

Flacourtia indica**Flacourtiaceae****Indigenous**

COMMON NAMES: **Chonyi:** Mdungatundu; **Digo:** Mnyondoiya; **Duruma:** Madungatundu, Madungatunga; **English:** Common flacourtia, Governor's plum, Indian plum; **Giriama:** Mdungatundu, Mdevere, Mugereaka; **Kamba:** Kiathani, Kikathani; **Kambe:** Mudungatundu; **Keiyo:** Tungururwet, Tungururak (fruit); **Kikuyu:** Mutuhacu, Muroro; **Kipsigis:** Tunguroloet; **Luhya (Bukusu):** Kumunyungululwe; **Maasai:** Ol-loiroroi, Oldongurgurwo, Oltangururua; **Marakwet:** Tungururwa; **Mbeere:** Mudundi, Muraga, Tingoswo, Tingas (plural); **Meru:** Muraga, Muroo, Muuga ruturu; **Nandi:** Tungururiet, Lichet; **Pokot:** Tingoswo, Tingas (plural); **Sabaot:** Tungururu; **Samburu:** Loloroi; **Sanya:** Mogodonya; **Swahili:** Mkingili, Mchongoma, Mkingiri, Mgovigovi; **Tugen:** Tingoswo, Tungururwo, Talatany (fruit); **Turkana:** Echoge.

DESCRIPTION: A deciduous **spiny shrub** or small tree, usually 3–5 m, occasionally to 10 m; spines on the trunk usually straight, sometimes branched, up to 12 cm long but quite variable. **BARK:** **Rough, pale yellow-grey**, branches may have a yellow powder at first. **LEAVES:** Very variable in size, **oval**, to 12 cm, **edge toothed**, 4–7 pairs, veins clear on both surfaces, stalk to 2 cm. **FLOWERS:** Small, cream, fragrant; male flowers with very **many yellow stamens**, female flowers with a divided spreading style. **FRUIT:** **Red–purple–black, round** and juicy but acid, to **2.5 cm across**, persisting on the tree. They contain up to 10 small seeds, hard and flat.

ECOLOGY: Widespread in tropical and subtropical Africa, Madagascar, Seychelles, Malaysia as well as other parts of Asia. Cultivated for its fruit. It can be grown in a variety of climates and soils, but prefers sandy soil, a high water table and full sun. Widespread in Kenya, from the coast to the highlands, but never very common. Found wild in bushland on rocky hillsides, woodland, riparian forest, mainly on red clay, humid sandy and rocky soils, 0–2,400 m. Agroclimatic Zones III–V. Fruits in February–March (Embu and Machakos), in April (Nairobi), in July–August (West Pokot, Malindi, Kilifi and Kwale), in October (Elgeyo) and in December (Nandi, Bungoma).

USES: Firewood, charcoal, small timber, poles (stems used for houses), tool handles, utensils (spoons), farm implements, edible fruit, jam (fruit), medicine (bark, roots), fodder (leaves for goats), bee forage, live fence, dead fence (branches).

PROPAGATION:

Seedlings, wildlings.

SEED:

treatment: Crack or pierce the hard seed coat for improved germination.

MANAGEMENT: Coppicing, pruning, pollarding. Trim if planted as a fence.

REMARKS: Ripe fruit soft, sweet and edible. It is sold in markets in West Pokot. Sometimes cultivated for its edible fruit. Can make a good live fence. Fruit can be dried in the sun, stored and then soaked in water before being eaten. A good fruit tree in agroforestry systems. *Flacourtia* is a relatively small tropical genus with about a dozen species distributed from Africa eastwards to south Asia and the Pacific Ocean islands.

FURTHER READING: <http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/Sites/TreeDBS/AFT/AFT.htm>; Backes and Ahenda, 1998; Beentje, 1994; Bekele-Tesemma et al., 1993; Katende et al., 1995, 1999; Kokwaro, 1993; Maundu et al., 1999; Mbuya et al., 1994; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Ruffo et al., 2002; Verheij and Coronel, 1991.

