

# Carissa edulis

*Apocynaceae*

Indigenous

- Common names: **Chag:** manka; **Eng:** simple-spined carissa; **Fipa:** msuuku; **Haya:** moyonzaki, muyanaza, muyonza; **Iraqw:** quach, titiyo; **Kere:** mkanga onza, mkangayonza; **Kuria:** munyore rinyore; **Nguu:** mkumbaku; **Nyam:** mfubeli; **Pare** mchhofwe; **Rangi:** mkabaku; **Samb:** mfumba, mkumbaku; **Zara:** mukambaku.
- Ecology: An evergreen shrub common in much of Africa and in most parts of Tanzania, in bush and forest edges, **0-2,000** m. Tolerates most soils, including black cotton.
- Uses: Firewood, food (fruit), seasoning (soup), medicine (roots), ornamental, live fence.
- Description: A spiny shrub or small tree to 5 m, sometimes a climber. **BARK:** grey, smooth **with straight woody spines to 5** cm, often in pairs, rarely branching. Milky latex as in **all** the family. **LEAVES:** **opposite**, leathery, **dark green shiny to 5** cm, **tip pointed, base rounded**, stalk very short **FLOWERS:** fragrant, in **pink-white terminal clusters, each** flower **to 2** cm, lobes overlap to the right. **FRUIT:** rounded **berries about 1** cm **purple-black when ripe**, sweet and edible, 2-4 seeds.
- Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.
- Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 28,000-30,000. Germination of fresh seed is good.
- treatment: no treatment required.
- storage: can retain viability for up to three months only.
- Management: Pruning.
- Remarks: An important medicine in Tanzania. Although difficult to establish, it can be grown from seed into an attractive impenetrable hedge. Excellent firewood.

