

Commiphora habessinica

Burseraceae



Indigenous

Am: *Anqwa*

Or: *Chalanga*

Tg: *Anqwa*

Ecology

Found in association with Acacia and Balanites, in sandy to loamy and black-cotton soil in Bereha and Dry and Moist Kolla and Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones of Gonder, Gojam, Wolega, Shoa, Harerge, Ilubabor, Gamo Gofa, Sidamo and Bale. It is common on the Afar Plain and in Tigray and Welo regions, 150–1,900 m.

Uses

Firewood, live fence, myrrh or balm (resin).

Description

A spiny shrub or tree up to 4 m, side shoots spine-tipped. BARK: Grey-brown, black and cracked into squares on old trees, branchlets smooth, purple-brown. Peeling bark comes off in large papery strips across the underbark. LEAVES: Usually simple but 1–3 clustered together on spiny side shoots, narrow oval to 4 cm x 2 cm, the edge with small rounded teeth. FLOWERS: 1–3 together, very small, yellow-green-pink on cushion-like side branches. FRUIT: About 1 cm, oval to rounded with a small pointed beak, containing a stony seed.

Propagation

Seedlings, cuttings.

Seed

Treatment: No need.

Storage: Can be stored.

Management

removing branching stems early on helps to develop leading trunk for better resin production.

Remarks

This species, *C. erythraea* and other *Commiphora* are all used locally for their fragrant resin. Another species, *C. myrrha* produces the best-quality myrrh collected commercially in southern Ethiopia, Somalia and the Arabian peninsula.

