

Indigenous

Common names: **English:** Red stinkwood **Luganda:** Ngwabuzito, ntasesa **Lugishu:** Chiramat, charamandi **Rukiga:** Musuba.

Ecology: A useful timber tree widespread from West to South Africa, usually in high-rainfall areas, but it is becoming rare in some places due to over-exploitation. In Uganda it grows in moist tropical rain forests, 1,100-2,200 m. Abundant in mixed forests, forest edges and gallery forests. The biggest specimens grow in the Bwindi and Kalinzu Forests and on parts of Mt. Elgon.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, poles, timber (construction, flooring), utensils (mortars), medicine (leaves, bark), bee forage, mulch, shade, windbreak.

Description: An evergreen tree to 40 m. In forests, the high foliage is open, the branches often pendulous, small buttresses occasionally present. **BARK:** rough, dark, scaling irregularly, branches corky, **branchlets dotted with breathing pores.** **LEAVES:** leathery, glossy dark green above, oval to 10 cm, **margin with shallow rounded teeth, leaf stalk typically pink,** to 2 cm. Crushed leaves have a bitter almond smell. **FLOWERS:** sprays on stalks about 8 cm long, very small, fragrant, green-white. **FRUIT:** rounded **about 1 cm, dark red, often bilobed,** containing one seed and topped by a persistent style.

Propagation: Seedlings (sow seeds in pots), wildings.

Seed: No. of seeds per kg: 3,400-6,000. Collect only dark brown ripe fruits from the crown of the tree or the ground. Remove the pulp by soaking for 24 hours, then wash over a wire mesh. Spread in a thin layer in an airy shaded place to dry—but for 4 hours only.

treatment: not necessary, but remove pulp from the seed.

storage: seed does not store; fresh seed should be used. Moist leaves around the seed minimize moisture loss during temporary storage and transport.

Management: Fairly slow growing.

Remarks: The heartwood darkens to a dense red. It is strong and tough and used for flooring. The stem bark has been harvested for certain pharmaceuticals manufactured in Europe.

