

Diplorhynchus condylocarpon

Apocynaceae

Indigenous

English: Horn-pod tree, wild rubber tree**Nyanja:** Mtowa, mtombozi**Senga:** Mwenjendale

Ecology: Trees of this family grow as scattered individuals and not in stands. Many are good sources of drugs and latex. This species is found north to Tanzania, south to Namibia and throughout Zambia. It grows in all woodland types, especially plateau miombo, chipya, scrub woodlands but not in forest; preferring sandy well-drained soil at medium to low altitudes.

Uses: **Firewood, charcoal**, timber (furniture, utensils, carving), poles, **medicine** (bark, roots, leaves), **fodder** (leaves, fruit), gum (latex).

Description: A semi-deciduous shrub or small tree growing up to 4–10 m, often multi-stemmed; the **main branches erect** to a narrow crown. Young branches arch over with **drooping leaves**. **BARK:** thick grey to dark brown, evenly cracked into rectangular scales—resembling “crocodile skin”. **When damaged, it exudes a lot of white, sticky latex.** **LEAVES:** opposite, yellow-green and shiny, margin wavy, oval to 7 cm, on stalk about 2 cm. **FLOWERS:** small white and “star-like”; in loose branched heads near tips of branches, August–November. **FRUIT:** characteristic **brown fruits** about 4 cm long; hang on the tree a long time; brown, dotted with paler lenticels. The woody capsules split and curve back to release 2–4 **winged seeds**, June–August.

Propagation: Cuttings, seedlings.

Seed: –**treatment:** Not necessary.**storage:** –

Management: Coppicing, pollarding.

Remarks: The wood burns even if wet. The sticky latex is generally useful as a gum. The plant can survive bush fires.

