

Casuarina junghuhniana (C. montana)

Casuarinaceae

Asia, Pacific islands

- Common names:** **Eng:** forest oak, she oak; **Swah:** mvinje.
- Ecology:** A native of highlands in Indonesia where it pioneers deforested lands, 1,500-3,100, but it can be grown elsewhere from sea level to 3,100 m. It grows on most types of soil from acid to alkaline and is moderately drought resistant. Roots extend sideways and there are many root suckers. It is commonly planted in the Lushoto area.
- Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, tool handles, fodder (green shoots), shade, ornamental, nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, soil improvement.
- Description:** A tall tree up to 35 m, the straight trunk to 1 m in diameter with dark grey-green branches to a narrow conical crown. **BARK:** dark brown to black, **rough, corky with furrows**. **LEAVES:** pale green branchlets **30-40 cm long** (bearing the tiny leaf scales) hanging down. **FLOWERS:** male and female flowers borne on separate trees in clusters. **FRUIT:** **female capsules small**, 9-12 mm diameter, become woody but not prickly when valves open to release tiny seeds.
- Propagation:** Seedlings, root suckers.
- Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 80,000-100,000. Seed germination is good and uniform, completed after 10 days.
- treatment:** no treatment required.
- storage:** Can keep viability for up to one year at room temperature.
- Management:** Fairly fast growing, it can be planted in woodlots and on farm boundaries, pollarding.
- Remarks:** A potential multipurpose tree in the Tanzania highlands favoured in poor soils for fuel and poles. There is a need to identify suitable provenances for different climatic and soil conditions. The tree is popular in south China as it is adaptable to many sites and in the best conditions provides timber in 5 years. Seed propagation results in stands of great variety. Although the wood is hard and heavy, splitting and cracking as it dries, it is useful for fencing, rafters, scaffolding, etc.

