

***Cornus volkensis* (*Afrocrania volkensis*)**

Cornaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **English:** Afrocrania; **Kikuyu:** Mucemeki, Mukorombothi; **Marakwet:** Sayit; **Meru:** Mugonyone; **Nandi:** Tarakiet; **Ogiek:** Chumnalilet; **Pokot:** Sayit; **Sabaot:** Totokio.

DESCRIPTION: A medium to tall forest tree, 5–20 m, usually with a straight bole and spreading crown. **BARK:** Rough and grey with large white elongated lenticels. **LEAVES:** Opposite, pale green, widest at the middle and narrowing towards the tip, 5–15 cm long, 4–5 pairs of very prominent side veins. **FLOWERS:** Small, greenish yellow, in terminal dense flowering heads. **FRUIT:** Fleshy, red, later turning black, oval to about 1 cm long.

ECOLOGY: Found in the East African highlands and in the Democratic Republic of Congo south to Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Found in highland parts of Kenya, where it may be locally common in wet uplands forests in association with *Ocotea*, extending to the bamboo zone. Typically a high-altitude species between 2,100 and 3,200 m. Found for example in Taita Hills, Aberdares, Mt Kenya, Mau, Elgon and Nandi Hills. Agroclimatic Zones I–II.

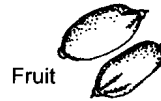
USES: Firewood, timber, furniture.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings. Some species of *Cornus* also grow from cuttings or can be propagated by layering.

MANAGEMENT: Many species in this genus can do well in exposed areas as well as in light shade. They can be cut back successfully. Many prefer rich, fertile and well-drained soils.

REMARKS: Mainly a timber tree. The timber is light yellow or whitish. The former genus *Afrocrania* has now been included in *Cornus* (dogwoods), which consists of 60 or so trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials of mainly temperate regions of the northern hemisphere. These have characteristic simple leaves with prominent inward-curving veins and red, blue or white fruits.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Sommerlatte and Sommerlatte, 1990.



Fruit



Enlarged flower

