

Commiphora erythraea

Burseraceae



Indigenous

Ko: *Gahadito*

Or: *Hagar, Hagar-ad, Hagar-medow, Hagarso, Hagarsu*

Sm: *Hagar, Hagar-ad, Hagar-medow*

Ecology

A tree of north-eastern Africa, Ethiopia, the Sudan, Somalia, Arabia and extending south into northern Tanzania. In Ethiopia it is found in *Acacia-Commiphora* woodlands, wooded grassland and bushlands, dry coastal bushlands, often on rocky slopes in Bereha and Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones of the Afar Plain, Sidamo, Bale, Harerge and Shoa and Arsi (within Awash Valley) regions, up to 1,500 m.

Uses

Incense (resin), insecticide (resin).

Description

A sizeable tree 6–20 m. Mature trees have a trunk to 5 m before branching, 30–50 cm in diameter. Young twigs grey-green and hairy. BARK: Smooth blue-grey, often with pink spots. The outer bark peels away in yellow-white flakes, large and thin, to reveal blue-green underbark. A cut shows red layers and yellow sap. LEAVES: Compound, usually 3 leaflets, sometimes on a grooved stalk to 7 cm (can be hairy, grey-green). The edge of the leaflet is round-toothed, the middle leaflet longest, to 9 cm, narrowed to the base. FLOWERS: Produced with the leaves, green-yellow and tiny, 1–5 on a hairy stalk to 4 cm long. FRUIT: Ovoid but flattened, 1–3 on stalks, each about 1 cm long, smooth or hairy with a stony seed inside.

Propagation

Seedlings, cuttings.

Seed

Treatment:

Storage:

Management

Lopping, pollarding, coppicing.

Remarks

This is a very variable and valuable species that is a dominant part of the vegetation over large areas of southern Ethiopia. The resin is used as an insecticide by the Borena people and it is also used for incense.



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