

Combretum aculeatum

Combretaceae



Indigenous

Am: *Zenfok, Ungo*

Or: *Kalade, Totofe*

Sm: *Shuna-shuna*

Tg: *Aflot, Kato, Mellu*

Ecology

The northernmost of the tropical African Combretum, found from the Atlantic to the Red Sea and in East Africa in Acacia-Commiphora and Combretum woodland and bushland, usually along watercourses. In Ethiopia, it grows in riverine forests in Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones of Tigray, Gonder, Welo, Kefa, Gamo Gofa, Sidamo, Bale and Harerge, 300–1,600 m.

Uses

Firewood, fodder (leaves, fruits), fencing material (dry branches), local brooms.

Description

A deciduous thin scrambling shrub to 4 m, young branches with red-brown hairs, later yellow-brown, hairy. LEAVES: Usually pale green, small, 4–7 cm, wider at the rounded tip, which may be notched, hairy both sides, only 4–6 pairs of veins, very clear below. On older twigs the leaf stalk becomes a hooked spine, hairy, over 1 cm long. FLOWERS: Yellowish-white, fragrant. FRUIT: Small, green-yellow-brown with 5 papery wings, almost round to 2 cm, tip notched, on a thin stalk to 1 cm.

Propagation

Seedlings (sow seed in pots), wildings.

Seed

Collect the winged fruit before they are too dry.

Treatment: Open the winged fruit to get the seed before sowing or soak in cold water for 24 hours.

Storage: Seeds cannot be stored for long. Use fresh seed. Once the seed is extracted it should be sown immediately. It is difficult to extract the seed from very dry fruits.

Management

Coppicing, produces root suckers.

Remarks

A preferred browse of wild and domestic animals. Leaves and fruits are good fodder for cows and said to increase milk production.

