

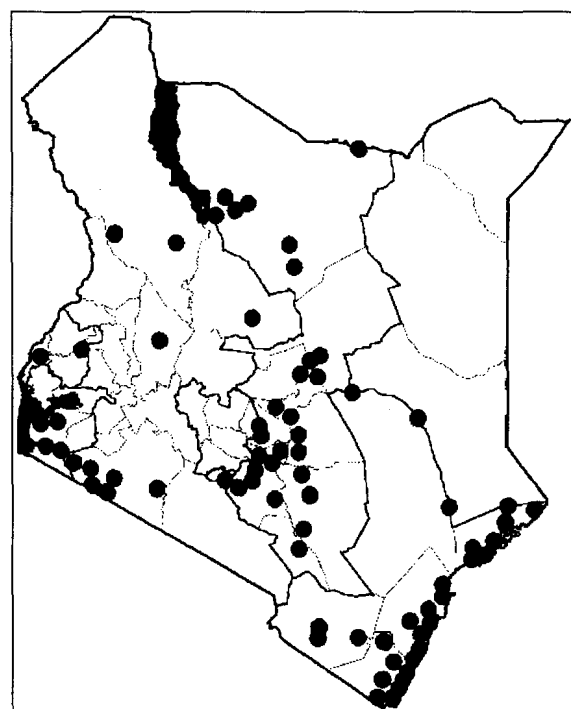
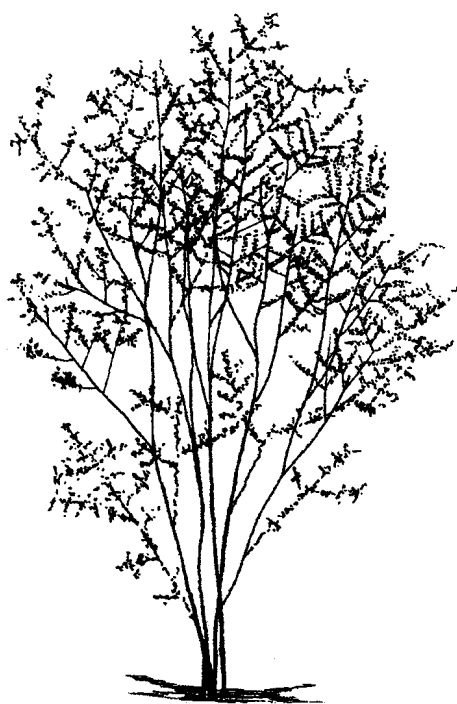
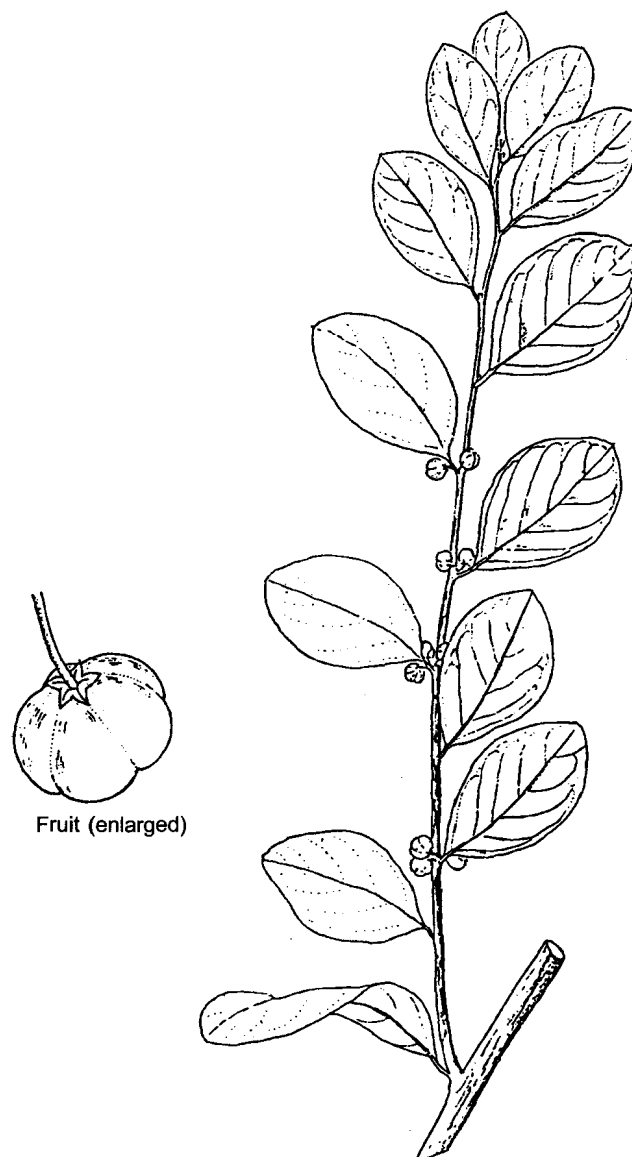
***Flueggea virosa* (*Securinega virosa*)****Euphorbiaceae****Indigenous**

