

Albizia anthelmintica**Fabaceae (Mimosaceae)****Indigenous**

COMMON NAMES: **Boni:** Hobocho; **Boran:** Hawacho; **Kamba:** Kyowa, Mwowa; **Maasai:** Olmugutan; **Marakwet:** Kitangwa; **Orma:** Habacha; **Pokot:** Kamakitan, Mukotonwo; **Samburu:** Olmukutan; **Somali:** Reidep, Reidup; **Swahili:** Mporojo; **Tharaka:** Mwaawra, Muguta; **Wardei:** Habasho.

DESCRIPTION: A deciduous shrub or, more usually, a small tree about 4 m, but can reach 10 m. **BARK:** Smooth, pale grey, later red-brown, rough. **Branchlets** often sharp-tipped. **LEAVES:** Twice-divided, 2–4 pairs of smaller leaves each with 1–4 pairs of leaflets, 1–4 cm long and almost as wide, the tip wider and usually blunt; clear net veins, shiny above, dull and pale below. The leaf stalk ends in a characteristic stiff, hooked point. **FLOWERS:** Half spherical fluffy heads about 2.5 cm across appear on leafless twigs, white stamens reach beyond the pale green calyx and corolla, 1–2 cm. **FRUIT:** Bright green when young, turning into pale yellow, shiny, papery pods 8–16 cm long, narrowed both ends, containing 3–5 flat, round seeds.

ECOLOGY: A tree widely distributed in Africa from Sudan and Eritrea southwards to Natal and Namibia. In Kenya, widely distributed in drier and hot parts of the country in dry bushland and scrub, often along seasonal rivers, even on lava; locally common. Often on strongly saline deep soils. Very common in Tsavo, lower parts of Kajiado, Kitui, Machakos and along the coast, 0–1,350 m. Less often in wooded or bushed grasslands or woodlands. Agroclimatic Zones III–VI.

USES: Firewood, timber (construction), furniture, medicine (bark as vermifuge), fodder, bee forage, shade, nitrogen-fixing, tannin, veterinary medicine.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings. Regenerates well naturally.

SEED: 10,000–20,000 seeds per kg. Germination rate may be 30% in 3 weeks.

treatment: Fresh seeds do not need pretreatment. With stored seeds, immerse in hot water, allow to cool and soak for 24 hours.

storage: Can be stored for about a year in airtight containers.

MANAGEMENT: Pollarding, coppicing when young.

REMARKS: A bark extract has been used in many areas to expel worms, hence the meaning of the specific name. It

is especially effective against tapeworms. The hard red-brown wood is a useful timber.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Bein et al., 1996; Blundell, 1987; ITDG and IIRR, 1996; Kokwaro, 1993; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002.

