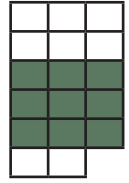


Vernonia amygdalina

Asteraceae



Indigenous

Ag: *Khokhitsi*

Am: *Grawa*

Eng: *Bitter leaf, Tree vernonia*

Gmz: *Banja*

Mjr: *Geshi*

Or: *Aebicha*

Sh: *Banja*

Ecology

Widely distributed throughout tropical Africa, in humid and sub-humid areas. Found in wooded grassland and at forest edges. Cultivated in West Africa for its leaves. In Ethiopia, it grows in sub-humid wooded savannah or wetter highlands in Dry, Moist and Wet Weyna Dega and Dega agroclimatic zones of Gojam, Wolega, Ilubabor, Shewa, Hararge, Arsi, Bale and Sidamo, 600 – 2,700 m. It is found on light shallow soils, often left in pasture land.

Uses

Firewood, charcoal, food (leaves), medicine (roots, bark, leaves), fodder, ornamental, mulch, soil improvement, live fence, toothbrushes (stems), stakes.

Description

A single-stemmed shrub to 3 m, sometimes a tree to 10 m with a wide bole. **BARK:** Pale grey, rather rough, flaking later, branches brittle. **LEAVES:** Ovate, up to 20 x 5 cm, tapering at both ends, dark green above, soft pale hairs below, edge may be widely toothed. **FLOWERS:** White-green, each only 6 mm across, in dense branching flattened heads to 30 cm across, sweet scented in the evening. **FRUIT:** Tiny seeds with stiff white hairs.

Propagation

Seedlings and cuttings.

Seed

About 850,000 seed per kg. Germinate in 10 days time, but germination rate often very low.

Treatment: Not necessary.

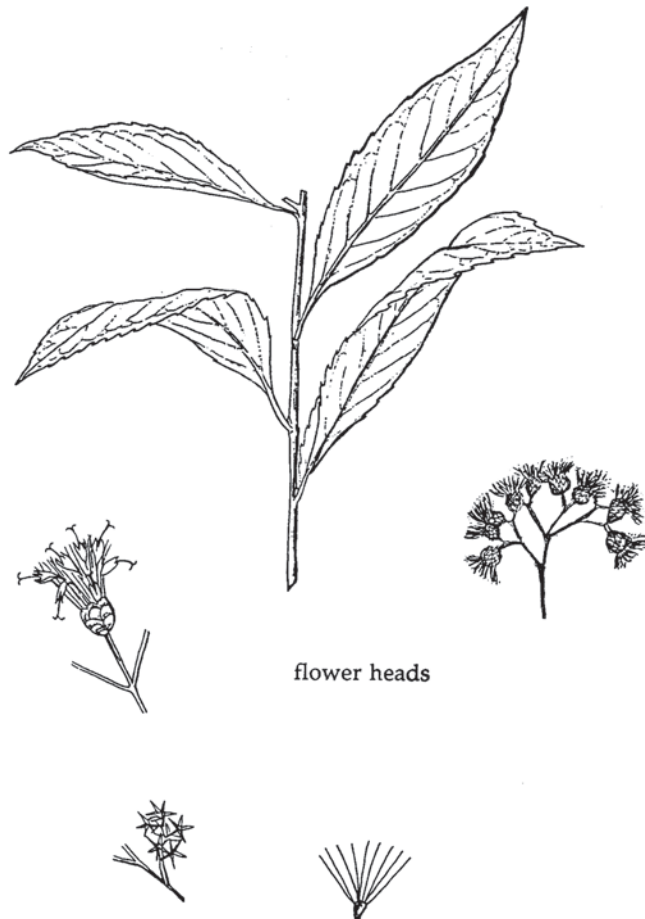
Storage: Often stores for short periods and loses viability gradually.

Management

Medium to fast growing, coppicing.

Remarks

The wood is strong and resists termite attack, making dried branches useful for fencing and as supports for earth works or stakes.



flower heads