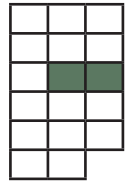


Arundinaria alpina

Poaceae



Indigenous

Ag: *Anini*

Am: *Kerkba*

Eng: *Mountain bamboo*

Ga: *Washo*

Gm: *Kias*

Gmz: *Jimna*

Kf: *Shineto*

Or: *Lemana*

Ecology

Mountain gorges and tops forming the bamboo zone, usually in Moist and Wet Dega agroclimatic zones in Gojam, Shoa, Kefa, Gamo Gofa, Sidamo and Bale regions, 2,200- 3,300 m. The grass grows in dense stands with a leafy canopy and stems so close that one can only pass through with difficulty.

Uses

Furniture, poles, construction, utensils (containers for grain, local spinning tools), food (shoots), fodder (shoots, leaves and young stems), , ornamental, soil conservation (plantation as well as materials for check dams), basketry, fencing material.

Description

A large hollow-stemmed grass, usually 6–8 m but can reach 12–25 m. STEMS (culms): Smooth, woody, hollow, yellow-green to brown, growing from swollen underground stems (rhizomes). Whorls of thin branches grow at the thickened upper nodes. Stems can reach 7–10 cm in diameter. LEAVES: Grow from branchlet nodes, pale green, up to 20 cm long and 1 cm wide, the tip long and thin; rough to the touch because of short hairs. Leaves

appear from a large yellow leaf sheath to 50 cm long, with purple hairs. FLOWERS: Rarely seen, in heads 10–20 cm long. After flowering the plant dies down.

Propagation

Rhizomes, natural regeneration, seed (possible but rare).

Seed

Flowers at long intervals after which it dies.

Treatment: Not required

Storage: Sow as soon as collected.

Management

Seed of *A. alpina* watered daily will germinate readily. Transfer seedlings to boxes when 2.5 cm high. Plant out 8–12 months later, above 2,500 m. Offsets from one-year old culms can also be planted out and will develop quicker than seedlings.

Remarks

A valuable forest crop which should not be over-exploited. Susceptible to termites and borers. In Tanzania, bamboo has been used for village water pipes. This species flowers between 15 and 40 years and then dies down, so a local stand of the grass will be of even age and size. All bamboos belong to the grass family. Most species grow in the humid forests of South East Asia where they are of great importance to rural people. Of 1,250 species, 43 are found in Africa and most of these grow only in Madagascar.



Photo: Tadesse Wolde Mariam



Photo: Patrick Maundu

