

Nuxia congesta

Loganiaceae

Indigenous

Sh: Lamasa

Tg: Kentebera

Tr: Etsmayet

Ecology: A tree of the upper limits of Afro-montane forest and also a shrubby tree of the lower-storey vegetation, normally at forest edges and in drier evergreen highland forests. It grows from Sierra Leone to the Sudan, Ethiopia and East Africa and as far south as South Africa. In Eritrea, it grows in the central and northern highlands, e.g. on hillsides and in river valleys around Nakfa, Wogret, Rora-habab and Semenawi-bahri, 1,600-2,600 m.

Uses: **Firewood**, charcoal, **medicine** (leaves), bee forage, live fence, building material (stems and branches).

Description: A shrub or tree, usually 2-8 m, but can reach 20 m, quite variable. The bole is often short, twisted and the **low branches** droop down. **BARK:** Rough, brown-black, shedding long **fibrous strips** with age. Young **branchlets** clearly **3- or 6-sided** with thick nodes where the leaves grow out. **LEAVES:** Rather leathery, **dull green**, scaly, usually growing out **in threes**, crowded at the ends of branches, variable in size, shape and texture, hairy or not, oval to rounded, 1-8 cm, **tip rounded or notched**, edge occasionally toothed, a stalk to 2 cm, midrib clear. **FLOWERS:** Fragrant **white-mauve in dense crowded heads**, flat or round-topped at the ends of branches, the 4 petals hardly longer than the **bell-shaped calyx**, which is sticky. Flowers numerous, attracting bees. The dry flowers persist on the tree. **FRUIT:** The **calyx continues** to surround **small hairy capsules** which split to set free many seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings.

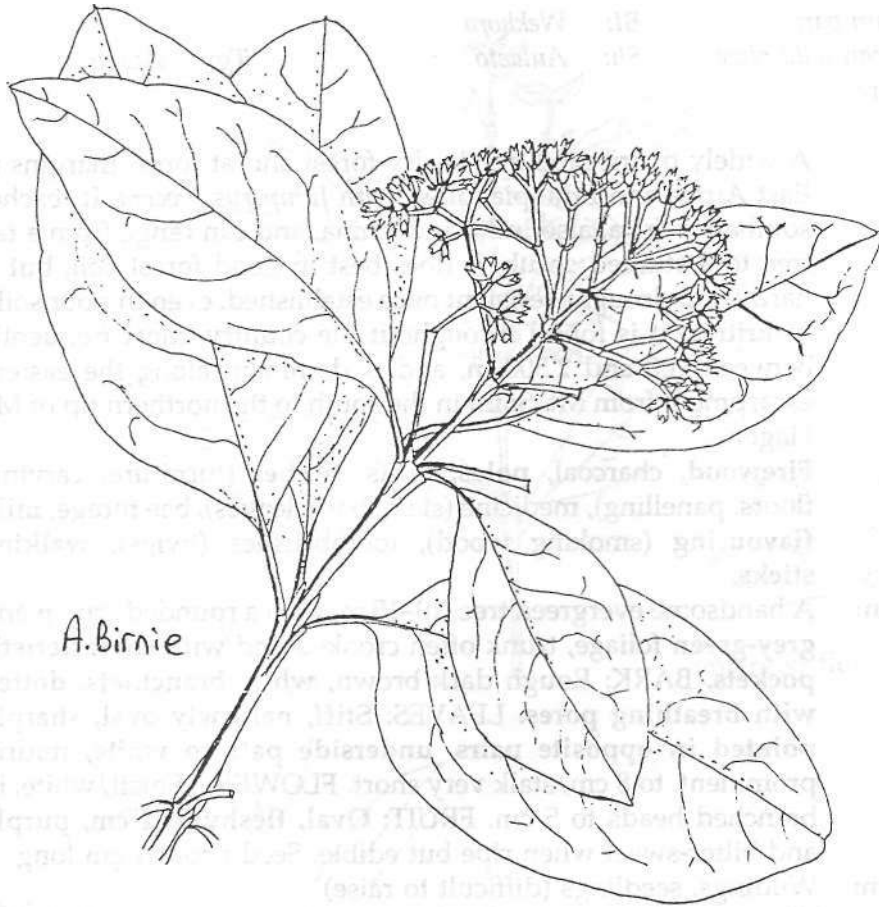
Seed:

treatment: Not necessary.

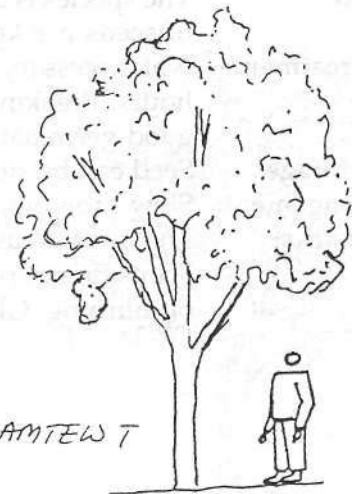
storage: Can be stored.

Management: Coppicing.

Remarks: The plant is believed to repel evil spirits. The leafy twigs are used as stoppers for small containers where strong-smelling foodstuff is kept. A good bee tree.



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