

Schrebera alata

Oleaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Keiyo:** Kakaruwet; **Kikuyu:** Mutoma; **Kipsigis:** Lamaiyak, Kabigiriet; **Luo:** Ochol; **Maasai:** Oliala, Olkakawa; **Nandi:** Kakaawet; **Pokot:** Chetoye; **Taita:** Msegembe; **Tugen:** Kakaawet.

DESCRIPTION: A graceful deciduous tree 9–25 m high, the bole fluted and the crown fairly open. **BARK:** Smooth and pale grey or yellow-brown, flaking in patches, becoming darker and cracking with age. **LEAVES:** Pale green and soft when young, pinnate with **2 pairs lateral leaflets plus a larger terminal leaflet** to 12 cm long, tip broadly tapering, sometimes rounded and notched, lateral leaflets often unequal-sided. The **leaf stalk characteristically winged**. **FLOWERS:** In **terminal heads** on short branches, compact, 4–6 cm across, **each flower cream-white, marked purple and sweetly scented, about 1.5 cm diameter**, the tubular corolla powdered with brown, 2 yellow stamens. **FRUIT:** **Pear-shaped woody capsule, 3–6 cm long**, often in groups of 4–5, pale brown and persisting on the tree; splitting open when ripe to set free many **papery winged seeds to 2.5 cm**.

ECOLOGY: A widespread tree of bushland and forest from Ethiopia to Angola. Occurs in dry forests and forest edges and remnants, often associated with *Juniperus*, *Olea*, *Vepris* and *Croton*; also in evergreen bushland, less often in scattered tree grassland, 1,500–2,400 m. Agroclimatic Zone III.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, medicine (bark and leaves), ornamental.

PROPAGATION: Wildings, seedlings.

SEED: Seeds are blown away from the mother tree. Collect mature capsules just before they open and dry in the sun and then separate seeds when the capsules open.

treatment: Not necessary. Sow seed with wings up.

storage: Seed can be stored for long periods.

MANAGEMENT: Fairly fast growing in good soil; coppicing, pruning.

REMARKS: The pale brown wood is hard and heavy and makes excellent firewood and charcoal. A potential firewood crop for highland farmers, it can be planted as a woodlot, managed by coppicing or intercropped with arabica coffee.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Blundell, 1987; Dharani, 2002; Katende et al., 1995; Kokwaro, 1993; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Storrs, 1979; van Wyk, 1993.

