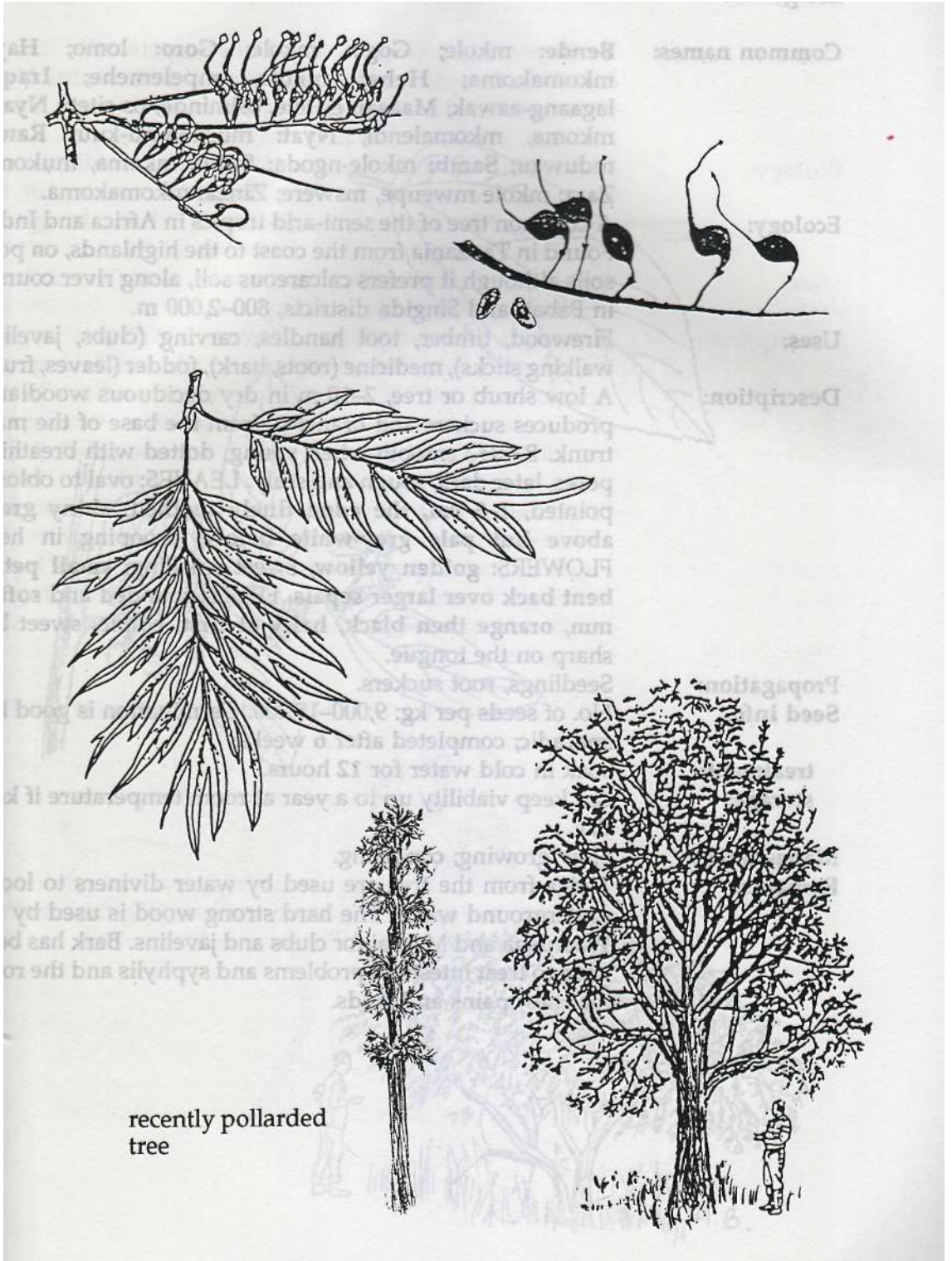


## Grevillea robusta

*Proteaceae*

Southern and eastern Australia

- Common names: Chag: meresi; Eng: grevillea, silky oak; Swah: mgrivea.
- Ecology: Naturally growing in the forest areas of southern and eastern Australia from near sea level to over 1,000 m. It will grow on a wide variety of soils except heavy clay. It can grow well in low-rainfall areas as well as montane zones. In Tanzania it has been planted as a nurse tree for *Olea capensis* in the Usa forest project and as a commercial tree in Meru forest plantations. It has also been used as a coffee shade tree in Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Mbeya regions.
- Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (furniture), veneer/plywood, tool handles, fodder (leaves), bee forage, soil conservation, shade, ornamental, mulch, windbreak.
- Description: A semi-deciduous tree to 20 m with a straight trunk, angular branches and an oval leafy crown. BARK: dark grey, rough, vertically grooved. LEAVES: distinctive, fern-like, very divided, leathery, pale green above, silver-grey below. Fallen leaves are slow to decompose. FLOWERS: very many, in one-sided golden-orange spikes, with much nectar which attracts bees and sunbirds. FRUIT: capsules, about 1 cm with a slender beak, green then yellow-brown, splitting to set free 2 winged seeds.
- Propagation: Wildings commonly used, seedlings.
- Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 70,000-120,000. The species is a prolific seeder but the seed is difficult to collect. There are only 2-3 days between seed maturity and dispersal by wind and only mature seeds are useful. Germination rate 30%-90%.
- treatment: not necessary.
- storage: mature seed can be stored for up to three months. The storage period can be extended up to 2 years if seeds are refrigerated.
- Management: Moderate to fast growing; pollarding, lopping, pruning. Young trees coppice well.
- Remarks: This tree is important for farmers as a general utility timber and dry season fodder. Relatively easy to establish and manage. When grown with food crops, branches are pruned and pollarded and lateral roots may also be pruned to reduce competition with crops. The hard timber has an attractive grain—the colour and silky surface rather like true oak (*Quercus*).



recently pollarded tree