

Lantana camara

Verbenaceae

South America

Eng: Lantana

Tg: Bun tilian

Ecology: A South American exotic often used as an attractive hedge in the tropics. In Eritrea, the shrub is cultivated as an ornamental hedge and river-bank stabilizer throughout the highlands and midlands, 1,400-2,300 m, especially in Asmara, Dekemhare, Mendefera, Keren, Elabered and in Anseba valley.

Uses: Food (fruit), bee forage, **ornamental, river-bank stabilization, windbreak, live fence.**

Description: A scrambling evergreen shrub 1-5 m with many **small recurved prickles on the 4-angled stems**, becoming woody and forming dense thicket. **LEAVES:** Opposite or in threes, **aromatic, ovate, 3-9 cm**, tip pointed, base rounded to a short stalk, the **edge toothed, the upper surface rough and sandpapery**. **FLOWERS:** Small and tubular in **flat colourful heads 5 cm across, yellow-orange to pink-purple**, changing colour with age. **FRUIT:** A **cluster of round black berries**, each one about **8 mm** across.

Propagation: Cuttings and seedlings.

Seed:

treatment:

storage:

Management: Pruning and shaping as required, e.g. for hedging.

Remarks: It spreads fast and can soon turn into a weed. Leaves are poisonous to livestock but the flowers are attractive to butterflies. In Kenya, the plant is classed as a "serious" weed along roadsides, in secondary vegetation and on farm lands all over the country. Horticultural varieties without prickles do not become weeds.

