



AFRĀ

AFRĀ, Persian term for the maple tree (genus *Acer*), also embracing a few shrubs of the family Aceraceae. There are 150 species indigenous to the north temperate regions of the Old and New Worlds; eleven of them are represented in Iran, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Iraq, Turkey, and the Caucasus region. The following species are known to be indigenous to present-day Iran: 1. *Karab/karaf* (*Acer campestre* L.), hedge or common maple, found in the forests and mountains of Gorgān, Māzandarān, and Azarbaijan at an elevation of 800-2,200 m. It is economically useful as a honey plant and the wood is used to fashion small articles. 2. *Afrā maḵmalī* (*Acer velutinum* Boiss.), velvet maple, found in Māzandarān and Gilān at 400-1,500 m elevation. A variety of this maple, called *gandlāš*, *palat*, and *pals* (*A. velutinum* var. *glabrescens* [Boiss. & Buhse] E. Murray), is found in Māzandarān, Gilān, and Gorgān (elev. 200-2,200 m), Azarbaijan, and Khorasan. 3. *Āj'Āj*, also *bozbarg*, *širdār*, and *bezvālak* (*Acer cappadocicum* Gled.), coliseum maple, growing in the mountain forests of Gilān and Māzandarān (elev. 400-2,300 m), Azarbaijan, and Khorasan, as well as in Turkey, the Caucasus, and Pakistan. 4. *Tal afrā* or *tal*, also *aqūčgī'n* and *karkū* (*Acer monspessulanum* L.), Montpellier maple. Two subspecies found in Iran are (a) *Tal-e kākestarī* or *afrā kākestarī* (subsp. *cinerascens* [Boiss.] Yaltirik) in west and central Iran (Arāk, Hamadān, Kermānšāh, Kurdistan [elev. 1,500-1,700 m], Isfahan [1,800 m], the Baḵtīārī country) and in the south (Fārs, Banāder [900-2,000 m], and Lorestān [1,500-2,100 m]) and (b) *Afrā Tālešī* (subsp. *ibericum* [M. B.] Yaltirik), in Gilān and Māzandarān (350-1,800 m) and Azarbaijan. 5. *Afrā Irānī* (*Acer persicum* Pojark), Persian maple, occurring in Fārs (1,400-1,900 m) and Kermān (2,100-3,200 m). Two varieties of the species



have now become native to Iran: (a) *Afrā Torkamanī* (*turcomanicum* [Pojark] Parsa), in Gorgān, Khorasan, and Šāhrūd-Bastām (as well as in Turkmenistan), and (b) *Afrā Āšūrī* (*assyriacum* [Pojark] Parsa), in Kermānšāh, Kurdistan, and Lorestān (as well as in Iraq, Turkey, and Turkmenistan). 6. *Afrā karkū* or *sefid karkū* (*Acer hyrcanum* Fisch. & C. A. Mey), found in the mountain forests of Gīlān, Māzandarān, and Gorgān (1,200-2,400 m), as well as in Turkey and the Caucasus. 7. *Afrā čenārī* (*Acer platanoides* L.), Norway maple, found in the Gorgān and Māzandarān forests up to the subalpine belt, at 1,800-2,300m.

The following species of *Acer* have not yet been noted in Iran itself: 8. *Afrā Torkestānī* (*Acer turkestanicum* Pax), occurring in Afghanistan and Turkestan (2,100-2,300 m). 9. *Afrā ābī* (*Acer caesium* Wall. ex Brandis), found in Afghanistan and Pakistan. 10. *Afrā tatarī* (*Acer semenovii* Regel & Herder), Semenov maple, occurring in Afghanistan, Turkestan, Bokhara, and the Tien Shan mountains. 11. *Afrā korkdār* (*Acer pentapomicum* J. L. Stewart ex Brandis), found in Afghanistan, Pakistan (1,380-3,000 m), and Turkestan.

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