

**LOCAL NAMES**

Amharic (zenfok,ungoi); Somali (eddi shebai); Tigrigna (mellu,kato,aflot)

**BOTANIC DESCRIPTION**

*Combretum aculeatum* is a scrambling shrub up to 0.5-4 m in height with virgate branches, or scandent to 8 m; bark grey or dark red. Recurved spines to 3 cm long formed by persistent, enlarged petioles.

Leaves alternate or subopposite, elliptic or obovate; base cuneate; apex rounded to shortly acuminate, to 7 x 5 cm; more or less pubescent.

Flowers in short, axillary racemes about 1.9 cm long terminating in short leafy shoots; pentamerous, pedicillate; receptacle and calyx purplish; tube constricted above ovary, petals 5, 4-6 x 1-2 mm, white, broadly lanceolate and clawed; stamens with red anthers.

Fruit stalked, pale yellow or pale reddish, 5-winged, slightly obovate, 11-22 x 10-23 mm.

'Combretum' was the name given to a particular climbing plant, the identity of which has been lost in time.

**BIOLOGY**

In Sudan flowering occurs from March to June and fruits from July to October.

**ECOLOGY**

*C. aculeatum* is found in dry savannah, thickets on dry soils and is sometimes riverine; recorded from Mauritania to northern Nigeria and across Africa to northeast Africa. In southern Sudan, it is widespread in the Terminalia-Combretum belt.

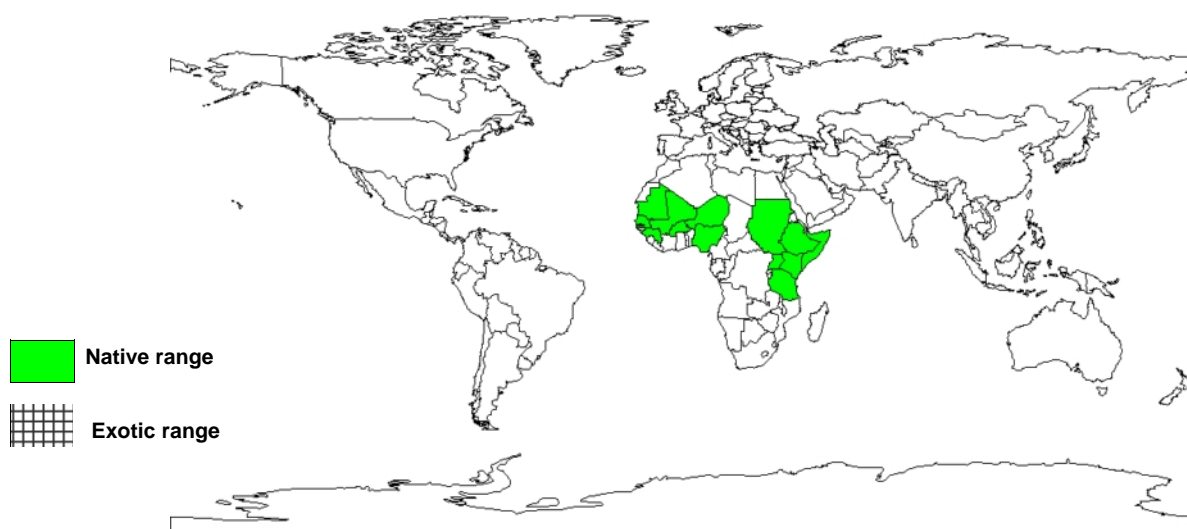
**BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS**

Soil type: Sandy or loamy soils.

**DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION**

Native: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

Exotic:



The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

**PRODUCTS**

**Fodder:** The plant provides browse for livestock in Senegal, Sudan and northern Kenya.

**Fibre:** The lianous branches are supple and are used in Kenya to make donkey panniers and wicker baskets for holding milk vessels. In Senegal, they are a part of the construction of a fish lure.

**Medicine:** The plant has diuretic properties. Water in which the leaves have been boiled is drunk in northwest Senegal to promote micturition in cases when venereal disease obstructs the urethra. The plant is also purgative. It is prescribed for blennorrhoea, helminthiasis, and loss of appetite. It is also used in Burkina Faso and Senegal for leprosy. In Senegal, the Soce tribe claims that a root decoction has a well-established reputation in the treatment of catarrh; the Serer tribe uses sap from the centre of the stem for eye troubles. The boiled roots are taken in Kenya for stomach upsets.

**Combretum aculeatum**

Vent.

Combretaceae

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GERMPLASM MANAGEMENT

Seed storage appears to be orthodox.

**FURTHER READNG**

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Bekele-Tesemma A, Birnie A, Tengnas B. 1993. Useful trees and shrubs for Ethiopia. Regional Soil Conservation Unit (RSCU), Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).

Burkill HM. 1994. Useful plants of West Tropical Africa. Vol. 2. Families E-I. Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew.

Dale IR, Greenway PJ. 1961. Kenya trees and shrubs. Buchanan's Kenya Estates Ltd.

El Amin HM. 1990. Trees and shrubs of the Sudan. Ithaca Press, Exeter.

Hong TD, Linington S, Ellis RH. 1996. Seed storage behaviour: a compendium. Handbooks for Genebanks: No. 4. IPGRI.

**SUGGESTED CITATION**

Orwa C, A Mutua, Kindt R , Jamnadass R, S Anthony. 2009 Agroforestry Database: a tree reference and selection guide version 4.0 (<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/sites/treedbs/treedatabases.asp>)