

Indigenous

**Common names:** **Bende:** msinde; **Chag:** mkadi, mkuare, msindi; **Eng:** African ebony; **Lugu:** mkoko, mtitu; **Mate:** nzakala we mwana; **Nyam:** mkinde, msinde; **Pare:** mjongolo; **Swah:** mgiriti; **Zigua:** mhukwi, mkulwe, mkulwi.

**Ecology:** An evergreen tree of medium to low altitudes, found in West, East and southern Africa in woodland, savannah and on rocky hillsides. In Tanzania it is a coastal woodland and riverine forest tree.

**Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber (construction, furniture), carving (walking sticks), food, (fruit: dry, fresh, fermented drink), medicine (bark, roots, fruit), bee forage, shade, ornamental.

**Description:** A medium to large tree, to 25 m. There may be a tall clear bole from a buttressed base to the dense rounded crown. Young parts have silvery hairs. **BARK: grey-black, rough and squared, grooved.** **LEAVES: shiny dark green, alternate, to 14 x 3 cm, the midrib raised below, edge wavy, tip rounded.** **FLOWERS:** fragrant, male clustered, female solitary, cream-white petals, 1 cm. **FRUIT: rounded to 2.5 cm in a calyx cup, the five segments curling back.** fruit yellow, later purple, pulp soft and sweet with 4-6 brown, hairy seeds.

**Propagation:** Seedlings.

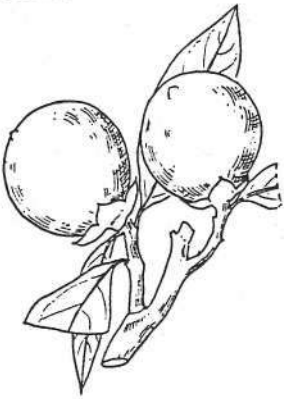
**Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 2,700-3,200. Good germination.

**treatment:** not necessary.

**storage:** seed can be stored for very long periods.

**Management:** Slow growing.

**Remarks:** *Diospyros* species produce the valuable black heartwood ebony. Only a few trees yield the black wood after felling; pale at first, the timber gradually becomes dark brown. The wood is hard and strong with a fine grain and is fungus and termite resistant.



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