

(R. nervosus var. usambarensis)

Indigenous

Ar: *Hummaida*Sh: *Hahot*Tg: *Hehot*Tr: *Hahut*

**Ecology:** A wayside plant in eastern Africa, Malawi and Zaire and common in grassland, rocky bushland, pastures and fallows. In Eritrea, it grows in the central and northern highlands and midlands, 1,300-2,400 m.

**Uses:** Firewood, food (young shoots are eaten by children), bee forage, **soil conservation, roofing material.**

**Description:** A shrubby herb or straggling climber to 3 m or more. Stems brown. **LEAVES:** Generally **oval but with small, distinctive basal lobes and 3 clear veins, to 5 cm long, tip pointed, on a stalk 1-4 cm.** The soft leaves have a sharp taste. **FLOWERS:** In **much-branched terminal flower heads**, each flower small with 2 series of 3 tiny sepals around the 6 stamens. The **inner sepals wing-like about 6 mm are nearly circular when mature, red to red-brown and well veined.** **FRUIT:** A **3-sided nut, oval and shiny brown** develops and remains with the 3 red sepals.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings, root suckers.

**Seed:**

**treatment:** Not necessary.

**storage:**

**Management:** Coppicing.

**Remarks:** Common along roadsides and paths and on overgrazed areas on mountain slopes. Young shoots are slightly sour but stripped of the bark they are enjoyed by children.

Rumex usambarensis

*Polygonaceae*

(*R. nervosus* var. *usambarensis*)

