

Indigenous

Trade name: African pencil cedar.

Common names: **English:** Cedar **Lugishu:** Ntorokya **Sebei:** Torokio

Ecology: A large, valuable timber tree found in the highland forests of East Africa, Ethiopia to Tanzania. In Uganda, it is found in upper moist montane forests frequently associated with *Rapanea* sp. and *Hagenia abyssinica*. Abundant on Mt. Tim in Kotido District but scarce on other mountains.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber (floors, roof shingles, pencils, joinery), poles, posts, medicine (bark, leaves, twigs, buds), ornamental, shade, windbreak.

Description: An evergreen tree about 40 m with a straight trunk, although often fluted. A pyramidal shape when young. The foliage is **finer and more open than cypress**. **BARK:** thin grey-brown, grooved and peeling with age. **LEAVES:** **prickly, young leaves to 1 cm**, soon replaced by scale-like mature leaves, blue-green, triangular and closely overlapping on the branchlets. **FRUIT:** male cones small and yellow with pollen, female **purple-blue fleshy "berries" about 8 mm**, the pulp containing 1-4 hard seeds.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings—often numerous.

Seed: Germination rate 20-30%. No. of seeds per kg: 40,000-50,000.

treatment: not necessary.

storage: up to a year if stored in a cool, dry place.

Management: Fairly fast growing in the open but otherwise slow. Prune trees for good-quality timber and poles.

Remarks: Litter fall from this tree makes the soil acid so it should not be grown with crops. It regenerates well and deserves high priority in reforestation. The wood is termite resistant. Although belonging to the cypress family, this subgroup has no dry cones like Cupressus.

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