

Faurea saligna

Proteaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **English:** Beechwood; **Kamba:** Kikaati, Mukaati, Mnyangati, Kikethuki; **Keiyo:** Sirik; **Kikuyu:** Mutorothua; **Maasai:** Olgeriantus, Olorten; **Marakwet:** Maiyokwa, Sirite; **Nandi:** Mosomboriet, Muargua; **Pokot:** Markwa; **Sabaot:** Bongwet, Maakwet, Maiyokwo; **Samburu:** Olbugui; **Tugen:** Musomboriet, Musumboriet.

DESCRIPTION: A deciduous shrub or large forest tree to 20 m with a dense crown. Bole often 7–10 m, straight or twisted. It resembles a gum tree. **BARK:** Almost black, rough with deep grooves. **LEAVES:** Leathery, shiny and drooping, often long and narrowing towards the base and tip, to 12 cm, tip pointed, edge wavy, often slightly curved, stalk short and red. **FLOWERS:** Dense silky spikes to 14 cm long, cream-purple, honey scented and attracting bees, calyx pink to red and hairy. **FRUIT:** Small nutlets, seeds with silky white hairs, the reddish styles persist, and appear as woolly pink-white spikes.

ECOLOGY: A tall tree found in low- to high-altitude forest and bushland areas from Nigeria and Sudan and south to southern Africa. Two forms occur in Kenya: a 'savanna' form occurring in wooded grassland (with *Combretum molle*), 1,050–1,800 m; and an 'afro-montane' form at forest margins and in secondary grassland derived from forest, 2,200–3,100 m. The latter is common around the forest edges of Mt Kenya and the Aberdares, at Mau, Timbroa and in the Cherangani Hills. Agroclimatic Zones III–IV.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber (construction), furniture, poles, posts, medicine (roots), bee forage, ornamental, mulch, windbreak, dye, ceremonial.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, wildings.

SEED: 160,000–165,000 seeds per kg.

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Perishable. Fresh seed should be sown for best results.

MANAGEMENT: Medium growth rate. Can be grown either as individual trees or as a stand.

REMARKS: The tree is often left in cropland. The wood is resistant to termites, hard, yellow-brown with an attractive grain, valued for furniture and panelling. Two species of the genus *Faurea* are recognized in Kenya: *F. saligna* and *F. rochetiana*. The occurrence of intermediaries, however, casts doubt on the validity of keeping them separate. *F. rochetiana*, whose leaves are densely hairy beneath, is more common in rocky grassland and bushland areas in Kisii and the Kakamega–Kitale region, often in association with *Protea*.

FURTHER READING: <http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/Sites/TreeDBS/AFT/AFT.htm>; Beentje, 1994; Katende et al., 1995; Kokwaro, 1993; Mbuya et al., 1994; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Storrs, 1979; van Wyk, 1993.

