

Indigenous

**Common names:** **Luganda:** Mutunku **Rutoro:** Ntengenene.

**Ecology:** A forest undershrub widespread in Africa from the Sudan to South Africa and common in East Africa. In Uganda it grows in moist tropical rain forest, riverine and dry forests, at forest edges and, less often, in thickets or wooded grassland; abundant in Kibale Forest.

**Uses:** Food (fruit), ornamental.

**Description:** A shrub or much-branched tree 3-8 m high, branches often drooping. **BARK:** smooth grey. Branches grey-brown, often dotted with breathing pores, **bearing straight spines, single, usually needle-like 1-6 cm**, beside leaves; sometimes absent. **LEAVES:** alternate, usually thin, long oval 4-9 cm, with 3-5 veins slightly raised on both surfaces but **vein network weak**. Edge may be finely toothed or round toothed; shortly stalked. **FLOWERS:** one or a few together by leaves or spines, hairy, yellow-green, with **about 20 conspicuous stamens**. Calyx lobes of **female flowers covered with glandular hairs**. **FRUIT: orange to red, fleshy and edible, ovoid to 2 cm long**, hanging down from the **enlarged reddish calyx, each sepal bent back with a fringe of sticky hairs**, 2 seeds inside the flesh are covered with brown wool.

**Propagation:** Seedlings (sow seed in pots), wildings.

**Seed:** Obtained by crushing the fruits and separating them from the pulp. They are collected from the tree when ripe.

**treatment:** not necessary.

**storage:** use fresh seed for best germination.

**Management:** Initial tending necessary.

**Remarks:** A fruit tree with considerable potential that so far has received little attention. It could be planted round homesteads.

