

Manilkara mochisia**Sapotaceae****Indigenous**

COMMON NAMES: **Bajun:** Warendi; **Chonyi:** Munago, Nago (fruit); **English:** Milk berry; **Giriama:** Munago, Nago (fruit); **Kamba:** Kisaa (Mwala), Kinako (Kibwezi); **Malakote:** Muwarande; **Orma:** Waradhe; **Samburu:** Itooj; **Somali:** Waradhe (Tana River); **Swahili:** Mnago, Msapa, Mtalawanda; **Tugen:** Noswo.

DESCRIPTION: A large shrub or, more usually, a small- to medium-sized tree 3–20 m, with low branching and a spreading crown. **BARK:** Brown–grey–black with deep longitudinal grooves but rather smooth in young plants. **LEAVES:** In characteristic **tight terminal rosettes growing from short side shoots**, stalks about 1 cm, blade stiff and shiny, **wider at the tip, 2–6 cm long, tip rounded or notched**, young leaves hairy below, 10–14 pairs of lateral nerves. **FLOWERS:** In leaf axils, **on stalks 6–13 mm, densely clustered, cream-yellow**, sepals in 2 series of 3, petals with many narrow segments. **FRUIT:** **Yellow, rounded, to 1.8 cm long**, containing a tasty soft red pulp around 1–3 dark brown flattened seeds.

ECOLOGY: Found from Somalia south to South Africa, Mozambique and Angola. In Kenya, e.g. in Kwale, Kilifi, Tana River, Kibwezi forest, Mwale, Taita and Lamu in dry deciduous bushland and bushed grassland, especially along dry watercourses, 0–1,200 m, occasionally up to 1,700 m. Sandy, light red clay and occasionally black-cotton soils. Agroclimatic Zones V–VII (riverine). Flowers in November–December in Tana River and Kilifi, May in Machakos District.

USES: Firewood, charcoal, timber (construction), poles, flooring, tools, tool handles, carving, utensils (wooden spoons), boat building (dhows), bows, wooden roofs, edible fruit, medicine (bark), bee forage, shade.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings.

SEED: 3,500–4,000 seeds per kg. Germination very good; 95% after 3 weeks.

treatment: Not necessary.

storage: Seed can be stored for long periods.

MANAGEMENT: Slow growing when mature, rather fast when young. Weed well during the first few years. The tree can attain a height of 10 m within the first 10 years of growth, but the trunk may remain small.

REMARKS: This tree has durable timber, is resistant to termites and has potential for agroforestry in semi-arid areas. The hard, heavy timber is resistant to sea water and has been used to build dhows. The wood is in high demand at the coast, hence the tree needs protection and increased cultivation. This is both a New and an Old World genus with several dozen members. Some members are sources of latex exploited commercially. The trees produce good timber and edible fruit.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Maundu et al., 1999; Mbuya et al., 1994; Palgrave and Palgrave, 2002; Ruffo et al., 2002.

