

Ficus sycomorus (F. gnaphalocarpa)

Moraceae

Indigenous

- Common names: Eng: sycamore fig; **Fiome:** kuyu; Fipa: kivuzi; Gogo: mkuyu; Hehe: njombe; Maasai: ol gngangboli, ol mangulai, ol nanboli; Nyam: mkuyu; Rangi: mkuyu; **Zara:** mkuju.
- Ecology: A fig tree widespread all over Africa. It is found in all regions of Tanzania near rivers or where the watertable is high, always left standing when riverine forest is cut down. It prefers rich well-drained soils and elevations of 0-2,000 m.
- Uses: Firewood, carving, food (fruit), medicine (milky latex), shade, mulch, ornamental, soil conservation, **soil** improvement, bee hives, ceremonial.
- Description: A large deciduous spreading tree to 25 m, sometimes **with** stem buttresses and the **base commonly spreading over the ground**. **BARK: distinctive yellow to cream-brown. smooth.** **LEAVES:** oval to **almost circular**, to 15 cm, upper surface **rough** to **touch**, margin wavy, roughly tocihed, base heart **shaped**, a hairy stalk to 3 cm. **FRUIT:** in **leaf** axils or in dense **clusters** on **main branches and trunk**, each rounded 2-4 cm, yellow-red when ripe, edible.
- Propagation: Cuttings strike readily, wildings.
- Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 800,000-1,000,000.
- treatment: not necessary
- storage: seeds should not be stored.
- Management: Fairly fast growing; pruning, lopping.
- Remarks: The fruits are eaten by livestock, birds and wild animal. They can be dried and have a high food value. The tree **can** be intercropped and managed to reduce shade. In Kilimanjaro and Arusha bananas are grown underneath. The wood is light, pale and easy to work.

