

Indigenous

Common names: **English:** Sandpaper cordia **Luo** L: Edomel **Lusoga:** Mukebu.

Ecology: This *Cordia* species grows from Ethiopia to Central and Southern Africa. It is found in many habitats from wet or riverine forest to woodland and bush with Acacia-Euphorbia or grassland. In Uganda, it is common in dry thickets near rivers and in low-lying short-grass savannah in the north and north-east of the country.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (construction), poles, tool handles, beehives (bark), fibre (bark), food (fruit), medicine (leaves), bee forage, sandpaper (leaves).

Description: A multi-stemmed shrub or tree to 6 m, occasionally reaching 12 m. **BARK: blue-grey, thin and fibrous, peeling in strips**—resembling Eucalyptus. **LEAVES:** broadly oval to almost round, 5-8 cm, margin slightly toothed, **upper surface like sandpaper to touch** but softly hairy below with prominent veins, a stalk to 2 cm. **Branchlets, leaf and flower stalks densely covered with rusty hairs.** **FLOWERS:** pale yellow, sharply fragrant, in dense terminal clusters, each flower tubular, about 1 cm across, calyx hairy and persistent. **FRUIT:** oval, pointed, yellow-orange and soft when ripe, about 2 cm long, held in a **hairy cup-like calyx which loosely covers one-third of the fruit;** the single seed lies in jelly-like edible pulp.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed: Collected in fruit after falling to the ground between September and February. They should be dried gradually so as not to lose viability.

treatment: scarify the outer coat or soak in cold water for 6 hours to improve germination.

storage: the large seeds can be stored if spread out on a dry concrete floor away from rodents.

Management: Slow growing; coppicing, lopping, pollarding.

Remarks: Can be planted as a pure stand for fuel and poles. Survives well in dry areas. The wood has been used for fence droppers and walking sticks.