**COMMON NAMES:** **Boran:** Awagino; **Chonyi:** Mukwamba, Kwamba (fruit); **Digo:** Mkwamba; **Giriana:** Mkwamba, Kwamba (fruit); **Ilchamus:** Longoosoiron; **Kamba:** Mukululu (Mwingi); **Kambe:** Mukwamba, Kwamba (fruit); **Kisii:** Esarara; **Luo:** Kaera, Kagena, Kagna, Odok, Rayudh; **Malakote:** Mokororo; **Mbeere:** Mukururu; **Orma:** Kororo; **Pokomo:** Mkwamba; **Pokot:** Chepochepkai, Kptarpotich; **Samburu:** Ikirebuk; **Sanya:** Mkibonyea; **Swahili:** Mkwamba, Mteja; **Teso:** Elachas; **Tharaka:** Mukururu; **Turkana:** Ekalis, Elakis.

**DESCRIPTION:** A deciduous much-branched shrub, usually 1–3 m, occasionally a tree to 7 m. **BARK:** Red-brown, smooth, later rough. **Branchlets and leaf stalks purple-red.** **LEAVES:** Simple and alternate, very variable, to 6 cm, **wider at the tip**, which may be notched, **grey below.** **FLOWERS:** Male and female plants. Flowers **small, green-yellow, sweet-scented, in leaf axils**, male flowers in clusters but only 1–5 female flowers. **FRUIT:** **Small white berries**, only 5 mm across but edible and sweet. **Pale green berries ripen white, 4–5 mm across**, edible and sweet with **5 soft segments** containing tiny seeds, pale brown and shiny.

**ECOLOGY:** A widely distributed species in Africa from Senegal to Somalia and south to Namibia, and in the southern Arabian peninsular, Madagascar, Pakistan and east to Japan and Timor. In Kenya, found mostly in open *Acacia-Combretum* woodlands or bushed grassland. Soils variable, but common on sandy and clay-sandy soils, 120–2,000 m. Agroclimatic Zones II–V. Flowers during the rainy season. In fruit in June–July in Tharaka, Machakos and Kitui. In fruit at the coast and adjoining areas in December–January.

**USES:** Firewood, charcoal, construction (twigs used for houses and granaries), utensils (wooden needles for sewing, storage pots), edible fruit, medicine (roots, bark, fruit, leaves), fodder (fruit for chicken, leaves for goats), tannin (bark), ceremonial, fish traps (branchlets).



## *Flueggea virosa* (cont)

**PROPAGATION:** Seedlings, wildings, cuttings.

**SEED:** Germinate better after passing through the gut of animals such as baboons.

**treatment:** Not necessary.

**MANAGEMENT:** A fast-growing shrub.

**REMARKS:** Ripe white fruit eaten whole, mainly by children; soft and sweet with a slightly bitter taste. Ash used for

cleaning out milk gourds (Maasai, Narok). *Flueggea virosa* is also used in *kitigo kia mburi*, a charm for good health in goats, dusted on the animals as they pass the entrance to the boma (Tharaka).

**FURTHER READING:** Beentje, 1994; Bein et al., 1996; Bekele-Tesemma et al., 1993; Kokwaro, 1993; Maundu et al., 1999; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Ruffo et al., 2002; Verheij and Coronel, 1991.

