

Indigenous

Trade names: Iroko, Mvule, Muvule.

Common names: **Ateso:** Elua, elowa **Kwamba:** Mbara **Luganda:** Muvule **Lugishu:** Boru, gumutumba, kimurumba **Lugwe:** Mutumba **Luo:** Olwaa **Luo J:** Olia **Madi:** Vundi **Runyoro:** Mutumba.

Ecology: A giant deciduous tree of lowland forest and wet savannah that is logged commercially throughout its range. Widespread throughout tropical Africa, Ivory Coast to Angola, Sudan to Mozambique. It can grow well with mean annual rainfall as low as 700 mm provided it has access to extra water from a perennial stream or underground. It does not tolerate waterlogging and the soils must be well drained and relatively fertile. In Uganda, it is abundant in Jinja, Kamuli and Iganga Districts, though it occurs in most Districts of the country.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture, boats), shade, ornamental, mulch, soil conservation..

Description: Old trees may have a **straight trunk clear to 21 m and 2 m in diameter**. The high umbrella crown grows from a few thick branches. Ultimate branches hang down (only female trees; male individuals have upright branches). **BARK:** thick, pale, grey then brown, exudes slightly milky sap, as do the leaves. **LEAVES:** large, **oval to 18 cm**, rather thin, **a well-pointed tip**, 10-18 pairs clear side veins, base rounded, often unequal sided, stalk to 4 cm, **leaf edge finely toothed and wavy**. **FLOWERS:** trees are male or female, both with small flowers in spikes, **male flowers in drooping catkins to 15 cm**, female shorter and thicker. **FRUIT:** like a long, green mulberry, 6-7 cm, the soft pulp attracting birds and bats. Fruits ferment rapidly on the ground. Small hard seeds lie in the pulp.

Propagation: Seedlings, stumps, wildings.

Seed: No. of seeds per kg: about 475,000. The tree produces plenty of seeds in Uganda, and seed collection is not difficult. Collect the whole fruit, crush and float in water. Seeds sink and can easily be separated.

treatment: not necessary.

storage: seed loses viability quickly.

Management: Growth rate is medium; slower than *Khaya* spp.

Remarks: The wood is hard, durable and termite resistant and resembles teak. Therefore, it is extremely valuable timber, used especially for quality indoor and outdoor furniture. In Kenya, the species is now rare and endangered. Trees planted 50 years ago in Uganda are now ready to harvest.

Milicia excelsa (Chlorophora excelsa)

Moraceae

