

# *Cordia millenii* (*C. ugandensis*)

*Boraginaceae*

Indigenous

**Trade names:** Mukumani.

**Common names:** **English:** Drum tree **Kwamba:** Ketumba **Luganda:** Mukebu **Runyoro:** Mujugangoma **Rutoro:** Mutumba.

**Ecology:** A forest tree of the upper canopy in lowland and intermediate forest, but also in thickets in grasslands and in riverine forests. The tree is often left for shade in Eucalyptus and coffee plantations. In Uganda it is abundant in Budongo and Kibale Forests, occurs in Mengo, Masaka, Toro, Bunyoro and the Zoka Forest, but is less common elsewhere.

**Uses:** Timber (furniture), carving (drums, musical instruments), boat building, bee forage, shade.

**Description:** A large tree 30-35 m, the **trunk wavy**, rarely straight, the bole about 10 m before branching to a thinly spreading crown. Buttresses usually absent, or short and blunt. **BARK:** pale brown, thick and rough with **deep vertical fissures**. A cut is yellow at first and then greenish, finally dark brown. **LEAVES:** **very rounded**, alternate but at ends of branchlets, about 16 cm x 13 cm across with 3-7 main veins arising near the base, tip rounded, base almost heart shaped, edge wavy, entire or slightly toothed, **smooth above but hairy brown below**, on stalks to 12 cm. **FLOWERS:** **pale yellow and fragrant in heads about 25 cm long, hanging down**, each flower, **bell shaped**, 5 jointed petals, longer than the calyx, but **less than 2 cm**. **FRUIT:** **ovoid, 3-4 cm**, green then brown, pointed, **cupped in the enlarged woody calyx**.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings or sow directly on site.

**Seed:** Collect fallen fruit when mature and dry slowly,

**treatment:** the outer coat should be scarified for better germination,

**storage:** the seeds can be stored if spread out on a dry concrete floor away from rodents.

**Management:** Fairly fast growing. The tree branches in stages in a horizontal plane. Attempts should not be made to prune these branches as a new shoot comes up in the vicinity of the last aborted leading shoot and so on up to the required height.

**Remarks:** The tree has been used in reforestation and as a shade tree. It is a favourite for dugout canoes both because it is easily adzed and the canoe floats if overturned. The Luganda and Runyoro names can apply to any tree used to make musical instruments. The yellow-brown timber is also very suitable for furniture. Hornbills eat the fruit and so disperse the seed.

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