

# Stereospermum kunthianum

*Bignoniaceae*

Indigenous

Ar: *Khash*

Km: *Usa*

Nr: *Umberi*

Sh: *Sabahambo*

Tg: *Argizana*

Tr: *Argizana*

**Ecology:** A small tree occurring at medium to low altitudes and widespread in savannah areas from Senegal to Zaire and to eastern and southern Africa, also frequent on rocky outcrops and hillsides. It also occurs in open woodlands and at margins of evergreen forests. In Eritrea, it grows in the central highlands, on the eastern and western escarpments and western lowlands, 750-2,200 m, e.g. around Habrenkeka, Mai-tsebri, Tokombia, Barentu, Mensa, Enda-mariam-aila, Elabered, Ghinda and on the Hazemo plains.

**Uses:** **Firewood, medicine** (bark, fruit used on wounds), **ornamental, bee forage, toothbrushes.**

**Description:** A deciduous tree, 5-13 m, the trunk wavy or spiral, **rarely straight**, crown rounded. **BARK:** Grey and **flaking in round patches to show paler underbark** (like a gum tree). **LEAVES:** Compound, with 4 pairs leaflets plus one on a stalk to 7 cm, each leaflet oval-oblong, pointed to 8 cm, young leaves sometimes toothed and hairy. **FLOWERS:** Fragrant in **large drooping heads on the bare tree, pink-lilac-dark** pink, the bell-shaped tube to 3 cm opening to 5-petal lobes, 4 cm across, lobes marked with red lines inside, **2 long, 2 short stamens** inside. **FRUIT:** **Very long thin cylindrical capsules**, twisted, red-brown to 45 cm but only 1 cm across. They split to release many **winged seeds** 2-3 cm long and then remain many months on the tree.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, suckers.

**Seed:**

**treatment:** Seeds often germinate poorly.

**storage**

**Management:**

**Remarks:** Since the tree grows in dense stands and has a long flowering period it is very valuable for bee keepers. The fruit capsules, chewed with salt, are used as a cough remedy. The wood is white-yellow and traditionally is used to splint fractured bones in animals.

