

(*D. schimperiana*, *D. goetzenii*)

Indigenous

Sh: *Hambuka*

Tg: *Sonqua*

Tr: *Tambuk deber*

Ecology: A common understorey tree in the highland woodlands and forests of East Africa, the Sudan and Ethiopia, and also in Zaire and Malawi, often with *Juniperus*, *Rhus abyssinica* and *Olea africana*. In Eritrea, it grows on Mt. Bizen, Mt. Lalimba and around Rora-habab, Quahaito, Semenawi-bahri and Debresina, 1,900-2,500 m.

Uses: Firewood, **timber** (house construction, turnery), poles, **farm tools, bee forage, mulch**, soil improvement, **rope, cloth** (bark fibres).

Description: A deciduous shrub or **much-branched** tree, 12-15 m, with a **shady umbrella crown** and a trunk diameter about 50 cm. **BARK: Grey and smooth**, only lightly grooved with age; clear breathing pores (lenticels); inner bark thick, orange-brown, very fibrous. **LEAVES:** Large, hairy and **heart-shaped**, the **leaf bases overlapping**, to 30 cm long, **tip pointed**, edge sharply toothed, vein network very clear below with 5 or more veins radiating from the centre. **Young stems and leaf stalks often red.** **FLOWERS:** Often abundant, pale pink or white, full of nectar, in showy clusters on **branched hairy stalks** to 30 cm, calyx of 5 hairy sepals, 5 petals rounded but one-sided, red-purple in centre; many stamens with orange anthers; 5 pink stigma. **Petals remain around the fruit**, turning yellow-brown as they dry. **FRUIT:** Oval capsules to 1 cm, densely hairy, about 10 small brown seeds inside.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed:

treatment: Not necessary.

storage:

Management: Coppicing, lopping, pollarding.

Remarks: Bark fibres may be used to make cloth or string. The tree is considered one of the best nectar-producing trees so a good place to put bee-hives. High-quality soil may be found below as fallen leaves produce a rich mulch. The timber is soft and lightweight but strong, easy to saw and plane. The heartwood is dark brown but the rest of the wood is uniformly pale.

Dombeya torrida subsp. *torrida*

Sterculiaceae

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