

# **Securidaca longepedunculata**

Polygalaceae

## **Indigenous**

**Agn:** *Urao*

**Am:** *Temene, Etse, Menabe, Eise Menabele*

**Brt:** *Sheget*

**Eng:** *Violet tree*

**Gmz:** *Sikida*

**Nur:** *Leele*

**Shn:** *Sigida;*

**Wel:** *Sangano*

## **Ecology**

Widespread in tropical Africa from Eritrea and Ethiopia to South Africa, occurring in semi-arid savannah and deciduous lowland woodland. In Ethiopia, it grows in Dry and Moist Bereha and Kolla agroclimatic zones, common at Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella, also occurs in Tigray, Gondar, Gojam, Wolega, Shewa, Ilubabor and Gamo Gofa in various kinds of woodlands and bushlands, 400-1,700 m.

## **Use**

Poles, medicine (bark, leaves, smoke from burning plant parts), veterinary medicine (bark), bee forage, fibre (inner bark for ropes), incense (root), soap substitute (bark).

## **Description**

A semi-deciduous shrub or small tree 2-6 m, with slender branches to an open crown, sometimes with drooping branchlets. **BARK:** Young twigs yellow-green, becoming stringy and pale; rough grey mature bark flakes to show yellow below. Deep fissures when old. **LEAVES:** Alternate, thin and narrow, tip rounded, to 5 cm long, hairy when young, becoming smooth, blue-green, sometimes clustered on spine-tipped

branchlets. **FLOWERS:** Small, about 1 cm long, pink or purple, sweet scented in showy sprays with new leaves. **FRUIT:** Rounded and winged, to 4 cm long, purple-green when young, pale yellow-brown when mature, hanging in bunches.



## **Propagation**

Direct sowing at site. Raising and transplanting seedlings is less successful than direct sowing.

## **Seed**

About 6,000 seed per kg.

**Treatment:** Seeds should be covered with grass and watered until the beginning of the rainy season when they are directly sown at site. Germinate poorly otherwise. Soak in cold water for 24 hours just before sowing.

**Storage:** Can retain viability for a long period at room temperature if kept dry.

## **Management**

Fairly fast growing. Produces root suckers. Seedlings are difficult to plant successfully because of the sensitive taproot.

## **Remark**

The root is burnt to produce smoke with a pleasant scent, while lather from the bark of the root is used as soap substitute for washing clothes. The smoke is inhaled to treat sore throat infections and cold, while leaves are used to treat coughs. The bark is pounded, chewed and applied to the skin to treat wounds and for snakebites. The bark is also used to treat domestic animals. Ash from burnt roots' is rubbed into small incisions made on the temple and forehead relieves headache. A characteristic smell of oil from root scrapping is said to drive away snakes. The tree is one of the most valuable sources of nectar. Poles are said to be termite- and rot-resistant.

