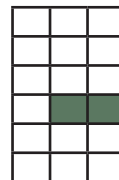


Piliostigma thonningii

Fabaceae



Indigenous

Ag: *Frq*

Am: *Yekolla wanza*

Br: *Abairtubata*

Eng: *Camel's foot tree, Monkey bread*

Gr: *Ambarda, Lilu*

Or: *Kora*

Tg: *Amam-gemel*

Wt: *Kalkalla, Kalkallo*

Ecology

A small dense tree found all over sub-humid Africa from west to south in wooded grassland in a variety of soils. In Ethiopia it grows at medium to low altitudes, especially in the Gibe River valley and various areas of Illubabor region. It performs well in Moist and Wet Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones and occurs in most regions, 500-2,000 m.

Uses

Firewood, charcoal, poles, timber (houses), food (pods), drink (leaves, pods), medicine (leaves, bark, roots, pods), fodder (pods, shoots), bee forage, ornamental, mulch, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation, tannin, dye (pods, seeds, bark, roots), rope (bark, root fibres).

Description

A rounded deciduous tree, 3–5 m, branches twisted (occasionally climbing). **BARK:** Thick, dark and rough, fibrous within. Dark red if cut. **LEAVES:** Large and bilobed, a small bristle in the deep notch, often folded along midrib, leathery, pale green, to 12 cm long, lower surface brown hairy, in between many raised veins.

FLOWERS: White, fragrant, in heads, 10–20 cm. **FRUIT:** Flat brown and woody pods, 15–20 cm long, persisting on the tree but finally decaying on the ground to free pea-sized seeds. Pulp surrounding the seed can be eaten.

Propagation

Seedlings (sow seed in pots).

Seed

The tree produces many seeds with a good germination rate. About 7,300 seed per kg. Seeds difficult to extract. Dry the pods in the sun, cut them into pieces and pound in a mortar to separate the seed from the pulp.

Treatment: Soak in cold water for 24 hours.

Storage: Can be stored for several years if kept cool, dry and insect free.

Management

Fairly fast growing on good sites, coppicing, pollarding. Produces root suckers from exposed roots.

Remarks

Frequently growing with *Annona senegalensis*. A good tree for intercropping. The pulp surrounding the seeds is edible and under famine conditions leaves, crushed green pods and seeds have been eaten. Pods and seeds give a blue dye and roasted seeds a black dye.



Photo: Patrick Maundu



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