

*Erythrina burttii*

Fabaceae (Papilionaceae)

**Indigenous****COMMON NAMES:** **Kamba:** Muusi, Kikunguu; **Maasai:** Engaraji.

**DESCRIPTION:** A deciduous tree 5–15 m tall with a flat crown. **Trunk and branches stout.** **BARK:** Thick, deeply fissured, with large **raised bosses, each with a spine at the tip; branches spiny.** **LEAVES:** Compound, with 3 leaflets, often on short shoots; leaflets round, or slightly long but widest in the middle or towards the tip, which may be rounded or indented, often **less than 5 cm across, smooth.** **FLOWERS:** Red, in dense erect heads up to 9 cm long, often appearing when the plant is leafless. **FRUIT:** Straight or curved pods, 6–9 cm long, somewhat papery, **not constricted;** seeds orange or red.

**ECOLOGY:** Found in Tanzania and Kenya; occurring in wooded or bushed grassland, often in *Acacia-Commiphora* bushland in southern, eastern and northern Kenya, 950–1,750 m. Common near Kajiado town and around Lukenya and Katumani in Machakos District. Usually found in well-drained, often rocky ground. Agroclimatic Zones IV–V.

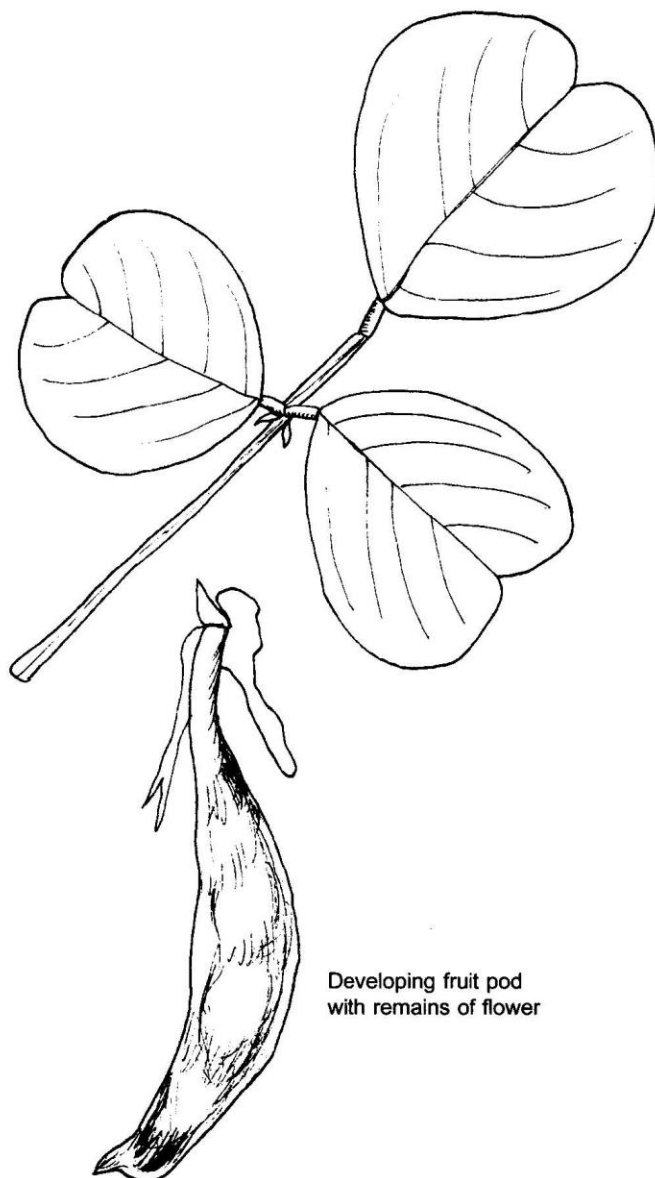
**USES:** Furniture (stools), utensils (camel bells), shade, nitrogen-fixing.

**PROPAGATION:** Seedlings.

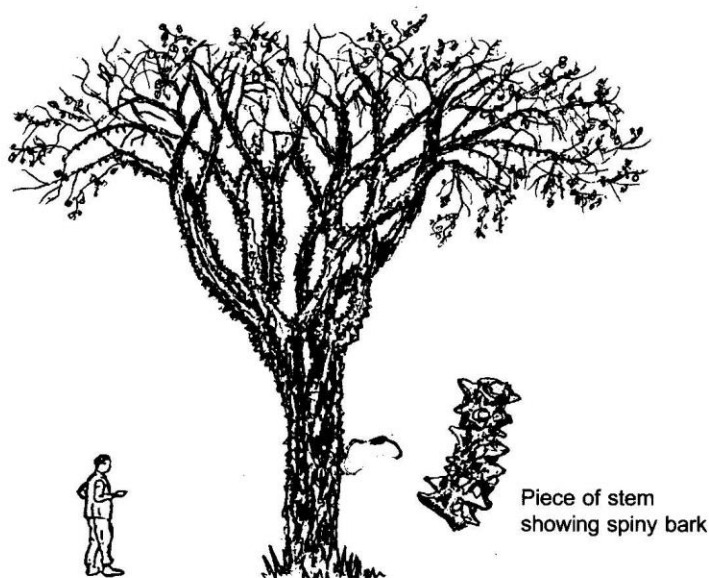
**MANAGEMENT:** Pollarding, coppicing.

**REMARKS:** This is a common plant in the drier areas, where it may be the most conspicuous tree due to its large size and umbrella shape.

**FURTHER READING:** Beentje, 1994; Blundell, 1987; Dharani, 2002.



Developing fruit pod with remains of flower



Piece of stem showing spiny bark

