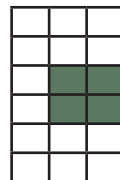


Hagenia abyssinica

Rosaceae



Indigenous

Ag: *Gora-gora, Shinchi*

Am: *Kosso*

Or: *Hucha, Heto*

Ecology

A tree confined to Africa, from Ethiopia to Malawi. It is found in upland rainforest at even higher altitudes than bamboo and may be the last tree before moorland; naturally often the dominant tree of the woodland zone just above the mountain bamboo. Occasionally found also at lower altitudes. Formerly one of the commonest high-altitude rain forest trees in Ethiopia. Now usually only scattered trees remain in Moist and Wet Weyna Dega and Dega agroclimatic zones. Spread in nearly all regions, 2,300–3,300 m.

Uses

Firewood, timber (furniture, flooring), carvings, poles, medicine (bark, roots), ornamental, mulch, green manure, soil conservation, firebreak.

Description

A tree to 20 m with a short trunk and thick branches, the crown leafy and rounded. BARK: Red-brown, thick, flaking irregularly, branchlets covered in silky brown hairs and ringed with leaf scars. LEAVES: Compound to 40 cm in large terminal tufts, 5–8 leaflets on each side, leaflets bright green above, covered with silvery hairs below, red and sticky when young, leaf edge toothed and fringed with hairs, stalk winged and hairy. FLOWERS:

In large attractive masses to 60 cm, female heads pink-red, male heads more feathery, orange-white. The sexes are on different trees. FRUIT: Small and dry, one-sided.

Propagation

Seedlings, wildings.

Seed

The fruit should be collected just after they have turned brown. Later than that the fruit will remain on the tree but is attacked by insects. After collection, dry the fruit in the sun but protect from wind. Germination 40–60 % in 14–21 days. 200,000–500,000 seed per kg.

Treatment: Not necessary.

Storage: Seed stores for 6–12 months.

Management

Remarks

The wood is dark red, hard and used for furniture but attacked by borers. Used locally for its medicinal qualities, kosso from the female flowers is used as a dewormer. Not competitive against crops if managed to prevent shading. It is recommended for homesteads because of its good timber. It constantly sheds leaves forming a carpet of dried leaves.

