

# *Rhamnus prinoides*

Rhamnaceae



## Indigenous

**Ag:** *Gebho*

**Am:** *Gesbo*

**Gr:** *Gisbe*

**Or:** *Gesbo*

**Tg:** *Gesbo*

## Ecology

A small tree or shrub of wet rainforests well distributed in Africa. In Ethiopia, it is widespread and locally cultivated from medium to high altitudes, in grasslands, in rain forests and on the margins of evergreen forests in Moist and Wet Kolla, Weyna Dega and Moist Dega agroclimatic zones, 1,000–3,200 m.

## Uses

Firewood, flavouring (leaves), medicine (roots).

## Description

An evergreen shrub or small tree to 7 m, which may climb over other bushes. It has slender stems and drooping branches. **BARK:** Grey-brown, dark with age, smooth but clearly dotted with breathing pores. **LEAVES:** Alternate, long oval to 10 cm, shiny dark green above with raised vein network, tip sharply pointed, edge finely toothed, base narrowed to a stalk. **FLOWERS:** Small, yellow-green with 5 sepals, single or 2–10 in a group on thin stalks. **FRUIT:** Rounded, three-part berries on a 2 cm drooping stalk, about 8 mm, shiny red, turning purple-black, 3 seeds inside.

## Propagation

Seedlings.

## Seed

Germinates readily.

**Treatment:** Not necessary.

**Storage:** Stores well. Mix it with ash to repel insect attack.

## Management

Need to improve the infiltration of the soil. It does not like wet and swampy areas. Adding sand to clay soil will help. Harvest before the branches are coarse (diameter > 1 cm).

## Remarks

It is widely planted in gardens. The roots contain ingredients said to purify the blood. The leaves are used to flavour the local alcoholic drinks 'tella' and 'tej', which are brewed from fermented barley, sorghum or finger millet.



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