

South Asia

Common names: **English:** Gmelina, white teak.

Ecology: Native to the lowlands of India, Burma and Sri Lanka where it grows in moist forests. A useful tree planted worldwide from sea level to 1,200 m. It prefers hot humid areas with fertile well-drained loams. In Uganda, it grows well in Gulu and Kitgum Districts.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, poles, timber (furniture, tools), bee forage, ornamental, shade, windbreak.

Description: A deciduous tree which may reach 18 m, but usually smaller; the crown fairly open. **BARK:** pale cream when young, grey-yellow-brown with age, corky and rough. **LEAVES:** large, heart-shaped to 20 cm, tip pointed, shiny above, pale and hairy below, on a stalk to 12 cm. **FLOWERS:** in clusters to 30 cm long, orange-yellow, each flower bell-shaped. Abundant nectar attracts bees. **FRUIT:** orange-yellow, egg shaped to 2.5 cm, containing a stone with 1-4 seeds inside.

Propagation: Seedlings, direct sowing at site, cuttings.

Seed: Germination 40-80 %. No. of seeds per kg: 2,500-3,000.

treatment: Soak in cold water for 24 hours.

storage: Seed can be stored for a year before losing viability.

Management: It is fast growing and moderately drought resistant once established. Protect young trees from livestock. Pruning, lopping, coppicing, pollarding (while young).

Remarks: Young trees do not compete well with weeds. Established trees compete with crops so should not be grown near cultivated land. The soft grey-white timber is light but strong. It has been used to make matchsticks. To obtain best-quality trees, select the best provenances for a particular area.

