

Dodonaea viscosa* (*D. angustifolia*)*Sapindaceae****Indigenous**

COMMON NAMES: **Boran:** Hidesa; **English:** Dodonaea, Sand olive; **Kamba:** Kithongoi, Muthongoi; **Kikuyu:** Murema muthua; **Luhya:** Muendu; **Luo:** Oking'; **Maasai:** Olgeturai, Oltuyesi; **Pokot:** Tobolokwo; **Sabaot:** Tombolokwa; **Swahili:** Mkaa pwani; **Taita:** Msidu; **Tugen:** Tabilikuet.

DESCRIPTION: A thin-stemmed leafy shrub or tree, usually 2–8 m, with a light crown. **BARK:** Grey, grooved, peeling. Branchlets red and sticky. **LEAVES:** Thin, narrow, stiffly erect to 10 cm, tapering to a stalk, young leaves light green, shiny and sticky. **FLOWERS:** Male and female separate, insignificant. **FRUIT:** Distinctive capsules, 2 cm with 2 to 3 papery wings, sometimes inflated, greenish to red, looking like blossoms, turning light brown, small seeds inside.

ECOLOGY: The natural range of this tree is very wide—Australia, India, tropical and subtropical Africa. It does well in a wide range of climates and soils. A pioneer species in disturbed areas. Widespread in Kenya in a variety of habitats from riverine forest to rocky soils, on hillsides and arid marginal areas, often in disturbed ground, where it may form a pure stand. Tolerant to salt (as seen on sand beaches); 0–2,800 m. Agroclimatic Zones II–IV.

USES: Firewood, poles, tool handles, medicine (leaves and roots), bee forage, ornamental, land reclamation (marshes, poor or sandy soils), dune fixation, live fence, tooth-brushes.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, wildings, direct sowing at site.

SEED: Germination rate 30–70% after 15 days; 90,000–100,000 seeds per kg.

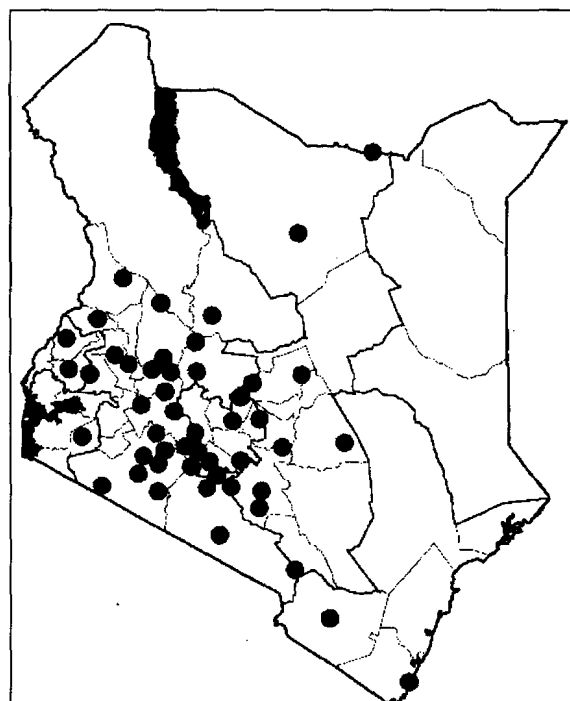
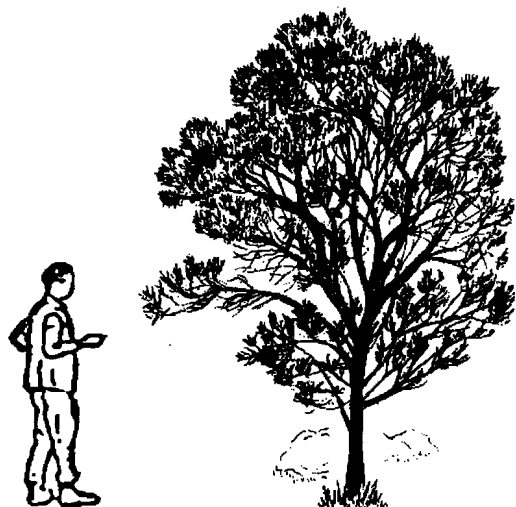
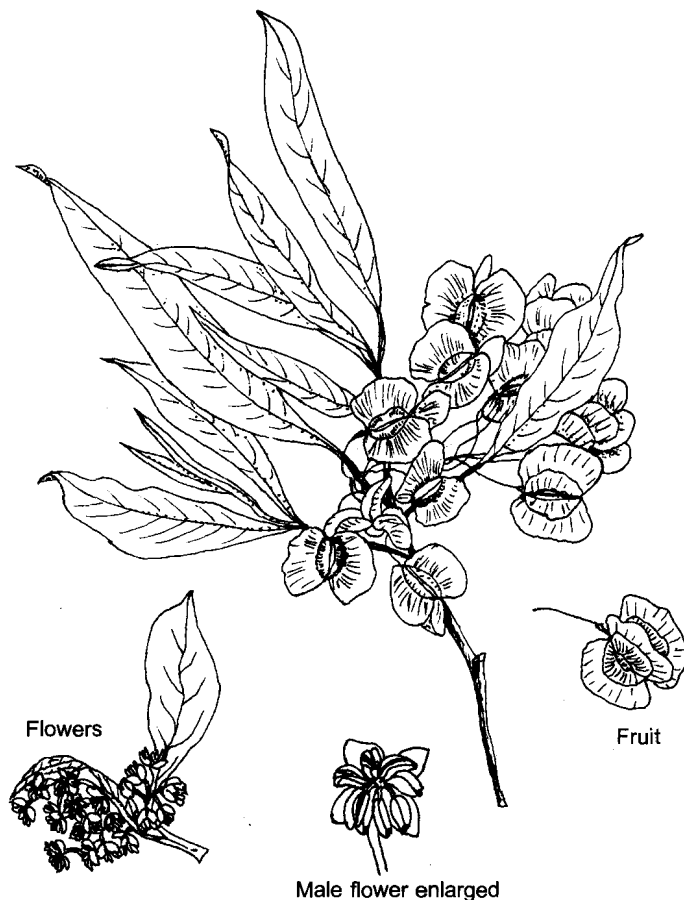
treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Seed can be stored for long periods.

MANAGEMENT: Fast growing. Little or no management required once established.

REMARKS: The species is rarely browsed, which makes it easy to establish. The wood is hard, termite resistant and heavy, but the stem rarely grows over 20 cm in diameter. A good hedge for dry areas, regenerating rapidly after burning. Two varieties are found in Kenya—the more common and inland form, var. *angustifolia*, and the

coastal variety, var. *viscosa*, which grows in sand, especially near the sea. The latter variety is a thick bush about 3–4 m. The fruit capsule usually has only 2 wings. It has generally larger leaves and fruit. It is occasionally left in homesteads as an ornamental. The genus *Dodonaea*, with several dozen species, is mainly Australian, thus casting doubt on the assertion that the species is indigenous to the eastern Africa region.



***Dodonaea viscosa* (cont)**

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Bein et al., 1996; Bekele-Tesemma et al., 1993; Blundell, 1987; Dharani, 2002; Fichtl and Adi, 1994; Katende et al., 1995; Kokwaro, 1993; Mbuya et al., 1994; Noad and Birnie, 1989; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Turnbull, 1986; .

