

Indigenous

Common names: **English:** Giant diospyros **Kwamba:** Nkinga **Luganda:** Mpojwa **Luganda, dialect Buddu:** Mpimbya, mpojwa **Lugwe:** Muryonjo **Lunyuli:** Mubale **Rukiga:** Muhoko, nsenene **Runyankore:** Muhoko **Rutoro:** Muhoko **Sebei:** Cheptua.

Ecology: A widespread African forest tree found in rain forest, lower montane forests, especially on drier sites and upper slopes, often on shallow soils underlain by murram, 1,100-2,200 m. In Uganda occurs in Bushenyi, Rukungiri, Kabale, Bundibugyo, Mukono, Masaka and Mpigi Districts and in Mabira, Kibale and Maramagambo Forests.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture, local construction), poles, implements, tool handles, shade, walking sticks.

Description: A tall evergreen tree with a straight, slender trunk about 20 m but reaching 40 m in forests. It has a **small mushroom-shaped crown**. **BARK:** dark grey-brown, turning black, thick and fibrous, scaling off in thin strips or cracking into small rectangles. **LEAVES:** shiny dark green, long oval to 16 cm, narrowing to the tip, the **edge wavy, midrib clear below**. The short stalk is grooved. **Dry black leaves** can be seen below a tree. **FLOWERS:** small, white and fragrant in clusters beside the leaves. **FRUIT:** round to 1.5 cm across held in a **cup-shaped calyx, about 1 cm long, the tip pointed, red-yellow then black** when ripe. Sometimes in dense clusters.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings.

Seed: No. of seeds per kg: 2,500-3,000.

treatment: not necessary.

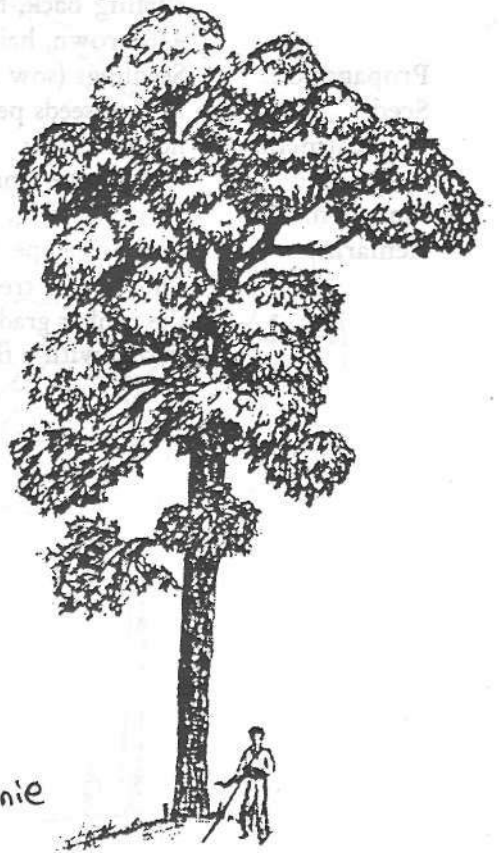
storage: seeds store for several years if kept free from insects. Add ash to reduce insect damage.

Management: Slow growing; pruning, pollarding, coppicing.

Remarks: The wood is pale, hard and tough, difficult to plane and not durable. The heartwood is darker. Though a mixed-forest species, it grows quickly when planted in new areas and in farm land thus quickly yielding good firewood and low-quality building poles.

Diospyros abyssinica

Ebenaceae



A. Birnie