

***Ozoroa insignis* subsp. *reticulata* (*Heeria reticulata*)**

Anacardiaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Garri; **Digo:** Msangasanga; **English:** Ozoroa; **Kamba:** Mugadi; **Kipsigis:** Lemejwet; **Luhya (Bukusu):** Kumwandanda; **Luo:** Achak, Madhari, Nyandumira, Wadhare; **Maasai:** Olokunonoi; **Marakwet:** Mutungwa; **Meru:** Mutira nkong'u; **Ogiek:** Longononoi; **Pokot:** Kromwa; **Sabaot:** Chepkitowiondet; **Samburu:** Lokononoi; **Swahili:** Mwaalika; **Taita:** Mkalamke; **Tugen:** Mutungwa; **Turkana:** Lopsok orongole.

DESCRIPTION: A small, semi-deciduous shrub or tree to 14 m, the bole often twisted, with a light rounded crown.

BARK: Grey, corky, **widely grooved and scaly, exuding drops of creamy resin if cut.** Branchlets covered with yellow hairs. **LEAVES:** Often 3 together, leathery, very variable, long, oval 5–17 cm, **dull green above, but silvery hairy below, the veins clearly parallel, the edge rolled under,** on a stalk to 2.5 cm. **FLOWERS:** Small cream-white in hairy sprays to 17 cm. **FRUIT:** Small, red, **bean-shaped, flattened, shiny black when ripe,** on branched sprays, one very hard seed inside.

ECOLOGY: Widely distributed from southern Ethiopia to South Africa; 0–2,200 m, occasionally even higher. It grows all over Kenya in wooded grassland and woodland, often in rocky places and on raised and well-drained ground. Agroclimatic Zones II–IV. Flowers in March–May and seeds in July–August in Bungoma.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber, furniture, posts, construction material for granaries, wood for ox-cart wheels, medicine (bark, root and twigs), shade, gum (fruit).

PROPAGATION: Direct sowing at site and shaded. Produces root suckers.

SEED: Collected from the tree or as dry fruit from the ground. The species is a prolific seeder.

treatment: Not required.

storage: Best to use fresh seed.

MANAGEMENT: Coppicing, pollarding.

REMARKS: The dark red wood is easy to work, tough, durable and termite resistant. Sticks are used by the Pokot to smoke milk gourds.

O. obovata (**Boni:** Kedula, Bangoe; **Digo:** Msalasanga, **Giriama:** Mukuikwaiyu, **Swahili:** Mwaalika) is a shrubby tree similar to *O. insignis*, found in coastal bushland, 0–300 m. The genus *Ozoroa* has a few dozen species found in tropical Africa.

FURTHER READING: Backes and Ahenda, 1998; Beentje, 1994; Bein et al., 1996; Katende et al., 1995; Kokwaro, 1993; Mbuya et al., 1994; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Storrs, 1979.

