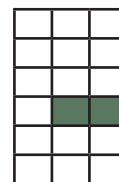


Dracaena steudneri

Dracaenaceae



Indigenous

Am: *Itsepatos, Moata*

Eng: *Dragon tree, Steudner's dracaena*

Gr: *Areg*

Kf: *Yudo*

Or: *Lankuso, Showiye*

Sm: *Tonkich*

Ecology

A tree distributed from Ethiopia and East Africa to southern Africa in moist or drier forest. In Ethiopia, it is an under-storey tree in humid lower highlands and *Cordia* and *Olea* forests, particularly in wetter and less dense or disturbed parts; also planted as an ornamental in large gardens and parks. Prominent in Moist and Wet Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones in Tigray, Gonder, Ilubabor, Gojam, Wolega, Shoa, Harerge, Kefa and Sidamo, 1,500-2,000 m. It can be seen as a remnant of former forest in Gojam (Finote-selam) and in Shoa.

Uses

The leaves are used to wrap the dough in baking the local bread known as 'dabo' in Amharic. The tree is ornamental and is also used to mark farm boundaries.

Description

An evergreen tree, usually 15 m but up to 18 m. The trunk often branches from the base with large branches rising steeply. Near the ground the base may be swollen. **BARK:** Smooth, grey-red-brown, with horizontal leaf scars. **LEAVES:** Dark shiny green crowding the branches like palms, the leaves over 1 m long and 12 cm wide, strongly fibrous, with no clear veins

but the centre thickened, the edge wavy. **FLOWERS:** Pale white-yellow-green, 6 narrow petals joined in a tube, in tight clusters all over a big flowering head about 1 m high. **FRUIT:** Small green berries, becoming red then black and juicy, about 1 cm across; eaten by birds. The angular branchlets remain for some time and turn orange.

Propagation

Cuttings.

Seed

Spread out on a dry cement floor to dry the whole fruit.

Treatment: Not necessary.

Storage: Better to use cuttings than to store seed.

Management

Fast growing. Little or no management required once established.

Remarks

