

*Adenia volkensii* is a perennial subsucculent shrub arising from a tuberous rootstock. In Kenya it is found in dry areas and has been used to poison hyenas and to make arrow poisons. The plant was collected during the dry season and all parts were found to contain cyanide but 90 to 95% of that in the whole plant was in the rootstock when the concentrations were typically 130 to 200 mg/kg in the inner part and 400 to 600 mg/kg in the bark. The concentrations in leaves and stem did not reach the 200 mg/kg considered potentially harmful to livestock and the tuber would not normally be accessible to stock. Boiling the tuber reduced its cyanide content and this may explain how it has been used in herbal medicines without fatal effects.