

Boswellia microphylla**Burseraceae****Indigenous**

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Bebek, Dabasso, Dakkar, Mokh lidi, Muqli; **Pokot:** Songolulwo; **Rendille:** Halale; **Somali:** Bebeh, Mogole, Mugle.

DESCRIPTION: A deciduous shrub or small tree to 5 m with slender rigid branches. **BARK:** Dark grey, rough and peeling off in patches. **LEAVES:** Compound, few, towards the end of twigs; **leaflets usually 5–9, hairless or nearly so.** **FLOWERS:** Small, whitish. **FRUIT:** Reddish capsules with 3 nutlets.

ECOLOGY: Found in eastern Ethiopia, Somalia and arid zones of north-eastern Kenya in *Acacia-Commiphora* bushland. Found near rock outcrops, on rocky ridges and along runnels. Prefers red sandy soils and limestone. In Kenya this species is known only from Marsabit, Mandera and Wajir Districts. Found at War Gedud and east of Wajir along the road to Wajir Bor and in Marsabit 20 km south of Moyale, 250–400 m. Agroclimatic Zones VI–VII. It produces white flowers just at the onset of the rainy season.

USES: Firewood, drink (bark and twigs boiled with milk), resin (incense), tannin.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, wildings, large cuttings.

MANAGEMENT: Coppicing, pollarding.

REMARKS: Its bark provides very good-quality tannin. The resin is sold in north-eastern Kenya. It is chewed or burnt in houses for its aromatic smell (incense).

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Maundu et al., 1999.

