

Macaranga kilimandscharica

Euphorbiaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: **Kikuyu:** Mukuhakuha; **Kamba:** Mukulati; **Kipsigis:** Logomaita; **Marakwet:** Kibgetouoa; **Meru:** Mukarati; **Nandi:** Sebesebet; **Ogiek:** Logomaita; **Sabaot:** Kaptebema.

DESCRIPTION: A tree that can reach 20 m, with a straight trunk to a dense crown of shiny leaves, the bole fluted in older trees with broad round columns. It may also be a multi-stemmed small tree when in thickets. **BARK:** Pale red-brown or grey, thin and smooth. **LEAVES:** Grouped at the ends of up-curving branches and hanging down. Generally heart-shaped with a long pointed tip, about 13 cm x 8 cm on a long stalk to 9 cm, the base usually rounded. Two typical glands lie on the leaf stalk just below the blade. Leaves 3–7 nerved from the base and dense rusty and glandular hairs below, very clear on youngest leaves. **FLOWERS:** Yellow-green, male and female separate, very small, on stalks to 10 cm. **FRUIT:** Small dull green capsules, rounded, about 6 mm long, covered in yellow glands and containing shiny brown seeds.

ECOLOGY: A tree abundant in wetter montane forests of eastern Africa. It is a very fast-growing pioneer species, often regenerating profusely at forest edges, 1,500–3,000 m. Generally abundant in wetter montane forests in Kenya. Agroclimatic Zones I–III.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber (boxes and crates), poles, medicine (roots and leaves), soil conservation.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings, wildings.

SEED: Many seeds are produced in one season. Since they are shiny, they are very easy to find on the ground.

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Sow as soon as collected.

MANAGEMENT: Fast growing.

REMARKS: Will produce firewood within 3 years. Can be planted as a pure stand for firewood and poles or intercropped with coffee and banana. *Macaranga* is an Old World genus with a few hundred species. The genus is better represented in South Asia.

FURTHER READING:
Beentje, 1994;
Katende et al., 1995;
Kokwaro, 1993.

