

Cordia monoica (C. ovalis)

Boraginaceae

Indigenous

Common names: **Arusha:** oseki; **Eng:** sandpaper cordia; **Gogo:** mdawi, msena, msenha; **Goro:** bagharimo; **Iraqw:** bagalmo, bagarumo; **Kuria:** mushenhu; **Mbug:** mwerema, mtoasi-mwerema; **Nyam:** mlembu; **Nyat:** mongoongo; **Pare** mshasha; **Rangi:** msasa, msasha; **Samb:** mshasa, magamosi; **Suku:** nembu.

Ecology: This *Cordia* species grows from Ethiopia to Central and Southern Africa. It is found in many habitats from wet or riverine forest to woodland and bush with *Acacia-Euphorbia* or grassland, from the coast to 1,800 m and in all districts except the cool highlands of Tanzania.

Uses: Firewood, timber (construction), tool handles, food (fruit), bee forage, medicine (leaves), sandpaper (leaf).

Description: A multi-stemmed shrub or tree to 6 m, occasionally to 12 m. **BARK:** blue-grey, thin and fibrous, peeling in strips, resembling the bark of *Eucalyptus*. **LEAVES:** broadly oval to almost round, 5-8 cm long, margin lightly toothed, **surface above like sandpaper to the touch** but softly hairy below with prominent veins, on a stalk to 2 cm. Branchlets, **leaf and flower stalks densely covered with rusty hairs**. **FLOWERS:** pale yellow, sharply fragrant, in dense terminal clusters, each flower tubular, about 1 cm across, calyx hairy and persistent. **FRUIT:** oval, pointed, yellow to orange and soft when ripe, about 2 cm long, held in a hairy, **cup-shaped calyx which loosely covers one-third of the fruit**. The single seed is covered by jelly-like edible pulp. Seedlings.

Propagation:

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: about 3,500. Germination is slow, **treatment:** soak in cold water for 6 hours, **storage:** seeds store well if kept dry and cool.

Management: Moderate to slow growing; pollarding, lopping, coppicing.

Remarks: A useful tree to grow in dry areas. The wood has **been** used for fence droppers and for walking sticks.

