

Ekebergia capensis

(*E. rueppeliana*)

Meliaceae



Indigenous

Ag: *Churi*

Am: *Lol, Somb, Teselimo*

Or: *Duduna, Sombo*

Ecology

A medium-sized to large African tree, very variable and widely distributed from Senegal to Ethiopia and south to South Africa; first described in the Cape Province, thus the name 'capensis'. In Ethiopia, it is widely distributed in a variety of habitats, often used as a shady meeting place in open grassland. It occurs in Dry, Moist and Wet Weyna Dega and Dega agroclimatic zones in all regions, 1,600–3,000 m.

Uses

Firewood, timber (furniture, light construction), poles, tool handles, medicine, fodder (leaves), bee forage, shade, ornamental, soil conservation, windbreak.

Description

A tree reaching 20–30 m, occasionally higher. BARK: Grey-brown and rough with age; a cut is red with white streaks, branchlets dotted with whitish breathing pores. LEAVES: Compound, mostly crowded at the ends of branches on stalks to 30 cm long, leaflets 3–6 pairs plus one, shiny green but some hairs below, up to 15 cm long, leaf blades unequal-sided. FLOWERS: In loose sprays, up to 8 cm, each flower small and white and heavily scented. FRUIT: Rounded, 1–2 cm long, thin-skinned and orange on long stalks, drying and splitting to set free 2–4 seeds.

Propagation

Seedlings, wildings, use of cuttings said to be possible but not the recommended method.

Seed

Good germination from fresh seed. 2,900–8,600 seed per kg.

Treatment: Not necessary but soaking the seed in cold water for 24 hours may improve germination.

Storage: Seeds do not store for long. Use fresh seed.

Management

Fairly fast growing, coppicing.

Remarks

Wildings are used most commonly for propagation. The light pale wood with an even grain makes attractive furniture.



Photo: Tadesse Wolde Mariam

