

Chrysophyllum albidum

white star apple, mululu

G. Don

Sapotaceae

LOCAL NAMES

English (white star apple); Luganda (nkalate,mululu); Trade name (white star apple,mululu)

BOTANIC DESCRIPTION

Chrysophyllum albidum is a small to medium buttressed tree species, up to 25-37 m in height with a mature girth varying from 1.5 to 2 m. Bole is usually fluted, frequently free of branches for 21 m. Bark thin, pale brownish-green, slash exuding white, gummy latex.

Leaves are simple, dark green above, pale tawny below when young and silver-white below when mature, oblong-elliptic to elongate obovate elliptic, 12-30 cm long, 3.8-10 cm broad; apex shortly acuminate, base cuneate; primary lateral nerves widely spaced, 9-14 on each side of the midrib; secondary lateral nerves indistinct or invisible; petiole 1.7-4.2 cm long.

Flowers shortly pedicellate, in dense clusters in the leaf axils or from above the scars of fallen leaves; calyx 5-lobed, 3 mm long, rusty pubescent outside, creamy white, the lobes equaling the tube in length.

Fruits almost spherical, slightly pointed at the tip, about 3.2 cm in diameter, greenish-grey when immature, turning orange-red, yellow-brown or yellow, sometimes with speckles, 5 celled, with 5 brown seeds in yellowish, pleasantly acid pulp. Seeds 1-1.5 x 2 cm, beanlike, shiny when ripe, compressed, with one sharp edge and a star-shaped arrangement in the fruit.

The generic name is based on Greek words for 'gold' and 'leaf' and refers to the leaves of some species that are often covered with golden hairs underneath.

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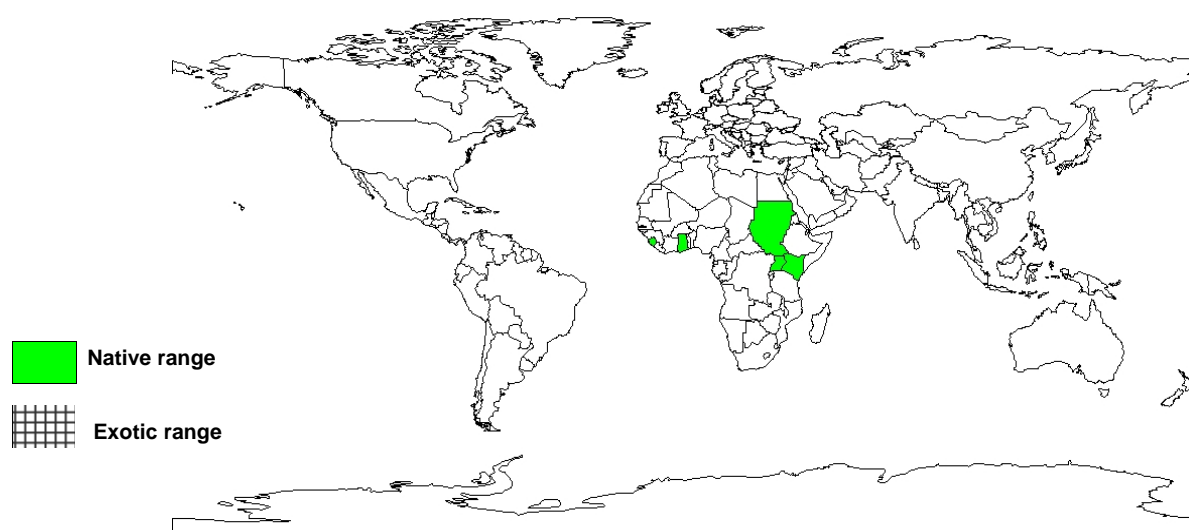
ECOLOGY

C. albidum is a dominant canopy tree of lowland mixed rain forest, sometimes riverine. It is widely distributed from West Africa to the Sudan with an eastern limit in Kakamega forest, Kenya.

DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION

Native: Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda

Exotic:



The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

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PRODUCTS

Food: The fleshy and juicy fruits, which are popularly eaten, are the potential source of a soft drink.

Timber: Wood brownish-white, soft, coarse and open in grain; very perishable in contact with the ground. Easy to saw and plane, nails well, takes a fine polish, and therefore is suitable for construction work, tool handles and similar purposes.

Alcohol: The fruits can be fermented and distilled for the production of wine and spirits.

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TREE MANAGEMENT

Seedlings require good tending and shade until well established.

GERMPLASM MANAGEMENT

Seed storage behaviour is recalcitrant. Seed treatment is not necessary but a light cracking of the seed might improve germination. Store in a cool dry place. Add ash to reduce insect damage.

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FURTHER READING

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Opeke LK. 1982. Tropical tree crops. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

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SUGGESTED CITATION

Orwa C, Mutua A, Kindt R, Jamnadass R, Simons A. 2009. Agroforestry Database: a tree reference and selection guide version 4.0 (<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/af/treedb/>)