

Combretum fragrans (C. adenogonium)

Combretaceae

Indigenous

Common names: Eng: four-leaved combretum; **Hehe:** mkunguni; **Mate:** mlama; Nyam: muluzyaminzi; **Sangu:** mkunguni; **Suku:** nujaminzi; Zinza: mtwalachenya.

Ecology: A tree found in deciduous woodlands and wooded grasslands, sometimes on termite mounds. It is often associated with seasonally waterlogged clay soils, but **also** sometimes on shallow stony or sandy soils, throughout Tanzania, 50-1,700 m.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, medicine (leaves), bee forage.

Description: A small deciduous shrub or much-branched tree, up to 10 m high. **BARK:** grey, rough and fissured, branches peeling to reveal dark red-brown underbark. **LEAVES:** simple, shiny and sticky when young, growing in **whorls of 3-4**, or opposite, 11-18 cm long and 9-11 cm wide; young leaves have golden-brown hairs, especially below, and these **hairs persist on mature leaves**. Leaves turn conspicuous orange-yellow before falling, 7-10 pairs of veins raised on both surfaces. **FLOWERS:** green-yellow or white, fragrant, to 7 cm, in bunches beside leaves. **FRUIT:** four-winged, up to 3.5 x 3.0 cm, **yellowish green** when young, becoming **yellowish brown** at maturity, often remaining on the tree. A small "peg", 3 mm, is found at the tip of the fruit.

Propagation: Seedlings, root suckers.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 10,000-15,000. Germination is very good and fast.

treatment: remove wings before sowing.

storage: can keep viability only for a short period at room temperature.

Management: Fairly fast growing; coppicing.

Remarks: The wood is very susceptible to attack by beetles so is not a useful timber. Leaves have been used to treat malaria, rashes and wounds.

