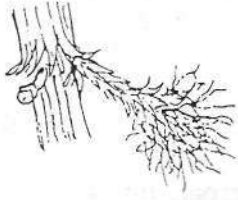


Casuarina equisetifolia (C. littoralis)

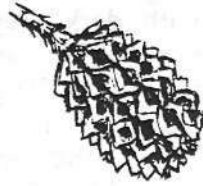
Casuarinaceae

Asia, Pacific islands

- Common names:** **Eng:** horsetail tree, sea pine, swamp she oak, whistling pine; **Swah:** moinga, mvinje; **Zara:** mkorolo, nsata.
- Ecology:** Native to Asia and the Pacific from north and north-east Australia to India and Sri Lanka, including Malaysia and Indonesia. The range has been extended by man to India, tropical and sub-tropical America and Africa. In Tanzania it is naturalized along the coast, 0-1,400 m, and prefers a semi-humid climate. It does best in loose sandy soils provided there is sub-soil moisture, but it will not withstand waterlogging, although it can tolerate some salinity. The extensive root system enables the tree to grow in poor soils.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, poles, timber (construction, dhow masts), tool handles, fodder (young leaves), shade, ornamental, mulch, nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, soil improvement, windbreak, dye, tannin (bark), dune fixation.
- Description:** A tree to 20 m with "weeping" foliage. **BARK:** grey-black, cracked with age, peeling off in strips. **LEAVES:** minute scales just visible on the green branchlets, **branchlets to 30 cm hang down in crowded tufts.** **FLOWERS:** pollen-bearing tips on some branchlets; female flowers in tiny heads with red stigmas. **FRUIT:** prickly, brown, like cones, in clusters, **to 2.5 cm long**, releasing hundreds of tiny winged seeds.
- Propagation:** Seedlings and wildings.
- Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 600,000-900,000. The tree seeds prolifically. Germination rate 50-70% with good seed, **treatment:** not necessary.
- storage:** in cool, dry conditions the seed can be stored for at least a year.
- Management:** Fast growing; side pruning to get a clear bole.
- Remarks:** Recommended for the coastal and lowland zones, especially on sandy soils where few other trees will grow. Appropriate for reclaiming and improving sandy soils to be planted later with crops. Tolerant of saline soil but susceptible to termites. Valuable as a windbreak against salty desiccating coastal winds. Dry branchlets on the ground decay slowly, suppress undergrowth and may be a fire hazard.



enlarged female flower



fruit capsule and seeds

