

# Ilex mitis

# Aquifoliaceae

Indigenous

**Common names:** **English:** African holly **Lugishu:** Mwandanda **Rukiga:** Munyambasi, munyangabu **Rukonjo:** Bwiso **Sebei:** Segar, sigara.

**Ecology:** The genus *Ilex* is widespread but there are few in Africa. This species extends from Ethiopia to South Africa being widely distributed but extremely variable. In Uganda, it occurs in highland and lower montane forests and may also be riverine. It is common in the Impenetrable (Bwindi) Forest and on Mt. Elgon.

**Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber (local construction), tool handles, farm tools, medicine (bark).

**Description:** An evergreen shrub or tree, 4-24 m, very variable. The trunk usually short but up to 1 m across with buttresses on large trees. **BARK:** pale grey-brown, smooth; branchlets with a purple colour. **LEAVES:** dark green and shiny, long oval to 14 cm, tip pointed, narrowing to a short stalk. The middle deeply channelled into the thick leaf. The edge may have a few sharp spines. **FLOWERS:** small (to 3 cm), white and fragrant, on hairy stalks beside leaves. **FRUIT:** berry-like, 4-7 mm, yellow-green ripening shiny red. Soft and edible with 4-6 seeds inside.

**Propagation:** Seedlings, wildings.

**Seed:** Collected from ground and gradually dried,

**treatment:** not necessary,

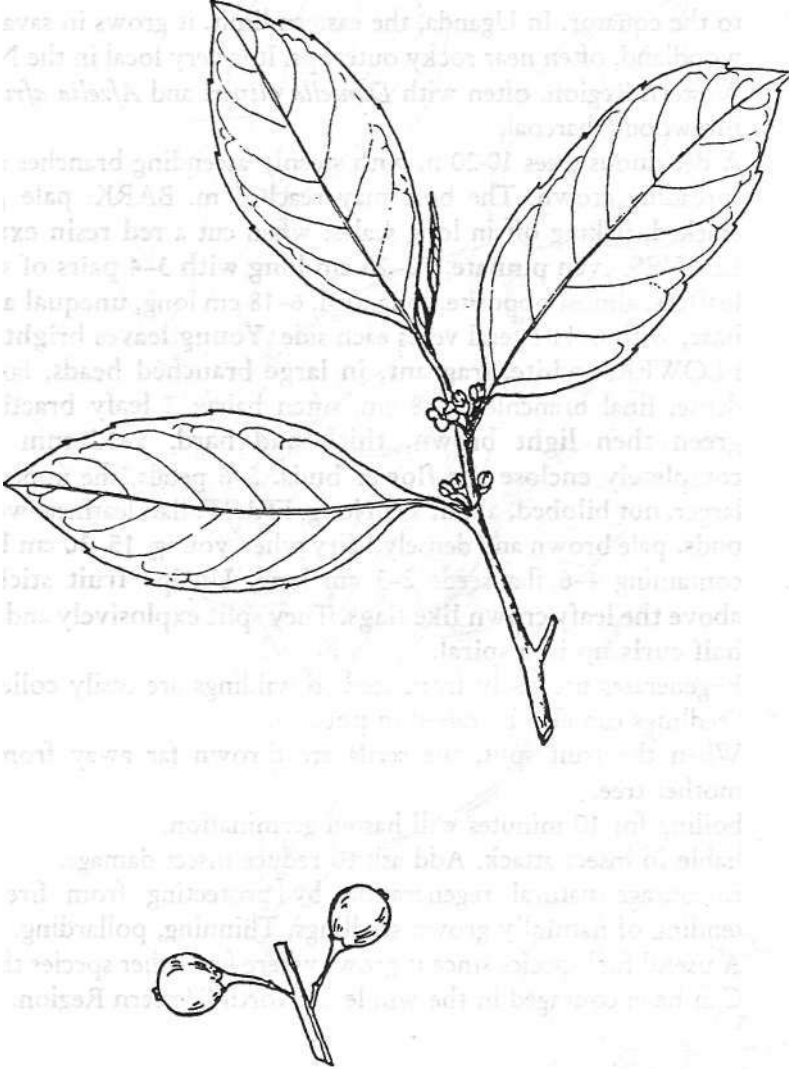
**storage:** in a dry cool place.

**Management:** Pruning, lopping, pollarding.

**Remarks:** The hard white wood is used as timber, but normally the trunk is too short to obtain long boards.

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