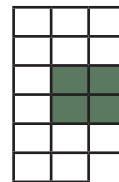


Olea capensis subsp. *macrocarpa*

(*O. hochstetteri*)

Oleaceae



Indigenous

Am: *Damot weira, Gegema*

Eng: *East African olive*

Gr: *Agergui*

Or: *Gagama, Gaja, Onoma, Sagada*

Sd: *Setemo, Sigeshote*

Tg: *Afsholer*

Ecology

A tree found in similar places to *O. europaea* subsp. *cuspidata*, 1,600–2,400 m, but preferring higher rainfall in forests of Ethiopia, West and Central Africa. It does best in the Moist and Wet Weyna Dega and Dega agroclimatic zones in Shoa, Harerge, Arsi, Bale, Sidamo, Gamo Gofa and Kefa regions, 1,700–2,700 m.

Uses

Firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture, flooring), tool handles, medicine (stems, bark).

Description

A tall tree, 10–20 m, with a straight trunk, steeply ascending branches and a small dense crown. BARK: Smooth, grey-white. LEAVES: Stiff, in opposite pairs, to 10 cm long and 3 cm wide, apex sharply tipped, margin wavy, midrib pale and clear below. Underside not white (contrary to *O. europaea* subsp. *cuspidata*), with scales, stalk to 3 cm long. FLOWERS: Small and white, mostly in heads about 7 cm long at the tip of branchlets. FRUIT: Oval, 1–2 cm long, usually green but may ripen purple, with a large hard seed inside.

Propagation

Seedlings, wildings.

Seed

Slow germination. About 3,000 seed per kg. Pulp should be separated from the seed by rubbing and cleaning in running water. Then dry seed for storage or sow immediately.

Treatment: Not necessary for fresh seed, soak dry seed in cold water for 48 hours.

Storage: Seed can be stored but use of fresh seed is recommended.

Management

Slow growing. Lopping, pollarding. Coppices when young.

Remarks

Does best in good forest soil, but hardy and drought resistant once established even in poor soils. Fruits do not produce olive oil. The hard pale brown heartwood has an attractive grain and polishes well.



Photo: Patrick Maundu

