

Kedrostis pseudogijef

Cucurbitaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Daasanach:** Yierit etha; **Kamba:** Mukauw'u; **Samburu:** Sakurdumii.

DESCRIPTION: A climbing deciduous liana with thick foliage. Stems greyish white, ridged, rough, with tendrils. **LEAVES:** Up to 5 cm long, divided into 3 leaflets with toothed margins. Leaflets without a stalk, may or may not be lobed. **FLOWERS:** Dioecious, usually appearing when the plant is leafless, often borne in clusters, male flowers numerous, female flowers one to a few. **FRUIT:** Usually in clusters (1–7), conical, roughly hairy, grooved, fleshy, to 2 cm long.

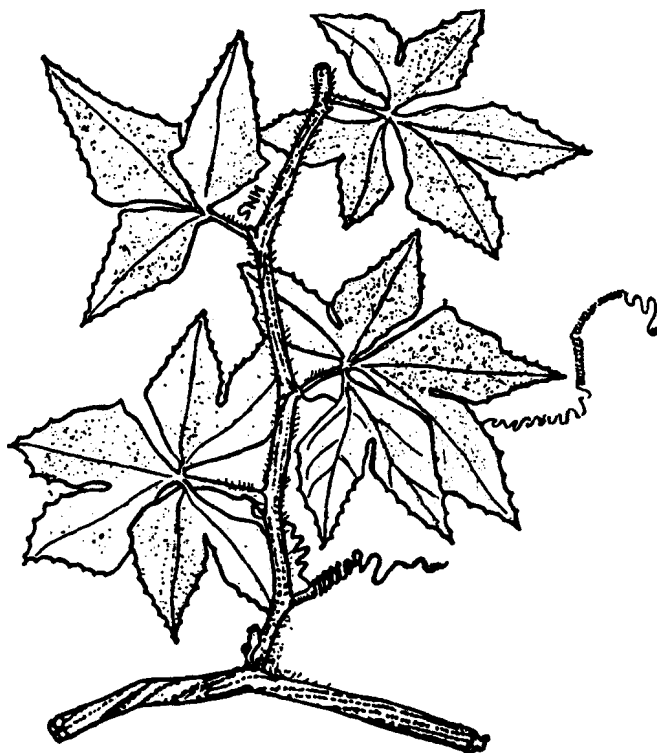
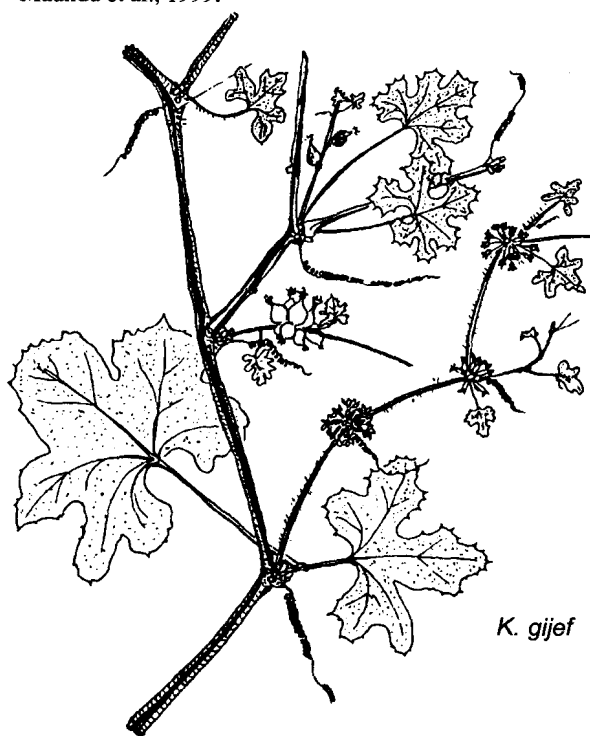
ECOLOGY: Known to grow naturally only in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Found in many parts of Kenya, for example in Moyale, Waita (Mwingi), Mutomo, south-eastern Makueni, Voi, Kitui, Taita and Marsabit. Dry *Acacia-Commiphora* bushland on red, sandy or rocky soil, 500–1,200 m. Often associated with *Adansonia*, *Delonix*, *Entada*, *Acacia brevispica* and *A. tortilis*. Rainfall 450–600 mm. Agroclimatic Zones: V–VI.

USES: Edible fruit, edible leaves and young shoots (after boiling and change of boiling water), medicine, rope (vines), mats (branches).

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, possibly also by cuttings.

REMARKS: A related species, *K. gijef* (**Gabra:** Gaale; **Kamba:** Witulu), also has edible fruit. Unlike *K. pseudogijef*, which has 3-foliolate leaves, this has simple, kidney- or heart-shaped leaves. It is found in most dry lowland areas of Kenya, north to the Arabian peninsula. Important camel and goat fodder and used as medicine among the Turkana. *Kedrostis* is an Old World tropics genus with about 2 dozen species.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Kokwaro, 1993 (*K. gijef*); Maundu et al., 1999.

*K. pseudogijef**K. gijef*