

Terminalia spinosa

Combretaceae

Indigenous

Standard/Trade name: Terminalia.

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Horobbo, Saeteh; **Digo:** Mwangi kululu, Mwangi; **Gabra:** K'orobo; **Giriama:** Mwangi; **Kamba:** Mutula; **Pokot:** Tikit; **Pokomo:** Mukorobo, Muchancha; **Sanya:** Kurubo; **Somali:** Hareri; **Swahili:** Mwangi, Mwangati; **Turkana:** Etail, Epata; **Wardei:** Hafeer, Kabxan, Hareeri madow.

DESCRIPTION: A tree to 15 m, the branches horizontal, long shoots zigzag. **BARK:** Rough, grey, longitudinally fissured, **stout spines, 2–3 together** on short (up to 2-cm long) side shoots. **LEAVES:** **In clusters from side shoots, up to 5 cm, usually 2–3 cm, wider at the tip, clearly notched**, narrowed to a short stalk, often red. **FLOWERS:** 4–5 pink-white spikes in clusters beside leaves. **FRUIT:** **2–3-cm long on stalks, orange-brown to dark brown, thin-winged.**

ECOLOGY: A spiny tree of dry bush country in northern Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia, northern Uganda and Sudan. In Kenya, found in coastal bushland, wooded grassland, along luggas, often on rocky sites; may be locally dominant, up to 1,600 m. Common, for example, at Lake Bogoria and in Tugen Hills. Agroclimatic Zones III (coastal area)–VI (dry inland). Flowers in April–June and November–December in Mwingi and Tana River Districts. Seeds are collected from October to December at the coast.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber, furniture (traditional stools), poles (construction of houses and semi-permanent structures, roofs), carvings, utensils, boat building (dhows), medicine, fodder, live fence.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, wildings.

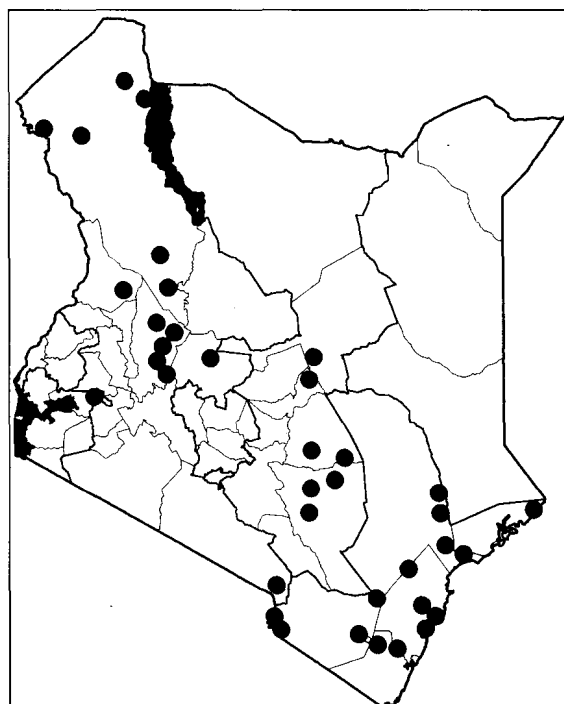
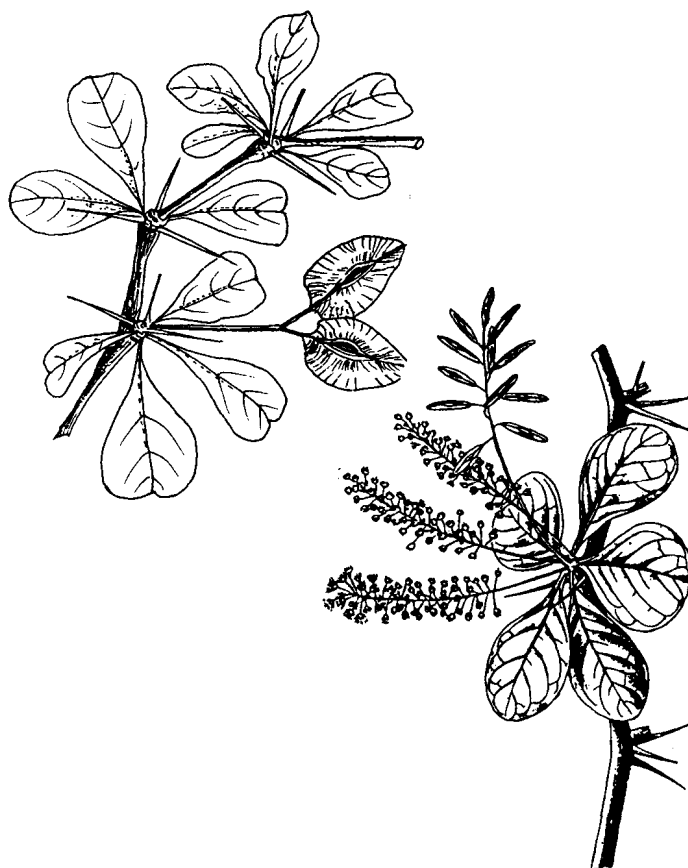
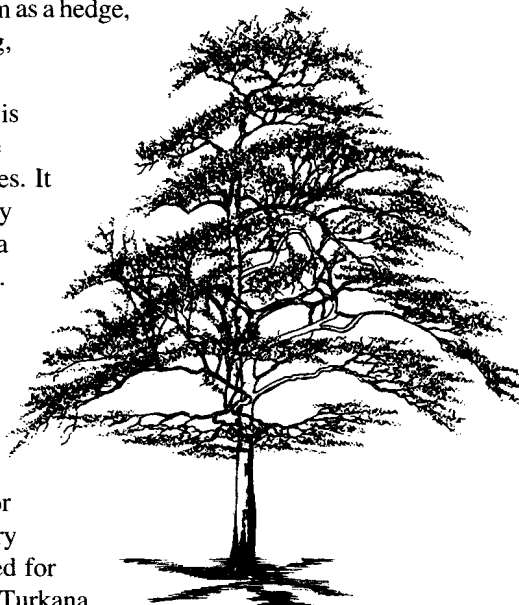
SEED: Tree seeds prolifically. Germination is slow but the germination rate is often quite good.

treatment: Remove wings and soak in cold water, or make a V-shaped nip at the distal end so that the tip of the seed is just visible. The procedure has to be done carefully so that the seed itself is not damaged.

storage: Seed can be stored for long periods.

MANAGEMENT: Trim as a hedge, pruning, lopping, pollarding.

REMARKS: The tree is believed to have magical properties. It is not browsed by goats, so makes a useful live fence. The wood is resistant to termites and fungal attack. Its timber is hard and heavy, valued for building and very durable; also used for dhow keels and Turkana



stools. In Bura the tree is not popular as firewood as its smell is unpleasant. Increasingly used for poles at the coast as supply of poles of other species is diminishing. Usually found outside forest reserves in bushland and therefore cutting is not regulated.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Kokwaro, 1993; Mbuya et al., 1994; Noad and Birnie, 1989.