

Ficus exasperata

Moraceae

Indigenous

**Common names:** **Luganda:** Luwawu **Lugwere:** Mkende, speri **Lusoga:** Luwawu, museno **Runyankore:** Musomoro **Runyoro:** Musomoro **Rutoro:** Musomoro.

**Ecology:** A forest tree widespread in Africa from Senegal south to Mozambique. In Uganda it grows in the wetter forests, on forest edges and in savannah forest mosaics along rivers and in rocky places, often persisting in cleared land. It is left in banana and coffee plantations because of its usefulness.

**Uses:** Timber (canoes), sandpaper (leaves).

**Description:** A forest tree usually about 15 m high (sometimes with shrubby growth) branching at all heights to a spreading deep crown, with buttresses on larger trees. **BARK:** smooth pale yellow-green, often with ring marks. **LEAVES:** rough like sandpaper on both surfaces, the tip usually pointed and the blade narrowed to a stalk, 1-2 cm. Young leaves and coppice shoots, even lower branches, bear **3-lobed leaves** but mature leaves not lobed; **leaf edge usually finely toothed**, 2.5-12.0 cm long, 3 veins from the base, the **2 laterals reaching beyond the middle of the blade**. **FIGS:** rounded, **1.0-2.5 cm** across when fresh and **red** when ripe, surface hairy, on a stalk beside or just below leaves.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings.

**Seed:** Seed is abundant in the figs and has to be extracted and dried, **treatment:** not necessary.

**storage:** store in sealed containers in a cool place.

**Management:** Fast growing. Pollarding.

**Remarks:** Can be planted as individual trees or intercropped with coffee or banana for example.

