

# Hame

*Antidesma platyphyllum* Mann

Spurge family (Euphorbiaceae)

Native species (endemic)

This handsome small evergreen native tree with shiny leaves and abundant dark purple, slightly flattened, pea-sized fruits, is widely distributed through the islands. A large shrub or small tree 20–30 ft (6–9 m) high, with trunk to 1 ft (0.3 m) and open crown of few nearly erect branches. Bark whitish gray, smoothish to deeply furrowed, the inner bark fibrous, pink, and bitter. Twigs slightly zigzag, with minute pressed hairs when young, raised rounded leaf scars, and very small rounded hairy buds.

Leaves alternate in two rows, becoming hairless, with short reddish leafstalks  $\frac{1}{8}$ – $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (3–10 mm) long. Blades elliptical, 3–5 inches (7.5–13 cm) long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$ – $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches (4–6 cm) broad, short- to long-pointed at apex and rounded, blunt, or slightly notched at base, not toothed on edges, slightly thick and succulent, curved up on both sides of midvein, light green, shiny above, beneath slightly shiny with reddish midvein.

Flower clusters (panicles) on twigs back of leaves, 2–4 inches (5–10 cm) long, with few slender finely hairy branches. Flowers male and female on different plants, small. Male flowers nearly stalkless, consisting of calyx about  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch (1.5 mm) long with 4–5 lobes, 4–5 long stamens, and minute nonfunctional pistil. Female flowers short-stalked, composed of finely hairy calyx with 5–8 lobes and hairless pistil with single-celled ovary and three very short styles.

Fruits (drupes) many, elliptical, nearly  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (1 cm) long, slightly flattened, with calyx and styles, shiny, turning from green to dark red, juicy. Seed single, slightly flattened.

Wood is reddish brown, fine-textured, and hard. It takes a fine polish and is suitable for cabinetwork but is not found in commercial quantities. It is reported that the wood is resistant to marine borers or shipworms. The Hawaiians used the logs as anvils for beating the fibrous bark of the native shrub *olonā* (*Touchardia latifolia* Gaud.).

The reddish fruits are edible, sweet, and have a juice that stains hands and clothes. Mixed with kamani oil (*Calophyllum inophyllum*), the fruit made a bright red

dye for tapa, particularly the tapa used for malos (loincloths).

Common in wet and dry forests, especially at 1500–3000 ft (457–914 m) altitude widespread through the islands.

## Special area

Kokee

## Champion

Height 52 ft (15.8 m), c.b.h. 6.7 ft (2 m), spread 23 ft (7 m). Kaupulehu, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii (1968).

## Range

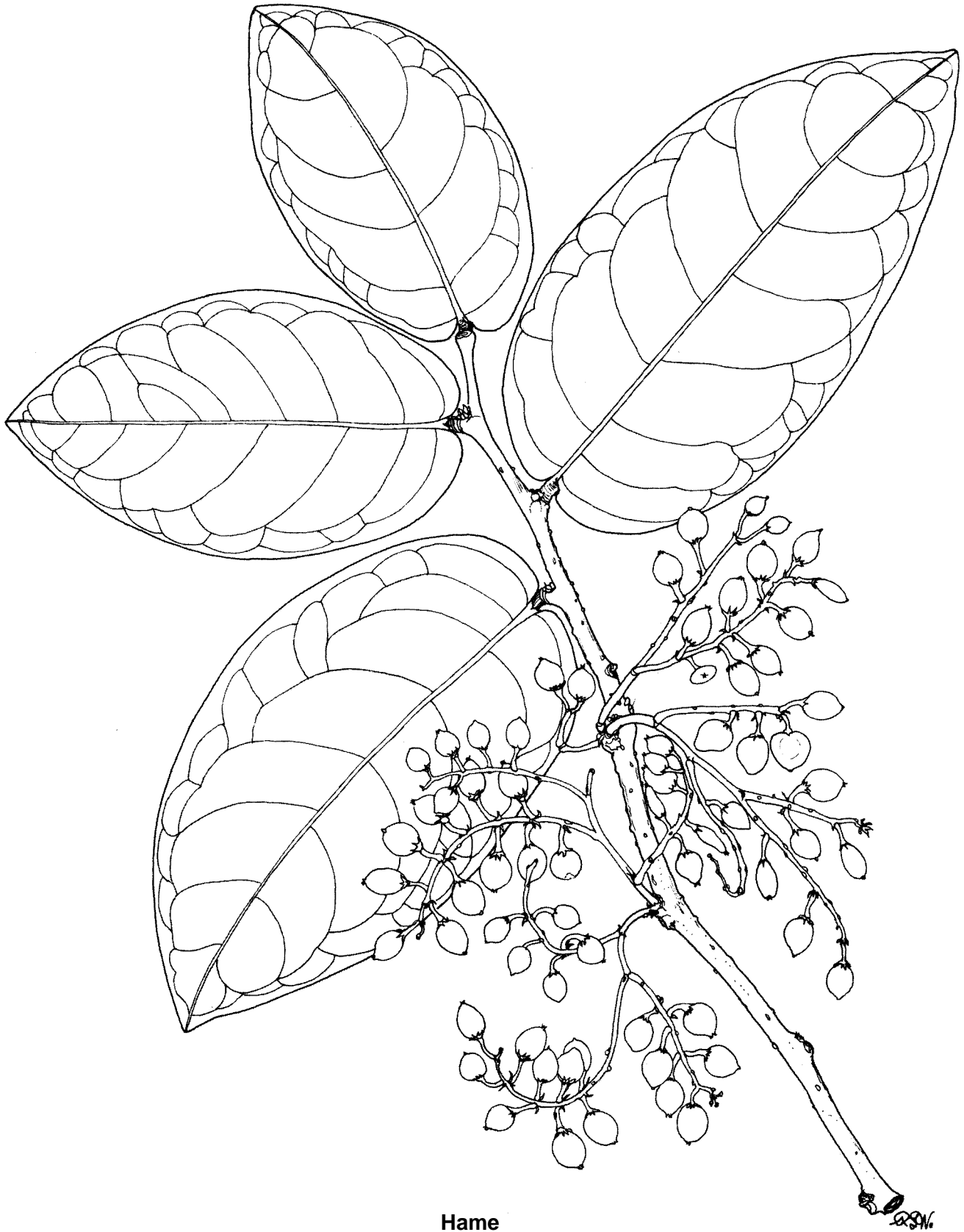
Hawaii only

## Other common names

ha'a, mehame, hamehame, mehamehame, ha'āmaile

A second species is ha'a or mehame, *Antidesma pulvinatum* Hillebr. It is distinguished by the dull green leaves notched or heart-shaped at base and with tufts of hairs in vein angles and small black fruits less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (6 mm) long. The crown is rounded and symmetrical. This small tree is found on Oahu, Molokai, Maui, and Hawaii, in dry areas, especially the a'ā (rough) lava fields at low altitudes. It is reported as common on the lava fields of South Kona, Hawaii, especially at Kapua at 2000 ft (610 m) altitude. Known only from Hawaii. Intermediate plants found together with both species on the Island of Hawaii apparently are hybrids (*Antidesma kapuae* Rock).

*Antidesma*, which has flattened seeds and smooth-edged leaves close together, is sometimes confused with *Xylosma*, which has prominent lenticels in the bark, round seeds, and toothed, well-spaced leaves.



**Hame**

*Antidesma platyphyllum* Mann  
Fruiting twig, 1 X.