

## Millettia dura

*Papilionoideae*

Indigenous

Common names: **Eng:** millettia; **Haya:** omulongo, morongo, mshafa; **Lugu:** mhavi; **Mwera:** mkuunge; **Nguu:** mhafi; **Samb:** mhafa; **Zara:** muhamvi.

Ecology: A small tree growing naturally in Kenya and Ethiopia in upland forests, 1,000-2,000 m. In Tanzania it grows in secondary scrub and forest margins (Bukoba and Usambara). It has, however, been planted elsewhere as it is drought resistant and attractive.

Uses: Poles, tool handles, fodder (leaves), shade, ornamental, mulch, soil improvement.

**Description:** A much-branched deciduous tree to 15 m with light foliage. **BARK:** grey and smooth. **LEAVES:** compound, **dull green, 5-12 pairs leaflets**, each one to 5 cm, often unequal sided. **Young leaves and stalks have orange-brown hairs.** **FLOWERS:** **mauve sprays, to 20 cm**, often on the bare tree **FRUIT: thick flat pods** to 25 x 2 cm, splitting **open** explosively.

**Propagation** Seedlings, direct sowing.

**Seed info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 6,000-7,000. Germination is very good; up to 80% after 20 days.

**treatment:** none, or soak in cold water for 6 hours.

**storage:** can be stored for some years if kept dry and insect free.

**Management:** Fairly fast growing.

**Remarks:** The wood is tough and resistant to termites. The tree has been planted between tea bushes both to enrich the soil and to attract insect-eating birds. This gives the tea crop some protection from insect attack. Seeds contain a narcotic, ground up they have been used to stupefy fish.

