

## Meriandra bengalensis

*Lamiaceae*

Indigenous

Tg: *Nihba*

**Ecology:** A bush or shrub, abundant on hill tops and slopes where the soils are thin and rocky. It is also frequently found in abandoned farm lands in the highlands, 2,000-2,500 m.

**Uses:** Firewood, roofing material, medicine (boiled leaves used to treat colds and stomach ache), bee forage, soil conservation.

**Description:** A **fragrant shrub** 50 cm to 2 m with dense branches. Most parts covered with **short grey hairs giving a white appearance**. LEAVES: Very aromatic, **long oval, 3.5-7.0 cm**, the blade narrows at the base into a winged stalk less than 2 cm, midrib clear below, **leaf edge finely round-toothed**, the tip more or less pointed; **both surfaces hairy, more dense below**. FLOWERS: In **rounded heads of 3-10, well-spaced on a long flower spike**, white to pale violet, tubular and very small, 5-6 mm, only 2 of 4 stamens fertile. FRUIT: 4 nutlets (sometimes only 2). The **dry calyx surrounds the nutlets, bell-shaped, 7-9 mm, flattened, the upper lip entire but lower lip split into 2**.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings.

**Seed:**

**treatment:**

**storage:**

**Management:**

**Remarks:** The leaves of Meriandra have a pleasant aromatic smell similar to that of *Salvia officinale*. It has occasionally been cultivated.

