

***Clerodendrum myricoides* (*Rothea myricoides*)**

Verbenaceae

**Indigenous****STANDARD/TRADE NAME:** Butterfly bush.**COMMON NAMES:** **Boran:** Mara sisa; **Kamba:** Kiteangwai, Muvweia; **Kikuyu:** Munjugu; **Kipsigis:** Chesamisiet, Obetiot; **Luhya (Bukusu):** Kumusilangokho; **Luhya:** Shisilangokho; **Luo:** Kurgweno, Okwergweno, Okwero, Okworo, Oseke, Sangla; **Maasai:** Olmakutukut; **Marakwet:** Chebobet, Chesagon; **Samburu:** Makutukuti; **Tugen:** Gobetie.**DESCRIPTION:** A small shrub up to 3.5 m, **much branched from the base** and often with some branches scrambling through other plants. The **leaves and stem have a distinctive smell when crushed**. **LEAVES:** Opposite or in whorls, simple, ovate, margin toothed or, rarely, entire, up to 12 cm long but usually smaller, without hairs and almost stalkless. **FLOWERS:** Blue or purple, sweetly scented, conspicuous, irregular, **2 petals shaped like butterfly wings**. **FRUIT:** Small rounded berry, **black when ripe**.**ECOLOGY:** Found from Sudan and Ethiopia south to Zimbabwe. A common shrub in forest edges, bushland, mountain scrub, wooded grassland and in secondary vegetation, 1,500–2,400 m. Common in rocky places. Agroclimatic Zone III. Flowers may occur any time of the year.**USES:** Arrows, medicine (leaves, stem, roots), bee forage, ornamental, ceremonial.**PROPAGATION:** Propagation is easy. Cuttings and seedlings can be used, as well as root cuttings or root suckers produced from exposed or injured roots.**REMARKS:** There are close to two dozen *Clerodendrum* species in Kenya. *C. myricoides* is the commonest. Other common species are *C. johnstonii* (**Kamba:** Muteangwai; **Kikuyu:** Muringo; **Luhya:** Lusala; **Marakwet:** Jersegao; **Meru:** Kiankware), which can be a shrub or liana that climbs with the remains of leaf petioles. Flowers are white and the usually galled fruits orange to black. It is common at forest edges. *C. eriophyllum* (**Kamba:** Muumbwa; **Somali:** Giyapp, Gurb) is a very aromatic bush or shrub, often many in one place, found in the region between Meru and Kitui in the north and Kajiado and Taita-Taveta in the south. Flowers are in dense white clusters. Commonly used for medicine. *C. rotundifolium* (**Kipsigis:** Kochutoi, **Maasai:** Osingarwa; **Luo:** Sangla minwa) is more common in the western region. *Clerodendrum* species attract honeybees that collect pollen and nectar from the flowers. Sunbirds like to visit flowers of *C. myricoides*.**FURTHER READING:** Backes and Ahenda, 1998; Beentje, 1994; Blundell, 1987; Fichtl and Adi, 1994; Kokwaro, 1993; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002.