

Baikiaea insignis subsp. minor

Caesalpinaceae

Indigenous

Common names: **Luganda, dialect Buddu:** Nkoba, nkobakoba.

Ecology: One of two *Baikiaea* in East Africa, this species is found in lowland rain forest from Cameroon to Angola. In Uganda it grows in the swamp forests of Sango Bay, in Mabira Forest with *Beilschmiedia* and riparian along Ishasha river. It extends along the western shore of Lake Victoria as far as Bukoba District.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber, shade, ornamental.

Description: A handsome **evergreen** tree to 35 m with a straight trunk and a small dense crown. The bole commonly 50 cm and can reach 1 m, without buttresses. **BARK:** **grey-brown, smooth or lightly fissured** and thin. **LEAVES:** pinnate, on stalks 4-17 cm, the leaflets **usually 5-9 cm** each one stalked and **more or less alternate**, long oval, **stiff and leathery, variable** in size 6-18 cm long, veins not clear, the tip more blunt than pointed. **FLOWERS:** terminal, arranged on stalks to 8 cm, 4 thick sepals in bud, covered with brown hairs, **4 large white petals 6-10 cm and one narrower pale yellow petal**, edges wavy, 9 plus 1 stamens with prominent 2-cm long anthers. **FRUIT:** **woody flat pods hanging down, about 25 cm long and 7 cm wide**, slightly curved. They are covered with **dense brown hairs** and **break open explosively at both edges, twisting spirally** to set free **thin dark red seeds**, rounded and flat, about 3.5 cm long.

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

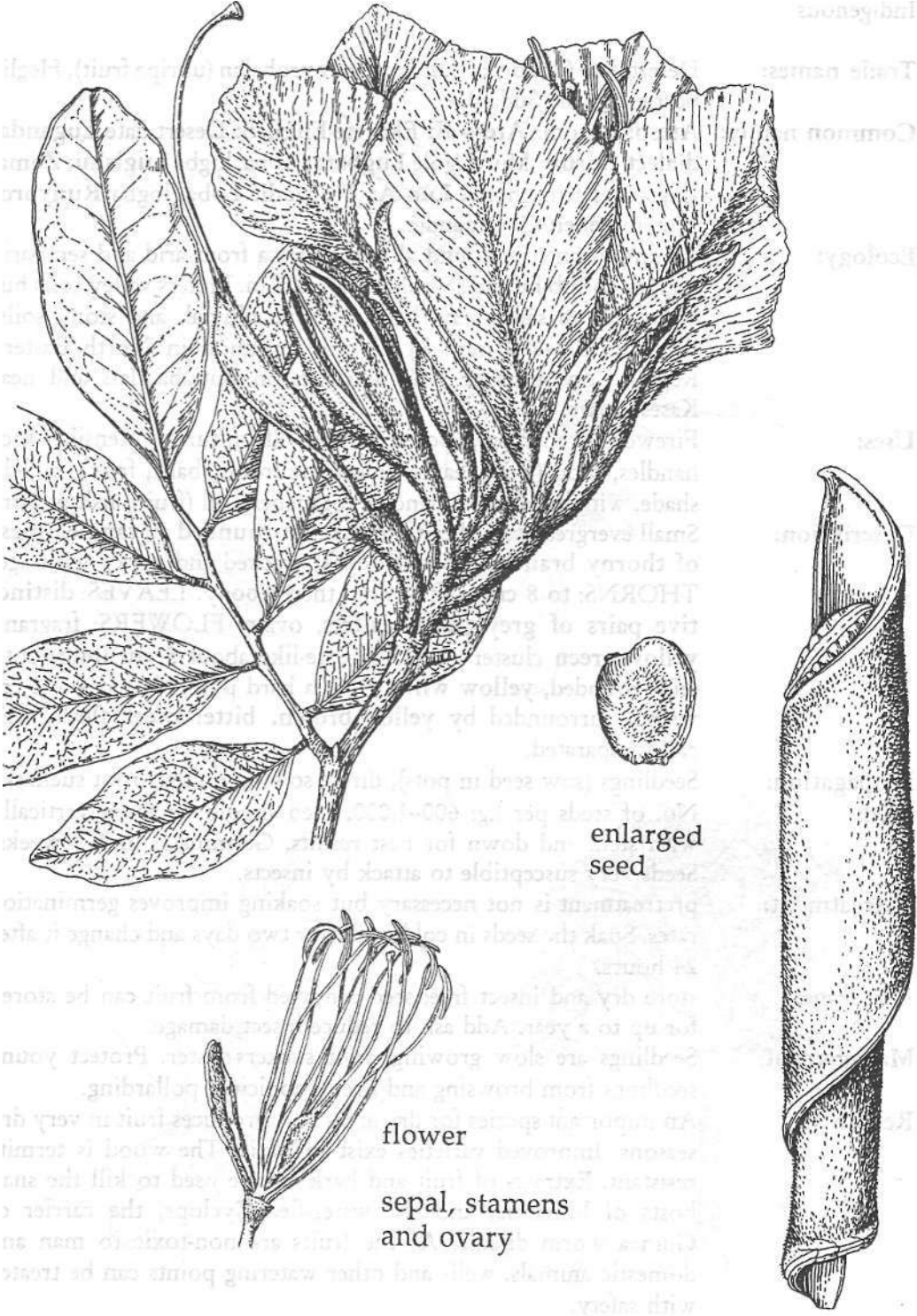
Seed: The pod splits open and throws the seeds out several metres from the mother tree. To obtain the seeds a search must be made on the ground.

treatment: soaking the seed overnight prior to sowing will shorten germination time.

storage: liable to weevil attack. Can be stored in sealed containers in a cool place. Add ash to reduce insect damage.

Management: Coppicing while young, pollarding. Slow growing.

Remarks: The timber is suitable for joinery, cheap furniture and shelving but must be treated with preservatives against borers. It is pale brown, moderately hard, heavy and strong.



enlarged seed

flower

sepal, stamens and ovary