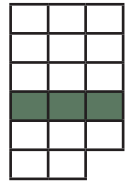


Phytolacca dodecandra

Phytolaccaceae



Indigenous

Ag: *Sebeti*

Am: *Indod*

Or: *Handode, Indodi*

Ecology

A shrub commonly found in degraded riverine woodland and secondary forest areas of Dry, Moist and Wet Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones in all regions, 1,500-3,000 m.

Uses

Medicine (roots, fruit, leaves, seed), soil conservation, soap (fruit).

Description

A climbing or scrambling shrub which can be a strong liane in riverine forest; long hanging branches to 9 m. LEAVES: Shiny oval to 25 cm, tip blunt, stalk and midrib pink, rather thick and juicy. FLOWERS: Strongly scented, cream-green, on spikes to 40 cm, often opposite leaves, each flower with many stamens on a fleshy disc, 5 sepals but no petals. FRUIT: Rounded soft fruit to 7 mm across, orange-red when ripe, a seed in each section.

Propagation

Seedlings, cuttings.

Seed

Seed is easily collected from dry fruit.

Treatment: Not necessary.

Storage: Can be stored.

Management

Trimming. Layering and leading it to grow on live fence.

Remarks

This is a very poisonous plant, both to people and grazing animals. The leaves and roots are particularly poisonous. It should, therefore, be used with great care as an overdose of medicine can cause death. Sheep and cattle have died from eating the leaves during drought. Juice from the leaves or roots can cause abortion, and, suitably applied, can kill sperm. The commonest medicinal use is for killing intestinal worms. The juice can also be used to kill mosquito larvae in ponds. It can also kill snails and the organism that causes bilharzia (schistosomiasis) in man in its early stages. The fruits are widely used as a soap substitute for washing clothes.



fruit and seed

