

# *Calotropis procera*

Asclepiadaceae



## Indigenous

**Am:** *Ghinda, Qimbo, Tobiaw*

**Agn:** *Abuwo*

**Eng:** *Apple of Sodom, Dead Sea fruit*

**Or:** *Falfala adal*

**Sm:** *Boha, Gala*

**Tg:** *Akalo, Dinda*

## Ecology

Grows in dry deciduous bushlands, in bare soil at roadsides and abandoned residences. Also often found along permanent or seasonal water courses and where the water table is high in the Bereha and Kolla agroclimatic zones in Afar plains and Tigray, Welo, Gojam, Shoa, Harerge, Arsi, Sidamo, Gamo Gofa and Ilubabor, 600-2,300 m.

## Uses

Firewood (old dry stems), fibre (stems), medicine (bark, latex), seed fluff (stuffing), medicine for camels.

## Description

A branched shrub, usually 2–3 m but up to 5 m. **BARK:** Corky and peeling, the round stems full of white latex. **LEAVES:** Large and oval, pale grey-green and fleshy, about 20 cm long, in pairs around the stems. **FLOWERS:** In stalked clusters of 3–10 between the leaves, each 2 cm across, with 5 white-pale mauve lobes tipped with dark purple. **FRUIT:** Develop in twin-lobed round bodies over 10 cm long. Green and spongy, then dry out to release numerous flat brown seeds with long silky hairs.

## Propagation

Seedlings, cuttings.

## Seed

**Treatment:** Not necessary.

**Storage:** Can store very well for years.

## Management

Coppicing to stimulate branching.

## Remarks

All parts of this plant produce latex, which can burn the skin. The plant contains a powerful heart poison (calotropin), which has been used to poison arrowheads.

