

**Ehretia cymosa****Boraginaceae****Indigenous**

**COMMON NAMES:** **Kikuyu:** Mukui, Murembu; **Kipsigis:** Mutereriet; **Luhya:** Shekutu, Shikuti; **Maasai:** Endalatiekutuk, Endalai ekutuk, Endalati ekotok; **Marakwet:** Kabonbonet, Morori; **Meru:** Mukui, Murembu; **Nandi:** Boranet, Shamut; **Ogiek:** Mundereriet; **Samburu:** Lachachur; **Taita:** Mdana; **Tugen:** Buruburuti, Makongiet.

**DESCRIPTION:** A deciduous shrub or tree usually 2–9 m (to 20 m), often branching from the base, the trunk crooked with weak drooping branches. **LEAVES:** Oval but wide or narrow to 20 cm x 12 cm, the **tip pointed, base rounded**, on a stalk 1–3 cm. The leaf is rarely flat and bubbles up between the veins. **Veins are raised below and have hairs.** Leaves are often attacked by insects. **FLOWERS:** In loose large heads no more than 15 cm across, on **hairy stalks**, often covering the tree. The small flowers are white–yellow–pink, quite fragrant. The **divided style and brown-black anthers hang out** of the bell-like flowers. **FRUIT:** In large heads. Round, orange-red and berry-like, later turn black. Each is **pointed** and breaks into **4 parts**, each containing a hard, comma-shaped seed.

**ECOLOGY:** An African tree distributed from West to eastern Africa and south to southern Africa, some in bushland, others in riverine forest. In Kenya, it is widely distributed in evergreen forest and forest patches, 1,200–1,850 m. Agroclimatic Zones II–III.

**USES:** Firewood, charcoal, poles, tool handles, medicine (roots, leaves, leaf juice), bee forage, ornamental.

**PROPAGATION:** Seedlings, direct sowing at site.

**SEED:** About 20,000–30,000 seeds per kg. Cut the fruiting head when 80% of the fruits are mature to extract the seed.

**treatment:** Not necessary.

**storage:** Seed can be stored for some time.

**MANAGEMENT:** Fast growing; pruning, pollarding, lopping and coppicing.

**REMARKS:** Planted mainly as an ornamental in Kenya. In South Africa it has been used to make good furniture. At least 3 other species in this genus occur wild in Kenya. *E. amoena* is a south coast species whose leaves are sand-papery above. *E. bakeri* (**Bajun:** Mnanyadia; **Boni:**

**Keruki; Digo:** Moza nyama; **Duruma:** Muyamavi; **Giriama:** Mukironda; **Taita:** Mdana) is the most common after *E. cymosa* but it is found at the coast and adjoining areas. It is a shrub or small tree seldom exceeding 4 m. Leaves are large, up to 15 cm or more, and it occurs in bushland, grassland and on coral and at forest edges.

**FURTHER READING:** Beentje, 1994; Bein et al., 1996; Bekele-Tesemma et al., 1993; Blundell, 1987; Dharani, 2002; Fichtl and Adi, 1994; Katende et al., 1995; Kokwaro, 1993; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002.

