

***Garcinia livingstonei***

Guttiferae

**Indigenous**

**COMMON NAMES:** **Boni:** Mangales, Unglise; **Digo:** Kisambwe, Mfungu tanzu; **Giriama:** Mufodzohi; **Kamba:** Mukanga kanywa, Mukanga, Kikaanga kanywa, Ngaanga kanywa (fruit); **Luhya:** Eshimwani; **Maasai:** Olkifulwa, Enongeperen; **Marakwet:** Nerkwo; **Pokomo:** Muchochozi; **Pokot:** Merwo; **Samburu:** Lkasiyoi, Lyoret; **Sanya:** Magadhoguyo, Dhembela; **Somali:** Daresa (Garissa), Shan faroth; **Swahili:** Mpekechu, Mpeketo, Mtotozi; **Taita:** Mnganga, Munyanga; **Teso:** Atenum, Ekwalakwala; **Tharaka:** Muthuthuura; **Wardei:** Shan forodla.

**DESCRIPTION:** A distinctive evergreen tree or shrub, 2–10 m, with a short bole. **Large erect branches** support a heavy conical crown. In big trees branches arch over in a characteristic way. Branching is often in 3s—useful as stirring sticks. **BARK:** Dark grey-black, ridged; exudes drops of yellow to red latex when damaged. **LEAVES:** Stiff and leathery, **in pairs or 3s**, 4–14 cm, edge usually wavy, **the veins irregular and raised on the shiny upper surface**. **FLOWERS:** Cream-green, in small clusters, a sweetish smell, small green buds sticky with resin. **FRUIT:** **Yellow-orange, oval, 2.5 cm diameter**, very many, edible, acid-sweet, up to 5 seeds.

**ECOLOGY:** Found from Cameroon east to Somalia and south to South Africa. Widely distributed in Kenya, especially along the major rivers. A riverine, forest and thicket species, but also found on rocky outcrops, 0–1,900 m. Left scattered in cropland in the Tana flood plains. On the coast also in forests away from water. Agroclimatic Zones II–V. Fruit and seeds in December at the coast, and in February–March in Embu and in West Pokot.

**USES:** Firewood, poles, tool handles, utensils (3-branched twigs for stirrers, wooden spoons), edible fruit, medicine (roots), fodder, shade, ornamental, soil conservation, dye (bark, sap).

**PROPAGATION:** Seedlings (sow seeds in pots), direct sowing at site.

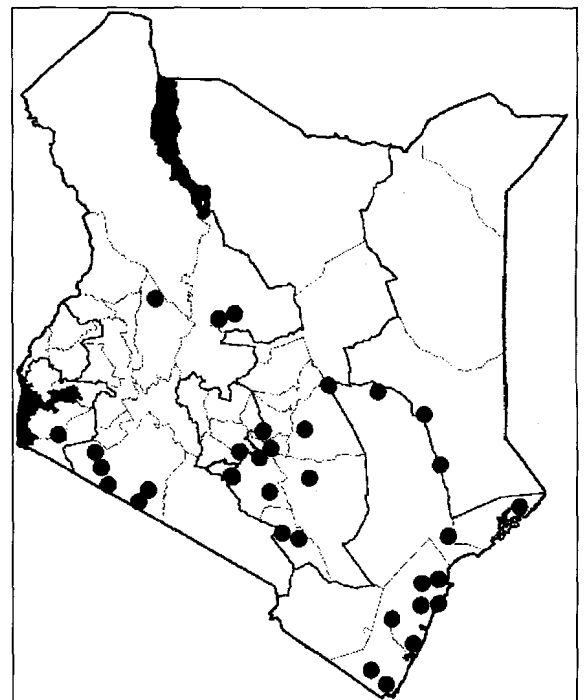
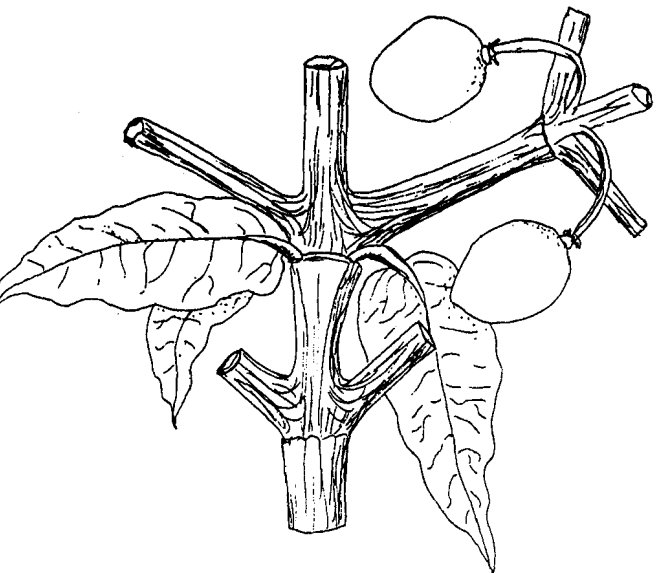
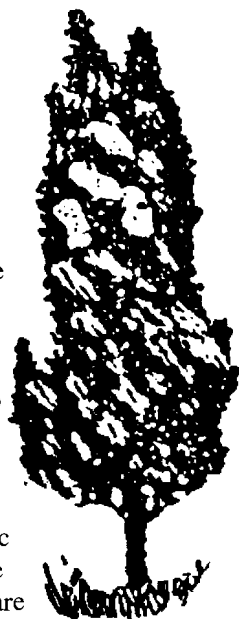
**SEED:** Ripe fruit are collected and put in a cool place for the pulp to rot and fall away. Then dry and separate the seed from the pulp residue; 2,000–2,500 seeds per kg.

**treatment:** Not necessary, but nicking the seed coat or soaking in cold water overnight may hasten germination.

**storage:** Best to use fresh seeds. If they are to be stored, it is best to keep them spread out in a dry cool place.

**MANAGEMENT:** Fairly fast growing. The young seedling develops a strong root before shoots, a feature that makes it worth trying to sow the tree directly at the site where it is to grow.

**REMARKS:** One of the most delicious wild fruits in the country. Leaf extracts have shown some antibiotic properties. Game readily browse the leaves. Twigs used to stir porridge are called *lufudzo* along the Tana River.



The yellow oily sap has been used to decorate arrows (Tharaka).

Two other species of *Garcinia* are found in Kenya. *G. buchananii* (**Luhya (Bukusu):** Kumukhomeli) is found at the coast and in western parts in moist forest and bushland. It usually has opposite leaves. The fruit is edible. *G. volkensii* (**Kamba:** Mulaliondo, Muketa; **Tharaka:** Muthuthuura) is found from central Kenya to the coast in evergreen forest. Flower petals and sepals are in 5s, but in 4s in *G. buchananii*. *Garcinia* is a medium-sized tropical genus particularly common in Africa and Asia. Many of its members have edible fruit with great potential for commercialization, e.g. the Malaysian *G. mangostana* (mangosteen), which is considered one of the most delicious of fruits.

**FURTHER READING:** Beentje, 1994; Katende et al., 1995 (*G. buchananii*); Kokwaro, 1993; Maundu et al., 1999; Mbuya et al., 1994; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Ruffo et al., 2002; Storrs, 1979; van Wyk, 1993.