

Calodendrum capense

Rutact

Indigenous

Common names: Arusha: olarashi, oltyaneibor; Chag: mpisili mpisile; **Eng:** Cape chestnut; Iraqw: tumatumo; Maasai: ol arash; **Meru** isau; Nyat: munyinkanyuki.

Ecology: A tree widespread in Africa, from Uganda to southern Africa, where it can be found in coastal forests. In Tanzania, typical of evergreen highland forests **and** riverine forests, 1,200-2,200 m. Best on moist forest soils but succeeds in drier soils, even black cotton.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, tool handles, bee forage. shade, ornamental, mulch, windbreak.

Description: A semi-deciduous tree to 20 m with a shapely spreading crown, bare for several months. **BARK:** grey, smooth young branchlets hairy. **LEAVES:** opposite, simple, often bunched together, broadly oval and wavy to 14 cm midrib and veins very clear underneath. **FLOWERS:** large and showy, pink-white in erect heads, abundant *but* erratic, at the ends of branches, crimson gland dots purple-brown anthers on the long stamens. **FRUIT** knobbly to softly spiny becoming hard, capsules ("chestnuts") hang on the tree then set free black angular seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: about 900. Seeds are large and easy to collect. Germination is good with fresh seeds.

treatment: not necessary; float to separate empty bad seed from heavy viable seed.

storage: **seed can be stored up to one year if kept insect free,**

Management; **Slow growing in most conditions; trim an ornamental tree to shape.**

Remarks: Monkeys and squirrels eat young capsules with seed while on the tree. Not good for intercropping due to heavy shade.

