

# Maerua angolensis

# Capparidaceae

Indigenous

*At:* Shajar-al-zaref

*Hd:* Kemtet

*Nr:* Arembile

*Sh:* Garomo

*Tg:* Keremo

*Tr:* Meraat

**Ecology:** A small African tree growing west to Senegal, in Somalia, Ethiopia and south to Natal. It is found in deciduous bushland, on rocky ground and even coastal thicket on coral, but most commonly in woodland and wooded grassland. In Eritrea, it grows in the midlands and lowlands throughout the country, particularly on hillsides, 1,200-2,200 m. It tolerates degraded soils.

**Uses:** Firewood, fodder (leaves), furniture, bee forage, milk curdler (leaves), flavouring of milk (smoked wood).

**Description:** A shrub or small tree 1-10 m, usually less than 5 m, with spreading drooping branches. **BARK:** Smooth, grey, dotted with white breathing pores (lenticels). **LEAVES:** Variable in size and shape, **leathery, usually 3-7 cm, oval, on a stalk 1-3 cm**, tip rounded or notched with a hair-like tip. **FLOWERS:** Sweet-scented, solitary or in **crowded leafy heads**, no petals, a central **mass of long white stamens with 4 yellow-green sepals about 1.5 cm long**. **FRUIT:** A long, **slender "bean" 2-16 cm, narrowed between seeds, green and smooth**, drying yellow-brown. The 10-20 round seeds are surrounded by pulp.

**Propagation:** Seedlings.

**Seed:**

**treatment:** Not necessary.

**storage:**

**Management:** A fast colonizer where soils are shallow.

**Remarks:** The wood is hard but brittle, and is used for furniture. The Tigre people believe that smoke from the wood is unpleasant and can lead to divorce.

