

Albizia schimperiana subsp. *schimperiana*

Mimosoidead

Indigenous

- Common names:** **Arusha:** olsanguwesi; **Chag:** mfulanje, mfuluanga, mruka
Eng: long-podded albizia; **Gogo:** mchenje, mkenge-maji;
Lugu: mkenge; **Meru:** nduruka, nruka; **Pare:** mreraiambo;
mririgwi; **Samb:** mshai, mshaimawe.
- Ecology:** Its natural range is eastern Africa from Mozambique to the Sudan and Ethiopia. In Tanzania it is widespread except in the west and south. It is a well-known tree in the Usambara mountains and Kilimanjaro. It grows well in the cool conditions of mountain areas up to about 2,000 m. However, it will also survive in lowland areas which are not too hot.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber, tool handles, medicine, bee forage, shade, soil conservation, nitrogen fixation.
- Description:** A semi-deciduous tree to 20 m, very similar to *Albizia gummifera* but the crown usually more umbrella shaped than flat. **BARK:** smooth, pale grey to brownish, branchlets bear velvety brown hairs. **LEAVES:** compound, 4–7 pinnae on a stalk about 25 cm long, leaflets less than 2 cm, **usually hairy, paler below**, shiny above, variable in shape but midrib diagonal, **tips rounded**. **FLOWERS:** **white or creamy**, in loose, conspicuous heads, **flower stalks hair**. **FRUIT:** numerous, persistent, **dull brown pods** with a thick edge, to 30 x 6 cm but often smaller, containing many large seeds.
- Propagation:** Seedlings and wildings.
- Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 13,000-15,000. Collect from trees soon as fruits mature to prevent insect damage. Germination is fair but sporadic.
- treatment:** soak in hot water to hasten germination but this is not essential for fresh seeds.
- storage:** seed can be stored for a long time if kept cool, dry and insect free.
- Management:** Trees raised from seeds perform better than those from wildings. Young seedlings are very susceptible to pests, thus long retention in a nursery should be avoided. Performs better when planted under other trees.
- Remarks:** In Tanzania the tree is recommended for highland areas with mean annual rainfall over 1,000 mm; grown in lines along contours together with grasses. It is being grown as a multipurpose tree in wetter areas (e.g. East Usambaras) where *Leucaena* is not acceptable.

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