

***Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*****Rhizophoraceae****Indigenous**

STANDARD/TRADE NAME: Muia.

COMMON NAMES: **Digo:** Mchofi; **Giriama:** Mkoko; **Swahili:** Msindi, Muia.

**DESCRIPTION:** An evergreen mangrove, 5–9 m, with **stilt roots and knee-like breathing roots emerging from the mud.** **BARK:** Grey or red-brown. **LEAVES:** **Opposite, widest in the middle, tip pointed,** to 15 cm x 6 cm, without hairs. **FLOWERS:** Borne on the leaf axils, white or red, **solitary,** petals about 15 mm long and forked into 2 with 3 hairs at the end. **FRUIT:** Bell-shaped with a leathery **berry, about 2 cm long,** and a **persistent calyx** divided into at least 8 parts. The seeds germinate when still attached to the tree (viviparous), starts to grow and then drops down into the mud where its growth continues.

**ECOLOGY:** A mangrove tree of the Indian and Pacific Ocean coasts. On Kenya's coast usually found on the inner edge or less exposed areas, in creeks and also on intertidal beaches.

**USES:** Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, furniture, bee forage, fish feed and breeding habitat, coastal erosion control, tannin (bark), dye (black, from bark).

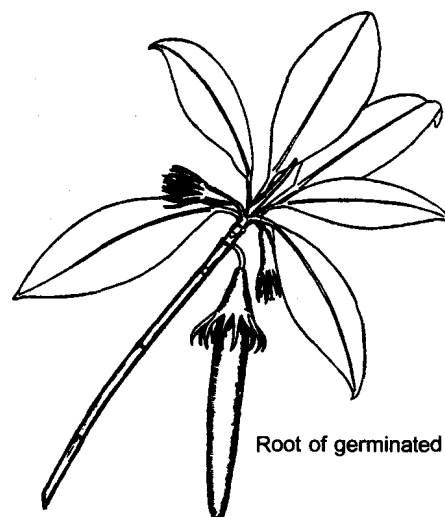
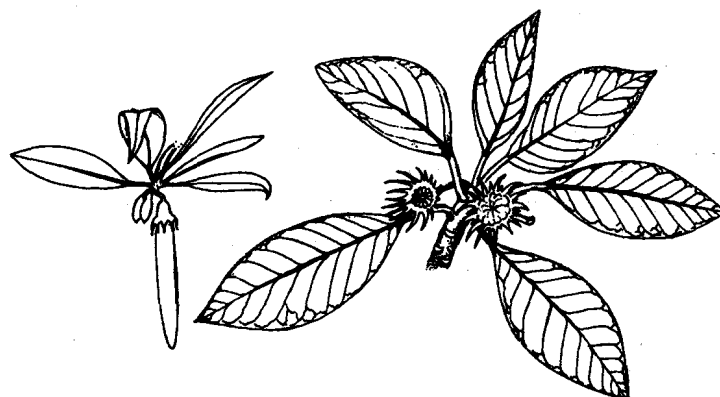
**PROPAGATION:** Planting is not usually needed because natural regeneration is so successful. Germinated seed have pointed ends; when they fall off the tree they stick in the mud and grow.

**MANAGEMENT:** Mangrove silviculture has been attempted in some areas of the world and is an established practice in some Asian countries. Most species seem to grow rapidly if conditions are conducive.

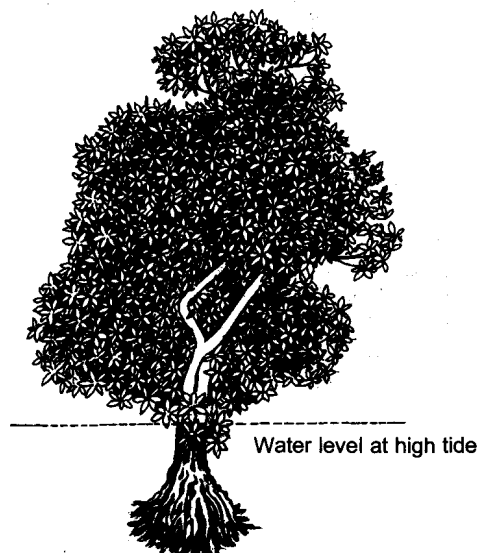
**REMARKS:** Mangrove charcoal is exceptional. It burns steadily, giving off intense heat without sparking. It has a very high calorific value and leaves little ash. Honey from mangrove trees is very good, thick, dark and tastes salty. The wood chips are used for pulp. Unlike *Rhizophora*, *Bruguiera* has knee-like breathing roots. The genus has about 6 species.

**FURTHER READING:** Beentje, 1994; ; Dharani, 2002; National Academy of Sciences, 1980; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002.

Flowering branch



Root of germinated seed



Water level at high tide

