twigs from the tree are used by water diviners to locate underground water.

TREE MANAGEMENT
Although slow growing, natural stands could be utilized commercially, provided harvesting is carefully controlled and stands are not overexploited. Coppicing is practised.

GERMPLASM MANAGEMENT
The dried seeds can be stored for up to 1 year under room temperature, provided they are protected from insect infestation. There are 9000-15 000 seeds/kg.

PESTS AND DISEASES
Fruits of G. bicolor are frequently parasitized.

## FURTHER READNG

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## SUGGESTED CITATION

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