

Crateva adansonii**Capparidaceae****Indigenous**

COMMON NAMES: **Sabaot:** Chiesamiss; **Tugen:** Nagarida, Koleonik; **Turkana:** Eiyoroit.

DESCRIPTION: A deciduous tree 3–10 m high, occasionally to 16 m, usually with a thick bole. Developing a round crown when old. **BARK:** Light red-brown with marked pores; coming off in scales. **LEAVES:** Tufted at the end of branches, compound with **3 leaflets**, to 10 cm long, on stalks to 8 cm long. Upper side of leaflets smooth, the 2 lateral leaflets asymmetric. **FLOWERS:** **White or yellowish white**, at or near the end of branches, held such that stalks are shorter towards the top, frequently 15–20, the common stalk 3–4 cm, calyx 4-lobed, 4 petals all on one side of the flower, white or creamy yellow, sometimes with lilac tips, 1.5–2 cm. Numerous long pale violet stamens, much longer than the petals. **FRUIT:** **Round, to about 5 cm across**, yellow or light brown when ripe, hanging on a 6-cm long woody stalk. Outer layer yellow, thin, hard, fissured; 10–20 small seeds, dark brown, kidney-shaped, embedded in a white, mealy, very sweet fruit pulp.

ECOLOGY: Widespread all over the Sahel from Senegal to Ethiopia and Eritrea and East Africa, extending to Democratic Republic of Congo, south into Zambia. Also extending eastwards into Asia to India and Burma. Needs much soil moisture and in dry areas therefore occurs only along river banks and in seasonally flooded depressions. Often in deep sandy to loamy soils and on termite mounds. In Kenya, in riverine forest or riverine woodland in Turkana, Samburu and south to Nandi, 550–1,500 m. Agroclimatic Zones III–V.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, farm implements, utensils, edible fruits, edible seeds, edible leaves, medicine (bark, leaves, roots), fodder (leaves), bee forage, ornamental, dye, gum.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, cuttings.

SEED: Hand pick from the fruit and clean; 7,000–7,500 seeds per kg.

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Avoid storage. Sow fresh seed.

MANAGEMENT: Lopping for fodder.

REMARKS: Wood used for implements by the Turkana. It is soft, yellow-white and strong smelling when cut, the smell being noticeable even if just a twig is broken. The leaves have high fodder value. A yellow dye is obtained from the branches and leaves. Honeybees forage for both pollen and nectar. Leaves reportedly used as a vegetable in West Africa.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Blundell, 1987; Fichtl and Adi, 1994; Kokwaro, 1993; von Maydell, 1990.

