

Erythrina abyssinica

Fabaceae

Indigenous

- Ag:** *Buri*
Am: *Korch, Gorgo, Korra, Kuara*
Eng: *Flame tree, Lucky-bean tree, Red-hot poker tree*
Gmz: *Gelia*
Kf: *Bero*
Or: *Anka, Wolensu*
Sh: *Gelia*
Sd: *Welako, Welesku, Walensu*
Tg: *Soans, Soaueb, Soarch*

Ecology

A small thorny tree found all over Africa in warm temperate and tropical areas, as well as in Central America, Australia, southern Asia and Hawaii. Found all over the country in open woodland or grasslands of the Moist and Wet Kolla and Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones, 1,300–2,400 m. As with many trees in areas with frequent fires, young trees establish a deep root system before stem growth and old trees a thick, corky and protective bark.

Uses

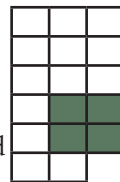
Firewood, carving, utensils (mortars, drums, bee-hives), medicine (bark, roots), veterinary medicine (leaves), bee forage, ornamental, mulch, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, live fence, necklaces (seeds), curios (seeds), ceremonial.

Description

A deciduous tree with a short trunk and thick spreading branches, rounded crown, 6–12 m. BARK: Deeply grooved, brown, thick and corky, with or without woody spines. LEAVES: Compound with 3 leaflets, largest leaflet rounded to 15

cm; branchlets and under-leaves covered with grey-brown hairs, veins and stalks sometimes prickly. FLOWERS: Orange-red heads, often appearing on the bare tree.

Both narrow calyx lobes and petals are coloured, each flower to 5 cm long. FRUIT: Woody pods, 4–16 cm long, hairy, strongly narrowed between seeds, opening to set free 1–10 shiny red seeds with a grey-black patch.



Propagation

Seedlings, direct sowing at site. Also grow from cuttings, but raising seedlings is easy. Propagation from cuttings is successful if done immediately after the rainy season but not while the land is very wet.

Seed

Low germination rate. About 6,800 seed per kg.

Treatment: Not necessary.

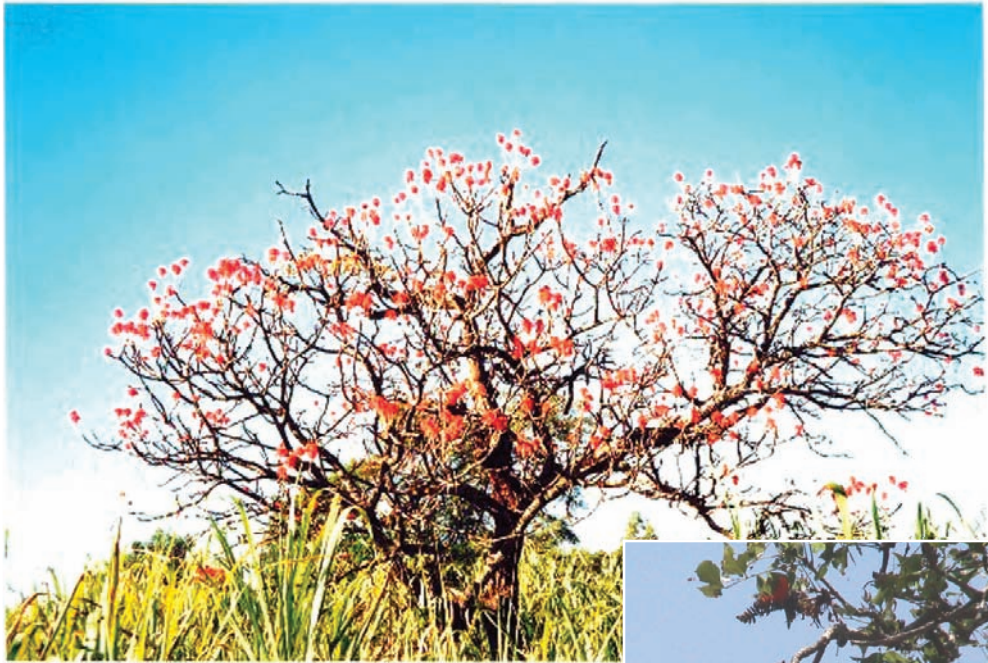
Storage: Seed stores for long periods if kept cool, dry and insect free.

Management

Pollarding, coppicing. Slow growing.

Remarks

The tree is resistant to fire and termites. The soft white wood is a poor timber but can be carved fairly easily. The tree is used on stream banks and for soil-conservation terraces. The seeds contain a poison but it is only released if they are crushed. Leaves have been used to treat skin diseases in cattle.



Photos: Patrick Maundu



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