

Datura suaveolens (D. Candida)

Solanaceae

Peru, Chile

Common names: **English:** Moon flower, angel's trumpet **Luganda:** Maduudu.

Ecology: A small tree from the mountains of Chile and Peru, widely cultivated in the tropics and subtropics, including Uganda, for its beauty, over 1,000 m.

Uses: Bee forage, ornamental, soil conservation, live fence, boundary marking.

Description: A **shrub or small tree 2-5 m**, stems often crooked, succulent when young becoming woody; dense drooping foliage. **LEAVES: oval, mid-green, 15-30 cm long**, softly hairy below, **edge wavy**, tip pointed, base often unequal-sided. **FLOWERS: attractive showy white trumpets to 30 cm long**, hanging down all over the shrub, funnel shaped at the mouth with an overpowering musky-sweet scent in the evening. Green **calyx, 5-lobed to 12 cm, is enlarged and persistent**. **FRUIT:** a capsule, smooth, oblong about 1 cm with numerous seeds (rarely seen).

Propagation: Cuttings, layering, rarely seedlings.

Seed: Seeds are very small and usually germinate and grow on their own.

treatment:

storage:

Management: Cuttings take easily and the plant spreads quickly and requires control by pruning. It forms an impenetrable hedge if properly looked after. Fast growing in high-rainfall areas.

Remarks: *Datura* hybridizes easily so there are many varieties, some double, others with cream or pinkish flowers. All parts of the plant are poisonous and have a narcotic effect—especially the seeds and leaves. (In Mexico cooked leaves are used as a medicinal poultice and leaves and flowers are smoked to relieve asthma.)

