A widespread African tree extending as far as South Africa. It is common in forest, as a forest remnant in cultivated areas and is also used in coffee plantations. In Eritrea, it grows in the central midland plains, e.g. around Mai-aini, Egela names (river banks), Tselema, Seharti, Rora-mensa and Sabur, 750-2,000 m.

**Uses:** Firewood, timber (furniture, beehives, boxes, mortars, church drums), food (fruit), medicine (bark, roots), fodder (leaves), bee forage, mulch, soil conservation, ornamental, shade.

**Description:** A much-branched deciduous tree with rounded crown and often crooked trunk, to 25 m, from a short bole. BARK: Grey or pale brown, finely grooved but rough with age. LEAVES: Large, oval, 20 x 15 cm, base rounded, veins prominent below; young shoots, leaf stalks, underside of leaves covered with soft brown hairs. FLOWERS: Showy, funnel shaped, thin white petals, sweet scented and attractive to bees. FRUIT: Yellowish, 1 cm in hairy cups. Flesh sticky and edible, each fruit containing 4-6 seeds.

**Propagation:** Wildings, seedlings, direct sowing on site.

**Seed:** Germination rate often over 80%; slow germination. No. of cleaned and dried fruits (each with 4–6 seeds) per kg: 5,000-5,500.

**Remarks:** The heartwood is hard and durable and takes a good polish so the timber is prized for furniture, but it can be twisted and difficult to saw. Plantations should be dense to encourage straight growth. A useful tree for homesteads and on crop land.
Cordia africana  

Boraginaceae